

# The Business Journal

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## Rotary water project to break ground, serve Tulare County residents

By Business Journal Staff

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Local Rotary clubs, working with Tulare County, Self-Help Enterprises and California Water Service, will break ground on a project to bring water to people living just north of Visalia along Avenue 322 whose residential wells have failed.

The ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. on April 28 along Avenue 322 east of Highway 63.

The \$192,000 project almost stalled when the state Drought Emergency grant funding could not be used to pay for fire protection and hydrants. Then a coalition of 11 Rotary clubs from Tulare and Fresno counties, plus the Visalia Rotary Community Foundation, provided money and accessed matching funds through Rotary International to cover the \$29,500 project gap and pay for fire protection service in the neighborhood.

“This project has taken a long time to come to fruition,” said Bill Mathis, Visalia Breakfast Rotary Club president. “Some of these people have been without reliable, safe water in their homes for almost two years. We are so glad that Rotary was in a position to help. Rotarians believe in service to others. That is bedrock upon which Rotary stands — service.”

So far, 14 households have registered with Self-Help Enterprises to tie into Cal Water’s service. More may still sign up, and others may opt into Cal Water’s service at some later date.

“This historic drought has had a severe effect throughout the state but especially here in the Central Valley,” said Lee Goldstein, president of the Rotary Club of Visalia, known as Downtown Rotary. “People are suffering. When we learned that these people whose wells have failed continued to lack water because there was no money for hydrants and fire protection, our local Rotarians in Visalia were eager to get involved and to help move this forward. Other Rotary clubs from around Tulare County and even in Fresno County joined us to get this project going.”

In total, the project comprises 1,800 feet of new water main plus service connections, meters and four fire hydrants for the neighborhood.

Self-Help Enterprises worked with the neighborhood residents and Tulare County to secure the State Drought Emergency grant funding for the project.

At the request of Tulare County and Self-Help Enterprises, Cal Water agreed to provide safe, reliable water to the neighborhood.

The following Rotary clubs are contributing to the project:

The Rotary Club of Visalia

Visalia County Center Rotary

Visalia Sunset Rotary

Visalia Breakfast Rotary

Visalia Latino Rotary of Tulare County

The Rotary Club of Porterville

The Rotary Club of Tulare

Tulare Sunrise Rotary

The Rotary Club of Selma

The Rotary Club of Fresno

The Fig Garden Rotary Club

The Visalia Rotary Community Foundation