



## Perris Press Release

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### Enchanted Heights Construction is Underway and Ahead of Schedule

Preliminary construction is underway on a \$15 million sewer system to replace inadequate septic tanks in the Enchanted Heights section of Perris and so far the work has been progressing ahead of schedule.

Initial digging along Enchanted Heights streets has revealed less granite—and therefore less potential problems of breaking through difficult bedrock—than previously believed. Already hundreds of feet of roadways have been trenched up at strategic points throughout the project area and 6-inch and 8-inch sewer mainlines have been installed. Huge trenching machines, bulldozers and earthmovers worked Tuesday as more sewer mains were installed.

Work on a lift station that will channel wastewater away from Enchanted Heights has been ongoing simultaneously. That phase of the three-year sewer system installation has also been going well, officials said.

The City of Perris has been working with Eastern Municipal Water District and Riverside County to bring the Enchanted Heights sewer project to reality.

Originally built as a retirement resort planned for one or two people per household, the 446-residence Enchanted Heights area has evolved into a neighborhood of much larger families. Septic tanks built 50 years ago are failing and posing health and quality-of-life challenges for Enchanted Heights residents, many who are economically disadvantaged. Half of the residences in Enchanted Heights lie within the City of Perris; the other half are in unincorporated Riverside County.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said he is pleased that the early phases of planned three-year construction project are moving so well. He said the City and its partners are committed to bringing a state-of-the-art sewer system to Enchanted Heights.

"I am really pleased that this project is underway," Busch said. "It will definitely improve the quality of life for residents of Enchanted Heights."

Busch thanks EMD officials for obtaining the funding to progress on the sewer project. The partnership received a huge boost with the announcement in December that the State Water Resources Control Board will pay the \$5 million cost of connection fees, freeing residents from the burden of paying to hook up to the sewer system.

Even as construction forges ahead, outreach efforts continue to educate residents about the need to support the new sewer system. A second public outreach meeting took place this week at Enchanted Hills Elementary School and property owners were encouraged to sign "right of entry forms" to allow construction workers onto their property and connect individual residences to the main sewer system.

The City of Perris hired consultant Maria Elena Kennedy, who has spent nearly a year meeting with small groups of Enchanted Heights residents to explain the sewer system project, conducting informal meetings in Spanish and English. In addition, the City has produced bi-lingual public service announcements on its website, [www.cityofperris.org](http://www.cityofperris.org)

EMWD officials have also been heavily involved in the formal public meetings, organizing the discussions and sending representatives to explain the construction schedule, the need for the project and answer questions from homeowners. So far, more than 250 homeowners have signed the necessary forms. Dozens signed up this week.

"I am tickled pink to be connected to the sewer system," said Karen Serbic. "I won't have to worry about failing septic tanks." Resident Darsicio Ortiz said Enchanted Heights residents "give a million and one thanks to the City of Perris" for working to improve the lives of the community.

"It is a great help you are giving up," Ortiz told Assistant Perris City Manager Ron Carr. "We appreciate it very much." Resident Marnie Palmerin, who has lived in Enchanted Heights for 11 years, praised the City's outreach efforts as "phenomenal." She said the new sewer project will improve community pride, increase property values and remove potential health concerns.

"Whatever we have to do, we are willing to do," Palmerin said. "This is going to be a reality."

Ron Sullivan, a member of the EMWD board of directors, attended this week's meeting and pronounced efforts to obtain right-of-entry signatures as "going terrific."

"The community support is outstanding," he said. "It is a significant project and we will see it through to completion."

Sullivan said he and Perris Mayor Busch made a commitment years ago to join forces and see the project through. "It's been a long time, it's paid off," he said. "Perseverance was a success."



Perris consultant Maria Elena Kennedy (right) explains the right-of-entry form to an Enchanted Heights resident during a public meeting this week.



Construction work on the Enchanted Heights sewer system is underway, as trenching machines cut through pavement so sewer mains can be installed.



This lift station, under construction in Enchanted Heights, will channel wastewater from the neighborhood as part of the three-year, \$15-million sewer project.



Ron Sullivan, a member of the EMWD board of directors, and Assistant Perris City Manager Ron Carr discuss the Enchanted Heights sewer project during an outreach meeting this week.