



Iron County Water Stewards

Recognizing Cedar Valley Mayors

Cedar City Mayor Maile Wilson-Edwards

Enoch City Mayor Geoffrey Chesnut

Kanarraville Town Mayor Betty Gould

With Southern Utah in the midst of an exceptional drought, and with an already overdrawn aquifer alongside unprecedented demand on the valley's water supply, mayors in Cedar Valley are coming together to collaborate with the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District to explore and create solutions.



Cedar City Mayor Maile Wilson-Edwards, Enoch Mayor Geoffrey Chesnut and Kanarraville Mayor Betty Gould are all working to educate their community residents and are examining ways they can help with the current water crisis. Recently, the mayors and District demonstrated their collaboration by hosting a Community Drought Briefing and announcing a collaborative public information campaign, "Get to Know Your H2O", broadcasting that in a drought, every drop counts.

Paul Monroe, Central Iron County Water Conservancy District General Manager, said the District is charged with managing the valley's water on a regional level, and working with the communities is critical for both emergent needs and in creating solutions for the future.

"Water is not limited by city boundaries and is a regional resource, so to have an agency that can oversee that and be able to help all of these entities come together, both on the agricultural and municipal side, that's what our focus is," he said.



The District has board members representing each city and town in its borders, as well as an agriculture representative, and Mayor Wilson-Edwards said collaborating is common sense.

"Water is critical to every aspect of our lives," she said. "As such, it only makes sense to work together and capitalize on the various resources (both personal and financial) to come up with solutions and move projects forward. Not only does partnering ensure that efforts and valuable time isn't wasted or duplicated but it also provides the opportunities to leverage

our efforts to be able to get outside funding for a project that a single entity alone would not be eligible for.

“I also believe that partnerships will become even more critical in the future as we continue towards large projects and the complexities that will inevitably be associated with securing new water sources,” she added.

Mayor Chesnut said he is glad Enoch has the opportunity to work with other partners in the area.

“Working together collectively, that’s a super exciting place to be,” he said.

Mayor Wilson-Edwards said each individual can make small changes in their water use, and many small changes make a difference.

“While there are large projects that the City and our other agency partners are working on, each of us can make a difference, especially this year with our drought,” she said. “Through being conscious about your water use and doing the small simple things, it will add up. No one person can solve the water issues, but together, each doing our part, we can make a difference.”

She said while working with other entities, the city is trying to do its part by working to review and revise ordinances, acquire water rights, and develop wells. Additionally, Wilson-Edwards said the city is working on design work for the reuse of the Wastewater Treatment Plant water as secondary water or recharge water. Currently the effluent water is only suitable for agricultural use, but if it could be cleaned up more it could be utilized in other ways as the city grows.

Cedar City is also in the initial design phase for a water-wise landscape conversion for the back portion of the Rotary Centennial Veterans Park. They are working with the Rotary Club on this project.

Mayor Gould said it is important to understand the value of water is only second to air. It is a basic need and it’s finite.

“We have to be really responsible with our water,” she said.

Gould said as a nurse practitioner, she hopes people drink plenty of water, but that they don’t be wasteful of it. She said water is a sensitive issue in Kanarrville, which gets part of its water supply from a spring in the mountain and part from a well. They are in the process of drilling a second well to use as a back-up. She said with the spring water, it’s important that Kanarra Falls, a popular hiking area, stays clean, and the town has worked to balance recreation with the importance of preserving the canyon and the water.

She said the community is working toward updating its antiquated water metering system.

While the District, Cedar City, Enoch, and Kanarrville, with other partners, are working to find long-term solutions for the Cedar Valley, the District is also working with the Washington County Water Conservancy District to spread the word about the value and scarcity of water. Monroe and the WCWCD’s General Manager Zac Renstrom recently went on KSL 5 TV to talk about the importance of visitors and residents each being aware and reducing their water use.

Monroe said working together and making sure everyone understands the situation will be critical to the valley's water situation moving forward.

"It involves a combination of doing a better job of using our water, doing a better job of conserving water in each of our households, and also planning for the future by importing water," he said.

The District is stressing three things that residents can do to help conserve water. Those are shortening showers, watering plants (only watering when necessary and after dark), and fixing leaks. Monroe said he realizes those things can sound oversimplified, and may not all apply to everyone, but "as we think about the ways we can save water it just keeps water top-of-mind. We all need to think about our water situation and how we are going to manage that in the future."

The purpose of the Iron County Water Stewards program is to recognize community members for contributing to the effort to optimize every drop of water in Iron County. The Central Iron County Water Conservancy District (CICWCD) is actively engaged in education, conservation, reuse and import projects to meet the growing demands on local water supply.

For every effort you make to conserve, we consider you a water steward, too. To Get to Know Your H2O, visit <https://cicwcd.org/>.

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