Western’s Education Program ‘Clicks’ with Local Students

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Teaching young people about the value of water is mission critical for Western Municipal Water District, who teamed up with the Discovery Science Center in successfully launching another year of innovative partnership providing a hands-on, water-use efficiency program to schools in its service area. The program, which aligns with the California Science Content Standards, is conducted in an assembly-style workshop. The District reached nearly 5,300 students during the 2011-12 school year. Schools throughout Western Riverside County, within Western’s service area, received assemblies this year.

“Making the most efficient use of our water supply is a priority for Western, and reaching kids early has long been a focus of our efforts,” said Jeff Sims, deputy general manager. “Discovery Science Center delivers a program and message in an interactive and measurable way, while also meeting the state’s science standards. The response has been outstanding in our local classrooms.”

The assembly program involves students in the learning process by using a keypad system that provides both a unique, interactive element to the program, as well as a means of measuring just how much information the students retain. When local 5th graders were asked how much of the earth’s water is available freshwater, only 24 percent responded correctly. In the post-test question, 98 percent answered correctly, proving that students had learned from the presentation and had retained the information.

Upon program completion, each student receives a take-home booklet, provided by Western. The booklet is designed to extend the classroom program and encourage wise water-use among students and their families. The District is also working with agencies within its 527-square mile service area to provide continuity in learning.

Discovery Science Center is the largest provider of water education programs in Southern California, instructing about 112,000 students within Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and LA counties. These programs focus on sources of water, water delivery, water quality, water efficiency, the chemical and physical components of water, water-related technologies and human impact on aquatic environments. Nationally, the center ranks third in outreach, with more than 220,000 students reached each year through its programs.

Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner.

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