

News Release

Pioneer Irrigation District

3804 Lake Avenue, Caldwell, ID 83605
TEL: (208) 459-3617 -- www.pioneerirrigation.com



PID 2009-4

PARENTS WARNED ABOUT DROWNING DANGERS FOR CHILDREN POSED BY CANALS, DITCHES

For Immediate Use
Caldwell, Idaho – May 12, 2009

For Information Contact:
Jeff Scott – 459-3617

With its canals now running full with deep water chilled by melting snow, Pioneer Irrigation District water managers have issued a strong warning to area parents: you are putting your children at risk of drowning if you let them go anywhere near canals and drains.

“Children who fall into canals are almost certain to drown. The steep banks make it almost impossible for a child to get out of. The cold water also means children will begin to suffer from hypothermia almost immediately. That is an extremely deadly combination for children and young people,” said Jeff Scott, Pioneer Water Superintendent.

State-wide statistics reveal that three children will drown in Idaho irrigation canals during a typical irrigation year. Plus, adults and young people also lose their lives in canals and drains.

“The arrival of warmer weather and the approaching end of the school year means children are outside more often with less supervision. That risky combination means the presence of flowing water in canals and drains can stimulate children’s curiosity, drawing them close to the edge of canal banks”, Scott noted.

“The actual edge of the bank can be hidden by grass or weeds. One simple misstep and your child can be in the canal with little hope of getting out,” Scott added.

Some parents may also think it is OK for their children to be on canal banks as long as the parent is present to supervise them. But Scott says that practice sends a completely wrong message to children about the dangers of a canal.

“That may actually give children the idea that canals banks must not be all that dangerous. Otherwise, why would their folks would let them be there. It’s the equivalent of like letting a child play in a busy street as long as the parent is there to watch them. The message to children needs to be that canals are very dangerous,” Scott added.

For more information on Pioneer Irrigation District, call 459-3617 or visit the District’s web site at www.pioneerirrigation.com.

-end-