

**Special points of interest:**

- Ground Breaking Ceremony
- \$150,000 funding from Legislature
- Applying for additional funding
- Hook-up fees

## Ground Breaking Ceremony a Success

On April 2, 2004 El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District held a ground breaking ceremony to kick off Phase I of the Wastewater Sewer System. Rudy Abeyta was our Master of Ceremonies and he did an excellent job relaying the history of El Valle and coordinating the event. Fr. Tim Martinez of St. Francis de Asis gave the invocation. We had numerous elected officials speaking at the event and they praised the Board and Staff for their persistence in getting this project built. Roberto Gonzales, Phil Griego, Nick Salazar, and representatives for Congressman Udall and Domenici's offices attended. We are very grateful for their support and encouraging words.

Because of the rain the actual ground breaking had to be held in front of the Sagebrush Inn. It was originally planned at the

old putt-putt golf course which is the beginning of the line in this first Phase. Phase I encompasses the following area:

- Chamisa Road trunkline to Rio Chiquito Road
- Montoya trailer park south to Ranchos Elementary
- Chamisa Road south to Chancas Road, Luisa Lane, across SR 68 south to Degodoi & Garcia trailer parks, east to Espinoza Road
- Dona Ana Road south to Gusdorf trailer park then east towards Ranchos Elementary
- Espinoza Road to Morada Road
- Morada Road south to Tafoya Road
- Camino Caballo south to Tros Road
- Morada Road east to before Maestas Road
- Trunkline west from Caballo Road east to Tros Road
- Tros Road north to Espinoza Road
- Espinoza Road east to Maestas Road
- East of Maestas Road to the Nickell Subdivision

A reception was held following the ground breaking ceremony and Ken Blair of the Sagebrush Inn was gracious enough to donate refreshments for our event.

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation would like to extend their sincere appreciation to the community for their support and attendance at the ground breaking and for their continued assistance in making this project a reality.

El Valle is committed to this community and is determined to build a wastewater system in all five of the communities that it serves.

## Construction of the Sewer Line Has Begun

The construction on the wastewater sewer project has began on April 12, 2004 . I am sure that you have seen New Mexico Underground Constructors, Inc. at highway SR-68 across from the Sagebrush Inn. The have started laying pipe and inserting manholes for Phase I of the project.

New Mexico Underground Constructors, Inc. is an Albuquerque based company.

The construction is expected to take approximately six to eight months to complete.



**Inside this issue:**

History of El Valle	2
Hook-Up Fees	3
Legislature Appropriation	3
Finding Future Funding	3
Monthly Meetings	4
Upcoming Events	4

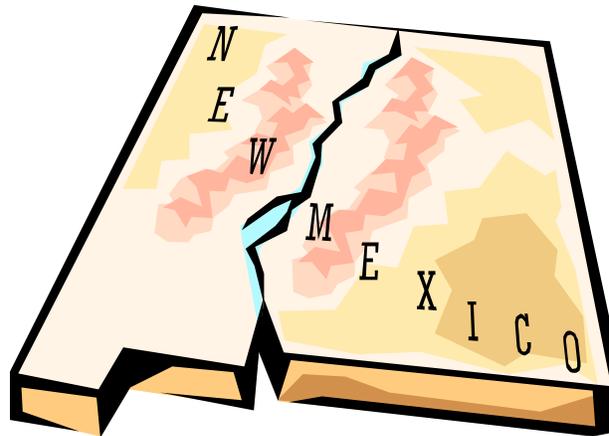
## El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation—History in the Making

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District was organized by the concerned residents of Talpa, Ranchos de Taos, Llano Quemado, La Cordillera and Los Córdovas to address the needs of the community by providing safe drinking water and constructing a wastewater system. In 1978, vecinos from the communities decided to incorporate so that they could address these concerns. In 1979, they were legally incorporated as per State requirements as El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District. These communities were growing and expanding quite rapidly. The need for safe drinking water and adequate disposing of wastewater and sanitation became top priority. Water testing has been done yearly since 1997 and results of those tests have over the years shown increasing contamination of the water.

In 1999, El Valle was authorized by the Taos County Commission, as per State Statute, to impose a mil levy tax on the property owners within its District in order to generate a source of revenue to be able to retain engineering services and other professional services to begin the initial start-up of building a sanitary sewer system for the community.

The New Mexico Legislature has been overwhelmed with requests for funding for water and sanitation projects, but in March of 2000 the electorate was able to grant El Valle \$50,000 to assist in the development and implementation of their water and sanitation projects. With mill levy tax monies the District hired Abeyta Engineering, Inc. to develop a wastewater and water master plan.

Abeyta Engineering went to work immediately on the sanitary sewer needs of the District and completed a Wastewater Sewer Masterplan in 2000. The extensive plan addressed over 40 miles of sanitary sewer collec-



State of New Mexico

tion lines. The Masterplan identified the need to construct these lines in seven phases. Abeyta Engineering then retained the services of Taschek Environmental to perform the necessary environmental documents, and archeological and biological reports. During this period the District's Board of Directors identified Phase I as a priority area for construction. Phase I area is on both sides of SR-68 from Chamisa Road, south to the junction of SR-518, then north and east to SR-518 to the forest service boundary, and east to Maestas Road at the highest point in the aquifer which supplies the private wells of our citizens. Abeyta Engineering was then told to finalize the design for Phase I creating a total gravity-flow system in the bail-out area.

Ted Martinez was hired as Project Manager to oversee this endeavor and he brings with him years of experience in sewer and water projects. Ted was the Public Works Director for the Town of Taos and served the Town for many years before his retirement.

