

## Milestones at Mills

**J**oining the majority of the nation's public water suppliers, in a few months the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) will begin adding fluoride to drinking water in order to improve the dental health of its customers.

Getting ready to be able to do this has been a major undertaking for MWD—and for Filanc. At the Henry J. Mills Treatment Plant in Riverside, Calif., our construction crews have been hard at work on a two-phased project, the first phase of which has been to build a fluorosilicic acid tank farm and chlorine unloading area.



**Henry J. Mills Treatment Plant chlorine facility**

We delivered the fluoride milestone last May and are beginning start-up activities for the first chlorine facility, all the while keeping the existing disinfection facility up and running. The second phase at Mills, which entails the demolition of an existing chemical facility and construction of the second new chlorine storage facility, is scheduled to begin soon. Expert sequencing will be key to the success of this effort, as the first of the two new storage facilities must be online and tested before we can start construction of the second.

Thanks in large measure to the partnering environment that is thriving at the Mills project, Filanc is right on track to meet and exceed MWD's requirements. What's more, we've maintained a perfect safety record at the jobsite, logging nearly 335 safe working days. 💧



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## Safety teamwork in Fresno

**W**ith Filanc's recently rolled-out Agua Viva Safety Committee at our Yuma jobsite already making important contributions to every worker's safety, the Fresno/Clovis Organic Upgrade jobsite has followed suit.

The Fresno/Clovis Safety Committee members have begun carrying out a variety of responsibilities, all of them ultimately aimed at ensuring that 100 percent of the workforce is safety-conscious—and therefore working safely—100 percent of the time.



Recently a comprehensive system was put in place to track fall protection at the Fresno/Clovis jobsite. This system ensures that workers are not only trained in the proper use of fall protection equipment; they also are able to document their use of the equipment each time it is issued to them.

Additionally, equipment pre-operation inspection procedures have been formalized to ensure that each piece of equipment is inspected daily for any signs of damage, needed maintenance, or unsafe operation concerns. This inspection doesn't stop at large equipment; it is carried out on the smallest of power tools, such as drills and grinders, as well. Their cords, guards, blades, drills, switches, and snaps are carefully inspected.

The value of teamwork has been demonstrated in countless ways, but in no instance is teamwork—such as that practiced by the Fresno/Clovis Safety Committee—more worthwhile than it is when it creates a safe, healthy work environment. 💧

## Working on the edge

**M**eeting or exceeding clients' needs and expectations doesn't happen by chance. At Filanc, it happens because we constantly attend to hiring the most qualified individuals and aggressively training and educating them on an ongoing basis.

A group of Filanc people—we call them Leadership Edge—is charged with carrying out a number of programs that are specifically designed to help our employees improve existing skills, acquire new ones, and stay up-to-the-minute in their respective areas of expertise. Leadership Edge provides a selected group an opportunity to evaluate strategic elements within the company, including growth objectives, direction, leadership, and mentoring.

Some of Leadership Edge's recent notable efforts will give you an idea of the breadth and depth of this group's value:

### Pacesetters Program

This aggressive learning experience for new project engineers in Northern and Southern California and Arizona develops their core competencies. Current participants in the program have completed or will soon complete workshops set up by Leadership Edge in the areas of metallurgy, scheduling, electrical and instrumentation basics for wastewater treatment plants, and estimating basics.

### Documentation Protocol

Working with Filanc's in-house counsel, Leadership Edge is creating a documentation protocol for our field project staff. This protocol will help ensure that each jobsite maintains complete and adequate documentation, and that critical information and documentation is transferred to Filanc's corporate office.

### Superintendent Development Program

This new program will allow interested individuals at Filanc to apply to enroll. Selected candidates then will receive comprehensive training to become highly effective superintendents.

### AGC Supervisory Training Program (STP)

Leadership Edge has been running STP's 10-unit course for several years. The newest group of individuals to complete this specialized instruction recently completed a unit on productivity improvement. 💧

## Marching double-time at March WRF



### March WRF sludge-drying beds

Sometimes, real-world circumstances get in the way of meeting a client's request—but they never get in the way of the Filanc 'Gator overcoming the challenges and turning in a great performance.

