



# BVID News

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**Browns Valley  
Irrigation District**

9370 Browns Valley School Rd.  
PO Box 6  
Browns Valley, CA 95918  
Office: (530) 743-5703  
Shop: (530) 742-6044

**General Manager**

Walter Cotter  
E-mail: [Walter@bvid.org](mailto:Walter@bvid.org)

**Board of Directors:**

**Division I**

Robert Bordsen  
Email: [bvidbobb@att.net](mailto:bvidbobb@att.net)

**Division II**

Russell Woods  
Email: [webinfo@bvid.org](mailto:webinfo@bvid.org)

**Division III**

Diana J. Wheeler  
Email: [webinfo@bvid.org](mailto:webinfo@bvid.org)

**Division IV**

Bill Lowe  
Email: [webinfo@bvid.org](mailto:webinfo@bvid.org)

**Division V**

Robert Winchester  
Email: [webinfo@bvid.org](mailto:webinfo@bvid.org)

## We have water!

As you know, we had a very wet winter and an especially wet and long spring. Collins Lake Reservoir is just below spill. The lake filled between Christmas and New Year's and has remained full into June. This, of course, is great news as we approach summer. But it is still important we focus on ways to conserve water and be smart about our usage. There are rules and regulations which apply to water usage on your own property and it is important even during non-drought years to practice techniques in conservation so they become second nature and none of our vital resource is wasted.

*“ But it is still important we focus on ways to conserve water and be smart about our usage.”*

### Remember these easy tips to conserve:

- Don't spill water and don't overwater! Overwatering makes your plants more susceptible to drought conditions should they occur again in the next few years. Spilling water, either off your property or out of ponds, can have harmful effects beyond just wasting water.
- Smart Irrigation / Drought Tolerant Planting – See our story in this issue about what you can do now to prepare yourself for drought years ahead should they occur.
- Don't take more water than you purchased.
- Don't kill your Oak Trees by overwatering them. Oak Trees are very easy to over water. These trees are natural to the area and too much water can kill them. This is the most common error made in watering in the District.



# Water Conservation in the Garden:

## Drought Tolerant Planting for Yuba County Foothills

The Yuba County Foothills can be a wonderful place to have a beautiful garden as long as you know what to plant. While water is sometimes plentiful, the best idea is to follow some easy steps presented below by the Yuba-Sutter Master Gardeners for having a yard that is both beautiful and drought tolerant, thus making it easier to care for in dry years as well as wet ones.

### When and how to irrigate?

According to the University of California, Davis Master Gardeners website watering is best when done in the early hours of the morning (generally between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.) which is easy to do with a watering timer. Generally the evaporation during this time of day is lower and there is little or no wind to disrupt your sprinkler system patterns. Drip irrigation systems are also excellent in conserving water as they deliver water to the exact place needed rather than sprinklers that overwater the surrounding soil and also contribute to the growth of weeds which fight your plants for water.

The most beneficial thing to know when it comes to irrigation is simple and only takes a few minutes. Be sure to check your irrigation system often for broken, leaking, or incorrectly placed sprinklers. These random checks can help you reduce your water usage by more than 10% yearly.

### Create Hydrozones

According to Master Gardener Joy Ames, hydrozones are a great way to conserve water. A hydrozone is when you group the plants in your garden by both their water and soil needs creating small areas which need more water, and other areas which need less water according to Ames. The most effective approach is to create zones so plants with the highest water needs are closest to the water source and the more drought tolerant plants are further away states Ames.

While the idea is simple it is also very important because too often people “put a plant with high water needs next to one that is drought tolerant and they end up drowning the drought tolerant plant,” said Ames. Hydrozone gardening is a great way to get the more water thirsty plants you might like in your garden, but in pockets that will help them survive and get the right amount of water.

### Don't kill your oak trees with too much water

Many foothill residents will admit they have killed more than one oak tree on their property from overwatering. However the thing you must keep in mind is oak trees are perfectly situated for the local climate. “They are a California native plant,” said Ames, “they like wet winters and very dry, hot summers.” According to Ames the worst thing you can do is to plant grass (which needs water all summer long) underneath them. “The area under an oak tree should not have plants unless they share the drought tolerant characteristics,” said Ames, “ideally I would recommend

mulch under the tree and not to plant under them for a sizable area around the base of the tree.” Ames does mention very young oaks can usually take a little more water than more mature trees as they can adjust to a small increase above normal levels of water when they are young.

The other problem is once people start to see the Oak trees dying; they assume they need more water. According to Ames this is a common mistake. “Many people have the misconception if a plant is not doing well, it must need more water, this is not always true,” said Ames.