In 2002, El Valle Board and staff met with Rural Utility Services (RUS) to review the project particularly Phase I and requested from RUS their support and financial assistance. After numerous meetings El Valle was notified that they had qualified for a one million dollar grant/loan with a maximum grant of \$750,000 and a loan amount of

\$250,000. The grant/loan amounts were based on the low median household income of the citizens of El Valle. Knowing that Phase I of the project was going to cost \$2,000,000 per the engineer's estimate, the Board of Directors voted to borrow additional monies from RUS to complete Phase I. In the end El Valle received a \$750,000 grant and a \$1,250,000 low interest loan with a 20-year pay-back.

During 2002 El Valle representatives met with then Governor Gary Johnson and informed him of the communities' need for a sanitary sewer system and he gave his full support and endorsement of the project. El Valle then approached the legislature and requested funding for the project. The legislature responded with a \$440,000 grant, which was used for engineering services, surveying of properties, appraising of properties, and purchasing right-of-ways on the properties in order to construct the sewer system.

El Valle's team worked aggressively to complete all necessary requirements to complete Phase I and in October of 2003 sent Phase I of the project out to bid for construction. Upon reviewing all bids, the team sent a recommendation to the Board of Directors to contract with an Albuquerque firm, New Mexico Underground Constructors, Inc. A Notice to Proceed will be issued to the contractor on April 2, 2004.

Wilbert Archuleta and Mario Barela have provided years of dedicated service to this mission have brought with them years of experience from the Acequia Associations and managerial know how from the Forest Service and school district. It is because of them, other members of our current board and many other past board members and individuals from the area that this project will be a reality.

"The need for safe drinking water and adequate disposing of wastewater and sanitation became top priority."

## El Valle Hook-up Fees

“Hook ups will be done in phases and once a line is completed and tested you will have the opportunity to hook-up your property to the sewer system”.

In the near future residents in Phase I of the project will be sent an application for hook-up. Property owners will have sixty (60) calendar days after written notice from the District to connect to the sewer system. All residents are responsible for the costs associated with plumbing that is necessary to hook-up to the sewer line. All plumbing work necessary to hook up your property to the sewer line must be done by a licensed plumber as mandated by County provision Sec. 73-21-16L. El Valle has no control over this and must abide by County regulations.

The cost of a residential hook-up is \$400 per residential structure and you must live in that structure. For those unable to pay the entire cost at one time we are asking for 10% (\$40) down and the remaining balance to be paid within 24 months. A one-percent (1%) over prime interest rate will be added to the balance. Monthly sewer rate for residential users is \$27.25 per month.

Commercial hook-up fees are as follows:

- 4” line—\$800 (small commercial which includes mobile home parks and/or rental units)
- 6” line—\$7,500

- 8” line—\$10,000

All commercial hook-up fees must be paid in full at the time of hook-up. If you are an owner of a multi-family structure or mobile home park it is considered a commercial property and commercial hook-up fees will apply. Monthly rate for commercial users will be based on usage.

Hook ups will be done in phases and once a line is completed and tested you will have the opportunity to hook-up your property to the sewer system.

For more information or to pick up an application, please contact El Valle’s office at 751-1700.

## The State Legislature Appropriation

In January of 2004, the New Mexico State Legislature with the support of Senator Carlos R. Cisneros and Representative Roberto J. Gonzales, El Valle de Los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District was awarded grants totaling \$150,000.

Mr. Wilbert Archuleta, Board President, Mario Barela, Board Secretary and Ted Martinez, Project Manager spent numerous days at the legislature trying to convince the legislature about the importance of the sewer system project.

The Board and Staff of El Valle de Los Ranchos believes that now that construction has begun we are hoping that the Legislature will be able to provide El Valle with larger appropriations next year.

“The Board of Directors of El Valle are very committed to getting funding for all seven phases of the wastewater sewer project”.

## Finding Financing for Future Projects

The Board of Directors of El Valle are very committed to getting funding for all seven phases of the wastewater sewer project. It will take an estimated twelve to fourteen million dollars to complete the entire sewer project.

El Valle is currently submitting a grant application to the New Mexico Environment Department for a \$400,000 grant.

If this money is received El Valle plans to increase the area of Phase I.



Always looking for Funding

**El Valle de Los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District**

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*"Sin Agua No Hay Vida"*  
*"Without Water There is No Life"*

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## Upcoming Events

El Valle de Los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District will be sponsoring a Water Fair the first week of August. The exact date and location still has not been determined.

If you wish to have your water tested for contaminants you will need to bring a small container of water from your tap. This is an opportunity for you to know just how safe your drinking water is. All testing will be done free of charge to residents living in El Valle's district.

For further information, please contact the office at 751-1700.



## Monthly Meetings

El Valle De Los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District holds their regular board meetings every 2nd Monday of every month.

The Board of Directors would like to have the community participate in these meetings to get your comments, ideas and support.

Our next meetings will take place on the following dates:

- July 12, 2004
- August 9, 2004
- September 13, 2004
- October 11, 2004
- November 8, 2004
- December 13, 2004
- January 10, 2005

Our meetings are held at 6:00 PM at the El Valle offices at 209-B Camion de La Merced.



Board of Directors Meeting

### Board of Directors:

- Wilbert Archuleta—President
- Gabriel Romero—Vice-President
- Mario Barela—Secretary
- F. R. Bob Romero—Treasurer
- Tyler Hannigan—Member

### Office Staff:

- Ted P. Martinez—Project Manager
- Pat Sanchez—Office Manager
- Dorina Martinez—Data Base Technician