Public Works Brings Home National Awards

The LA County Public Works Department has once again earned national accolades for outstanding and innovative programs and projects. The National Association of Counties recently recognized the Department with six prestigious NACo Awards. The annual awards honor outstanding excellence and achievement in a number of categories, including information technology, parks and recreation, and environmental protection and energy.

This year's award-winning Department honorees are:

Pictured with LA County Board of Supervisors Chairman, Zev Yaroslavsky, during the recent Board recognition of the Department's six NACo Awards are Joseph Shiuan of Chief Information Office; Assistant Director Mark Pestrella; Terri Grant of Watershed Management Division; Rene Melendez of Information Technology Division; Mary Villanueva of Operational Services Division; Youn Sim of Watershed Management Division; Chief Information Officer Jesse Juarros; Assistant Deputy Director Pat Proano of Environmental Programs Division; Greg Even of Waterworks Division; Assistant Deputy Director Adam Ariki of Waterworks Division; Isaac Gindi of Information Technology Division; Khaled Tawfik of Chief Information Office; and Deputy Director Massood Eftekhari.

iPhone App
Information Technology Division

Public Works' free iPhone app, "The Works™," provides the public a convenient way to request services or report issues related to wind damage, graffiti, potholes, illegal dumping, building code violations, or street sweeping.

The app, developed in-house, utilizes the built-in iPhone Global Positioning System and camera features to capture the incident location and image. Requests are automatically routed to the responsible Public Works business unit for a timely resolution. For requests outside of the County's service area, The Works™ displays the referral information of the responsible city. Reports and incident maps are available for staff to better manage resources and respond efficiently.

In the first two months of release, there were 900 downloads with over 250 items reported through The Works™.

SWIMS
Environmental Programs Division

The Solid Waste Information Management System (SWIMS) is a web-based application that collects and manages information regarding nearly 30,000 tons of trash generated throughout LA County each day. Stakeholders, such as waste haulers and landfill operators, input trash data, including the volume of recyclable materials captured, trash disposed at landfills, and materials exported outside of the County. Reports can then be conveniently downloaded online by government entities, private industries, or the general public, thus making solid waste management data readily accessible.

Traffic Signal Mast Arm Street Name Sign Upgrade
Operational Services Division

Public Works upgraded traffic signal mast arm street name signs using highly reflective non-illuminated technology that does not require lamps or electricity. This technology replaced energy consuming lamps in over 1,200 traffic signal mast arm mounted street name signs at over 400 intersections owned, operated, and maintained by Public Works in County unincorporated areas.

The use of retro-reflective signs not only decreases energy consumption by 100 percent, it decreases maintenance resulting from burnt-out lamps. The innovative and cost-saving technological change maintains the visibility of the directional signs to the driver without the need of costly electricity and maintenance. Both the decreased energy use and decreased maintenance contribute to energy savings and environmental conservation in LA County by reducing the demand for fossil fuels.

Lake Alameda Greenway
Watershed Management Division

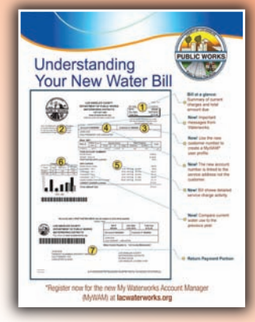
In partnership with the City of Burbank, the LA County Flood Control District initiated the Lake Alameda Greenway project, which enhances a "park poor" community by adding passive recreational trails, aesthetic appeal, and public enjoyment to the Burbank Western Channel.

Enhancements include native plant landscaping, decorative fencing, and a meandering pathway along the east side of the Channel. Other amenities include the installation of lighting, decorative hardscape pavement at the intersecting cul-de-sacs, doggy stations, and trash receptacles. The greenway improves pedestrian access and provides air and water quality benefits as well as opportunities for bird watching, walking, jogging, and educational activities. While the Lake-Alameda Greenway project amenities are designed to bring the public in closer contact with natural habitat, the project also ensures that current levels of flood protection will not be compromised.

MyWAM
Information Technology Division and Waterworks Division

My Waterworks Account Manager (MyWAM) is a new online account management tool that enables water customers to directly access their account information and pay their bills via credit card or eCheck, saving customers time and money through reduced phone calls and in-person visits.

Combined with a new back-end billing system, MyWAM provides greater flexibility in developing rate structures that encourage water conservation, more user-friendly graphical user interface and efficient navigation, and better customer service tools for resolving account issues and communications. It also offers enhanced security, audit logging, administrative tools, flexibility in bill content and presentment, significantly enhanced on-demand reporting tools, and interfaces to existing County systems.



Watershed Management Modeling System for Urban Runoff and Stormwater Quality
Watershed Management Division

In order to address the challenge of managing urban stormwater and runoff in a complex environment, the LA County Flood Control District developed a computer-based management tool, the "Watershed Management Modeling System (WMMS)."

The WMMS accounts for the collective impact of a variety of pollutant sources in a watershed, thereby promoting an integrated, watershed-based approach to a complex stormwater management challenge. The WMMS simulates hydrologic and multipollutant transport processes in a watershed while evaluating benefits and costs of different Best Management Practice (BMP) options, to ultimately identify the most cost-effective BMPs. Using this integrated approach, the WMMS helps decision makers develop projects that achieve overall watershed goals while recognizing needs of an individual municipality and other public and private entities.