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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALDWELL – Due to unprecedented dry conditions across the Treasure Valley and Idaho, Pioneer Irrigation District and the City of Caldwell are asking citizens to conserve water.

Pioneer Irrigation District delivers the irrigation water that serves the majority of the citizens of Caldwell. This irrigation water delivered by Pioneer and other districts is primarily from surface sources and is important for both irrigation within the city and the agricultural production that is key to our local economy, feeds Idaho and beyond, and produces the seeds that ultimately feed the world. “By joining the citizens who are managing the timing of their irrigation water usage, property owners can conserve water needed for crops and even improve their own irrigation experience. This means finding different times of day to water so that we don’t all water our lawns at the same time,” said Caldwell Public Works Director, Brent Orton.

Irrigation providers hope that conserving together will allow the irrigation season to extend into early September (a month shorter than normal) and bring in a successful harvest.

Since the onset of the current heatwave, residents have also been using nearly double the amount of potable water that is typically used during this time of year. Caldwell Citizens have a long standing history of being careful users of potable water. We see evidence of this in steady water usage despite significant growth. The uptick in potable water use during the heatwave has, for the first time, challenged the production capabilities of the Caldwell Water System. With an inevitable early end to irrigation season, it is critical to avoid added use of potable water for irrigation purposes. “This is a time when we need to pull together to lean towards critical needs for potable water ahead of keeping our lawns green,” Orton said.

In cooperation with Pioneer Irrigation District, cities have reduced irrigation water usage. Pioneer has achieved a system reduction down to 80% of normal. At irrigation pump stations serving urban citizens present delivery is at 90% of what is typical. Soon, there will be a reduction down to 80% for urban

citizens in order to prolong the season. Additional reductions are likely to be necessary, but managing irrigation water sustainably until weather conditions normalize will be a huge help and could prolong the need for further reductions.

“We have to remember that water is a precious resource,” said Brent. “We would encourage home owners associations, property managers, and citizens alike to recognize the unusual nature of the current situation and to be understanding with their residents if lawns brown as we work through this dry spell together. Thanks to our community for helping protect potable water for potable uses and conserve irrigation water to help preserve our farms harvest.”

One common misconception is that new subdivisions are contributing to the water shortage. However, new subdivisions are carefully planned and engineered with regard to water supply. Both Pioneer Irrigation District and the City of Caldwell work to ensure that new homes will have adequate irrigation and potable water, without taking away supply from other neighborhoods.

Some steps that residents can take to conserve water are:

1. Water lawns on odd/even days (depending on address)
2. Do not use potable water to irrigate (i.e. hose water)
3. Reduce shower length time
4. Only run the dishwasher and washing machines when full
5. Check your toilet, pipes and faucets for leaks

We would like to sincerely thank our residents for their consideration during the heat wave.