

THE PORTERVILLE RECORDER

Second phase of East Porterville project to begin soon

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By: Myles Barker

Work expected to take until late 2018

The second phase of the East Porterville Water Project will take the first seven letters of the alphabet to finish, which Mike Reed said won't be until possibly the end of 2018.

"And that is a very aggressive schedule," said Reed, the city's public works director.

The second phase, Reed said, is broken down into seven phases — Phase 2A through Phase 2G. Reed noted that construction workers may not work on each phase alphabetically.

He said the completion of the entire second phase of the water project is contingent upon how fast the City of Porterville can work through the property acquisition negotiation process for two new wells and a new 1.2 million gallon water reservoir site, which he said can take a lot of time.

"Those are underway and moving along," Reed said.

Phase 1, paid for and done by the state as a drought emergency project, saw water meters installed at more than 300 homes in East Porterville whose wells went dry during the drought.

Reed said Phase 2A of the project is expected to start sometime in the middle of July. He said that phase will include the installation of fire hydrants, four miles of pipeline and connecting an additional 450 homes to the city's water system.

"There was 12 miles of pipeline in Phase 1 so we are going to end up with roughly 16 miles of new pipelines maintained by the City of Porterville when this project is all said and done," Reed said.

Reed said Ames Construction is responsible for work in Phase 2A, which he said will also include connecting water mains that were previously installed in Phase 1 to a meter box where the City of Porterville will put a meter and a backflow preventer.

"Once that is done then Self-Help [Enterprises] and CSET will do the on-site plumbing and connect the home," Reed said, adding that plumbing work is scheduled to begin in Phase 2F.

In terms of the 450 home connections, Reed said 390 of those will be connected to pipelines that were installed during Phase 1 of the water project. He added that there will be roughly 60 new connections off of the new mains that Ames Construction is installing.

All work in Phase 2A, Reed said, is expected to be completed by the end of October of this year.

In Phase 2B, Reed said workers with the California Department of Water Resources will start drilling two new wells. Reed said one of the well sites is located on a piece of property where the Friant-Kern Canal and the Tule River intersect, which he said is north of Olive Avenue and west of Redwood Street.

"It is actually an old gravel pit that we are trying to purchase from a property owner," Reed said, adding that the other well location is on the west side of Westwood next to the Friant-Kern Canal.

In Phase 2C, Reed said state employees will start work on a new 1.2 million gallon water reservoir and a booster pump station, which will take water from the west side of Porterville to the east side of Porterville.

He said the booster pump station will be located at the southeast corner of Salisbury Street and Tomah Avenue.

“There is actually a well that is there right now so it will be a combination of a well and the booster pump site all at the same piece of property that we own there,” Reed said.

Reed said the 1.2 million gallon tank would be adjacent to the existing 3 million gallon tank, which he said is located west of Hillcrest and the prolongation of Henderson Avenue.

“The plan is to put the 1.2 million gallon tank just north of the existing 3 million gallon tank,” Reed said, noting that the nearest developed subdivision is Jasmine Ranch, which he said is just west of Hillcrest.

Reed said the city will manage Phase 2D and noted that the state will fund all costs associated with it. In that phase, city workers will equip the wells in Phase 2B with pumps, motors, electrical equipment and chlorine-injection equipment. Reed said because there is such a big gap between the well site and where the nearest water main is in the existing city system, city workers will have to run a pipeline to get the water from the well to the city system.

“So there is a lot of work there,” Reed said, adding, “It basically ends up being the same amount of work, virtually, as what we did for the equipping of the city-county well all in one avenue.”

In Phase 2E, which the state is also funding, Reed said city crews will install meters and backflow preventers at each home planned for connection in Phase 2A. Phase 2E, as well as Phase 2F, will be going on simultaneously with Phase 2A.

Reed noted, however, that work on Phase 2E and Phase 2F will not begin in the middle of July. Reed said workers must first get pressure testing done in Phase 2A, which will take the contractor some time.

“They have to lay the pipes, they have to do the chlorination, they have to do the pressure test and then they have to pass the bac-t test after all the chlorination is flushed out of the system,” Reed said.

Well abandonment, Reed said, will occur in Phase 2G. Employees with Self-Help Enterprises will complete that work. They will start with the well abandonment process for the houses that are already connected in Phase 1 and will move into Phase 2 after those homes are connected.

“That is all going to be moving simultaneously with everything else,” Reed said.