A recent case in point involved the rehabilitation of sludge-drying beds at March Water Reclamation Facility, which serves March Air Reserve Base. The Filanc Repair & Maintenance Division's contract with the facility owner, Western Municipal Water District (WMWD), called for a project duration of just 35 days. The required buried service plug valves, however, had a lead-time of at least 20 days. Candid communication, continued cooperation, and a sustained effort resulted in our client's issuing a slight time extension, and, with that nailed down, 'Gator crews hustled on the fast track to ensure that the main goal of the project was met.

Meeting this goal involved completing digester piping upgrades so that the facility's digester could accept sludge, thus allowing WMWD to discontinue hauling sludge. On July 13, the plug valves needed to complete these upgrades were received, and by July 19, the 'Gator had completed the digester piping, and the digester was ready to accept sludge.

Other aspects of the project included excavating and removing existing sludge bed underdrains and installing new underdrain piping. Crews also installed new submersible pumps and rehabilitated the pump station for underdrain runoff.

Adding to the challenge of this project was WMWD's request for additional work, including installation of three more plug valves and two service saddles, and saw-cutting and covering access holes in the digester floor. Once again the 'Gator came through, performing the extra work with no additional time requests. 💧

### Inquiring minds want to know

Would you like to read more about some of the people, companies, organizations, and issues mentioned in this newsletter? We encourage you to visit these websites:

[www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)—U.S. Green Building Council

[www.wmwd.com](http://www.wmwd.com)—Western Municipal Water District

[www.fresno.gov](http://www.fresno.gov)—City of Fresno

[www.ul.com](http://www.ul.com)—Underwriters Laboratories Inc.

[www.mwdh2o.com](http://www.mwdh2o.com)—Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

[www.azagc.org](http://www.azagc.org)—Associated General Contractors, Arizona Chapter

[www.filanc.com](http://www.filanc.com)—J.R. Filanc Construction Co.

## Meeting the challenges of explosive growth

A graph of Arizona's population growth over the past century would look like a relatively flat line for about 90 years. Suddenly, that line is shooting almost straight up. In fact, Arizona recently overtook Nevada as the fastest-growing state in the country.

Yes, the desert has become a hotbed (if you can forgive the pun). Arizona's cities are challenged to ensure that they have the necessary infrastructure in place to manage water and wastewater treatment needs before existing services are overwhelmed, and Arizona's public leaders are staying ahead of the curve by bringing new and expanded facilities online at an unprecedented rate.

With this much construction activity taking place, or about to take place, open lines of communication among all stakeholders—including owners, engineers, and construction contractors—becomes more important than ever before. To



**Gabe Rico**

that end, contractor-members of the Associated General Contractors, Arizona Chapter have recently formed a Water/Wastewater Plant Construction Committee.

The new committee, which already has nearly 20 members, provides an opportunity for leaders in the water/wastewater industry sector to converge and explore alternatives, share realities, and learn new strategies for the ultimate benefit of everyone involved. The committee will focus on current issues, best practices, and the challenges facing both owners and contractors as they strive to ensure that desert-dwellers now and in the future are well-served.

"We're eager to open up lines of communication and share our experiences," says committee-member Gabe Rico, Filanc vice president of marketing and business development. "We all have something to learn from each other." ●

## A lean green machine

It's early on a summer morning. From outside, our Escondido headquarters building seems the same as it did a few weeks ago, but inside something different has happened. While the heat once came on automatically to take the edge off the early morning chill, and the air conditioning then came on to cool the heated building, now the boiler has been turned off for the summer. The building stays cool naturally until much later in the day.

This one small action—turning off the boiler—has large consequences in Filanc's program to help fight global warming by reducing our company's carbon footprint. Kermit may have sung, "It isn't easy being green," but we respectfully disagree with the famous frog. With a new mindset and a stop-and-think attitude, we are beginning to demonstrate that many relatively easy steps can collectively add up. We intend that our company as a whole, as well as our 270-plus individual employees, become leaders in reducing the amount of carbon dioxide that goes into the atmosphere.

Recently we formalized this eco-friendly mindset by establishing a Filanc Green Committee. Six employees are charged with such tasks as investigating what effort would be required for our headquarters building to become a Certified Green Building within the next five years. Meanwhile, the committee members are overseeing various programs to reduce our use of virgin materials by recycling, repairing and reusing, and conserving ordinary items. ●

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