



# NEWS *from the APWA Southern California Chapter*

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## **PALMDALE TO PERRIS, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CITIES CELEBRATE PUBLIC WORKS WEEK**

**LOS ANGELES (May 31, 2006)** – With official resolutions and proclamations, special outreach projects, contests, open houses, public works equipment displays, recognition ceremonies, and media events, cities across Southern California enthusiastically celebrated National Public Works Week (NPWW), May 21-27, said Harvey Gobas, Southern California American Public Works Association Chapter president.

“Celebrations were truly fine examples of our 46<sup>th</sup> year theme: Public Works: The Heart of Every Community,” added Gobas, whose chapter covers Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties with branches in the Inland Empire, Coachella Valley and the High Desert.

Several projects held during the week are summed-up in subsequent paragraphs. “Events, activities, and ceremonies detailed here aim to capture a glimpse of the unique quality of service each city provides to their respective communities, not only during NPWW but every day,” Gobas noted.

Fun and games for the entire community emphasizing Public Works was how they celebrated in the City of Corona. Officials hosted an NPWW Fair at Corona City Hall that featured educational and information booths with the spotlight on the Public Works Department.

Heavy machinery and equipment was on display for viewing and teaching construction techniques. Games and activities for children included a dunk tank, bicycle and crosswalk safety-training exhibit, radar gun throw, Curby the Recycling Robot and prize wheels. Contact:

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Rob Johnson, Sr. Management Analyst, Public Works Administration, City of Corona, 400 S. Vicentia Ave., Corona, CA 92882, (951) 739.4870, Rob.Johnson@ci.corona.ca.us.

Preserving snapshots of today's Public Works people and projects for future generations was the goal of a unique photo contest in the City of Irvine. An annual City Council NPWW proclamation paved the way for a "Spirit of Irvine" Photo Contest for Public Works employees. More than 80 photos were received. Twelve winners were selected.

Employees who won were recognized and photos shared with the community at City Council meeting. Winning photos are on permanent display at the City's Operations Support Facility. Contact: Michele Lovenduski, Senior Management Analyst, Public Works Department, City of Irvine, 949-724-7558, mlovenduski@ci.irvine.ca.us.

While some Southern California Public Works Departments are relatively new and comparatively small, Los Angeles' is huge and enjoys a long-history, 100 years of service to its residents. Celebrating its centennial year, LA's Public Works Department put the accent on this milestone using "100" as a sub-theme during the week.

Public Works Board Commissioners recognized 100 employees for extraordinary service in a special ceremony. They also inducted 100 students into a Junior Inspector Program, which encourages students to do their part in improving the City's "Quality of Life." The 5<sup>th</sup> graders received badges, helmets, safety vests, and a tour of City Hall.

Information fairs, with educational exhibits, outreach materials and staff taking service requests at four Senior Centers, sought to raise public awareness of public works issues and celebrate the City's 5,500 Public Works employees. Of course, LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa issued an NPWW proclamation for the nation's second largest city. Contact Richard E. Lee, Public Information Officer, Department of Public Works, Public Affairs Office, 200 N. Spring St., M-165, Los Angeles, CA 90012, (213) 978-0324, rlee@bpw.lacity.org.

Meeting National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems permit outreach requirements while celebrating NPWW might seem challenging. Not for the City of Mission Viejo. City Council issued an NPWW proclamation early in the week. Later, the Public Works Department hosted an Environmental Fair for elementary school students as a part of its NPDES permit outreach requirement.

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Targeting the City's youngest residents, the event was open to all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes with attendance limited to the first 500 registered. Spaces were filled 24 hours after registration opened. About 550 students from six area elementary schools attended and received an introduction to the Public Works Department, saw a show called "The Magic of Recycling," and visited booths offering short interactive activities with environmental themes. Contact: Loren Anderson, Director of Public Works, City of Mission Viejo, (949) 470-3078 [anderson@cityofmissionviejo.org](mailto:anderson@cityofmissionviejo.org).

What do classic cars and Harley Davidson motorcycles have to do with Public Works? Not much, except perhaps used oil recycling. In Orange County, though, they became partners as the County Resources and Development Management Department hosted an Open House in conjunction with a collector car and motorcycle show near Angels Stadium and the Pond facilities.

Public Works Open House featured displays, games, heavy equipment on display, and Watershed Survey results. Contact: Holly Felipe, Supervisor-Maintenance Inspector/Specialist, RDMD/O&M/Procurement, (714) 567-6210 Holly Felipe, <mailto:Holly.Felipe@rdmd.ocgov.com>.

A brand new water theme park recently opened in the City of Palmdale. The Public Works Department there thought what better way to celebrate NPWW than to unite the growing urban center around the theme of water and the new "Wild West."

Week-long activities and events included an annual softball tournament, maintenance yard "Bean Burn and Backhoe Rodeo," annual golf tournament, a Public Works picnic at the water park and bowling night for City employees. Contact: Jennifer Adams Corio, Administrative Technician, Department of Public Works, City of Palmdale, (661) 267-5300, [jcorio@cityofpalmdale.org](mailto:jcorio@cityofpalmdale.org)

Recognizing that community partners, public works professionals, and citizens' work cooperatively to improve the "quality of life" in a community, the City of Perris celebrated with a luncheon and barbecue to honor Public Works staff, city employees, local policy makers, vendors and contractors who do business with that City.

All week the Department hosted an informational City Hall exhibit displaying its achievements throughout the year and a community television presentation featuring a short power point show

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celebrating NPWW. Contact: Lynette M Schreiber, Public Works, Engineering Admin Division, City of Perris, 101 North 'D' St., Perris, CA 92570, (951) 943-6100 x294, [lschreiber@cityofperris.org](mailto:lschreiber@cityofperris.org).

Protecting the environment was the focal point of the celebration as NPWW teamed with Earth Day in the City of Pomona. City Council first declared "Public Works Week" in a resolution at its meeting.

Subsequently a combination Public Works Fair/Earth day event was held at Pomona City Hall with information booths, giveaways, and Public Works equipment on display for public participation and education. Pomona Valley School District made it field trip for students. Public Works workers were honored in a City yard BBQ. Contact: Chris Vogt, [chris\\_vogt@ci.pomona.ca.us](mailto:chris_vogt@ci.pomona.ca.us).

“While only a few were highlighted here, many other projects and activities were held in cities across Southern California to stress the importance of public works in our communities, efforts that public works professionals give to ensure a better quality of life, and benefits they provide to every citizen,” said Gobas.

“Throughout our region, NPWW 2006 recognized their hard work and dedication, enhanced the prestige of these often–unsung heroes of society–professionals who serve the public good every day with quiet dedication, and underscored the national theme: Public Works: The Heart of Every Community,” he added.

For more information about National Public Works Week and local observances, contact Harvey Gobas, (714) 481-7992, Maureen J. Lull, APWA Southern California Chapter Administrator, at (310) 545-9179, or Richard E. Lee, Chapter Public Relations Chair, at (213) 978-0324. Visit the APWA Southern California Chapter website at: <http://southernca.apwa.net/>. Send email inquiries to: [socalapwa@verizon.net](mailto:socalapwa@verizon.net).

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