

# News Release

## Pioneer Irrigation District

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### **PIONEER TO HALT 2011 IRRIGATION FLOWS**

For Immediate Use  
Caldwell, Idaho – Sept. 19, 2011

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Pioneer Irrigation District will end irrigation water delivery to its 5,800 users on October 11, 2011, and then close its headgates on the Boise River two days later to stop all water flowing through its canals, the District's Board of Directors announced today.

The emptying of the canals marks the end of the general summer irrigation season. The extra time between stopping irrigation water deliveries and closing the canal headgates allows water to flush any debris through the 350 miles of Pioneer's canals before they are dried up. Shortly after that, Pioneer will launch its annual maintenance program.

"2011 was a good water year for Pioneer. We started with a good snowpack. Then a cool spring lowered initial demand for water, plus our employees have shown good due diligence in water deliveries. That combination means we should end up with water carry-over for next year" said Pioneer water manager Mark Zirschky.

Pioneer's attention now turns to annual maintenance activities, especially the removal of materials or other objects that encroach on Pioneer's canal banks and easements. Officials caution Pioneer patrons to remove any vegetation, bushes or trees, and personal property such as sheds that encroach onto a Pioneer facility. If these things are not removed, state law authorizes Pioneer maintenance crews to do so.

Pioneer also routinely burns weeds along canal banks as a part of its annual weed control activities. However, in recent years, it has encountered increasing problems with property owners who allow weeds to grow very tall around their private fences and right up to the easements. That creates a situation in which flames from routine weed burning can jump to those overgrown patches and create a fire hazard.

The District does not spray or mow up to the edges of fences and property lines because of liability issues. The only remedy is for property owners to correctly maintain weeds on their property.

Zirschky said Pioneer typically needs at least 25 feet of clear passage way from the edge of a canal or ditch to ensure room for maintenance equipment and other vehicles. However, easement requirements can vary by location, so questions about easement widths should be directed to Pioneer's office. In addition to trees and brush, the District also sometimes encounters situations in which fences and even sheds have been built in the canal maintenance easement areas and must be removed.

For more information about the end of water delivery, Pioneer's maintenance operations or easements, contact the District at 459-3617. There is also information available on Pioneer's website at: [\*\*www.pioneerirrigation.com\*\*](http://www.pioneerirrigation.com).

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