### When to plant?

Most of the area of the foothill is in Zone 9, which means it has cool, wet winters and dry hot summers according to Ames. She identifies fall as the best season to plant. “In the fall the soil is still warm and it gives plants a chance to get a head start,” said Ames. This is due to the rains during the winter allows for the plant to establish a good root system for the upcoming spring when water supply is less available. Ames also points out plants water needs can be reduced after the first year when their root system has been established.

### Where to go for more information?

Interested in finding out more about which plant is right for your garden and what plants are native to the area and the most drought tolerant. Ames recommends visiting the UC Davis Arboretum website at [www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu](http://www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu) which has a list and color photos of over 100 plants that are drought tolerant with the specific watering needs of each one.

# Collins Lake – Your recreation area right in your own backyard!

Not only is Collins Lake the essential element to the BVID, it is also a great place to have a good time this summer. This 1,600 acre lake with over 12 miles of shoreline is a fantastic place for a summer getaway without having to pay for gas to drive out of the area. “It is a great place to come to camp, fish, boat, and swim or just enjoy a day on the shore,” said Lincoln Young, Collins Lake General Manager.

The resort is open year round each day at Sunrise and includes

lakeshore camping, recreation vehicle sites, group camps, a boat launch, marina, boat rentals, a big sand swimming beach and a general store. “We offer lots of amenities for those staying just an afternoon or camping all week,” said Young. “We have a terrific children’s playground, an onsite laundry and even hot showers.”

“The biggest hit with the public though is our famous huge ice cream cones,” said Young. Well known for its terrific fishing too,

Collins Lake is the perfect get-away close to home. If you haven’t seen it recently, make it a point to come and visit this summer!



Photo Courtesy of Collins Lake



## Meet Your District Employee: Walter Cotter

You would not generally expect someone who has to meet with numerous agencies, manage numerous employees, answer questions, engage in long-term planning, manage finances, and work with a diverse board on a daily basis to appear relaxed and in control. But with Walter Cotter, General Manager of BVID, that is exactly who you get. Perhaps it is his strong background in water issues, having been involved in the industry since 1976, more likely it is due to his love of the job and the great working environment he has helped to create at BVID. “The job does require a lot of work,” says Cotter, “but it is the people who make it all

worthwhile.” Cotter has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from California State University, Sacramento and is a Northern California native.

“First and foremost, I like the people I work with and for during the process of managing the District,” said Cotter. Cotter sites his staff and crew along with the Board of Directors as some of the best people to work with on a daily basis. “I also truly enjoy talking with District members, without their sense of community, there would not be a BVID,” said Cotter.

Cotter also enjoys the diversity of the District. “The delivery system uses open canals and pipelines, we have ownership of a reservoir and hydroelectric generator, and we also have a very unique pumping plant that lifts water using

only water pressure as its energy source,” said Cotter.

A BVID employee since 2001, Cotter sees the major issue for the District will be related to water rights. “While it seems far away for us, the Delta’s problems, and the solutions being proposed to cure those problems (more water flow with a corresponding reduction in diversions),” said Cotter, “are the single largest threat to BVID’s water rights that currently provide a reliable water supply to the District’s water users.” Cotter, along with Board Members, keeps up to date on all issues and legislation that could affect the District.

He enjoys spending time with his wife, Jane and their four grandchildren. The couple enjoys the outdoors which includes camping on the coast and in the forests.

# Ask Flo...



**Hello all!** Your helpful water expert Flo here to answer all of your questions. If you have one for me send it on in, as I would love to provide you any of the answers you need, on water issues that is.

One issue that has come up is what to do when a pipeline break occurs (which usually means a pipe breaking because someone put a shovel where they shouldn't have....)

## **Here are some easy steps to remember if you have a pipe break...**

During office hours, call 530-743-5703. If there is no answer, you can also try the shop at 530-742-6044. **Do not call 911 unless the water or pipe breakage presents harm to either people or property.** The correct procedure would be to call the Yuba County Sheriff's Department at 530-749-7302 and they can reach a District employee to address the situation.

**Call before you dig!** This is important because they will also tell you about the location of phone lines, water lines, etc. You can call 811 from any phone or visit the website [www.Call811.com](http://www.Call811.com).

## **Reasons why pipes might break...**

1. Puncture or person caused break (usually caused by some-

one digging, putting in a fence or backing a vehicle into a valve)

2. Water Hammer (flows in pipeline quicker than it can stop, a.k.a. pressure break)
3. Glue joint failure (glue that hold joints together fails)
4. Older pipe may break due to contractions in the soil over time
5. Rock near installation of pipe, wearing a hole over a long period of time with movement of the soil

**Be careful out there folks!** Pipe breaks are no fun for anyone and can be avoided with just a little preparation and common sense.



Find all the latest information on your water district online at **www.BVID.org** You can see the Collins Lake Rain Gauge and Status updates. Also find District history, publications, forms and valuable information.

**Browns Valley Irrigation District**  
PO Box 6  
Browns Valley, CA 95918

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