

Farmersville lets drought-stricken neighbors hook up to city water

By Lewis Griswold



Jorge Rico waters down the dirt as foreman Joe Nasello uses heavy equipment to bury the new water line serving Cameron Creek Colony rural subdivision near Farmersville. LEWIS GRISWOLD — THE FRESNO BEE

-
-
-

Farmersville is coming to the rescue of its drought-stricken neighbor by allowing residents of Cameron Creek Colony rural subdivision to hook up to the city's water system.

A work crew is laying several thousand feet of water line under the streets and installing fire hydrants and water meters.

The visit of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to Cameron Creek last summer to offer support in the California drought played a role in the speed at which the \$1 million project came together, according to local officials.

Within months of his visit, USDA Rural Development approved an emergency grant of \$500,000, and the State Water Resources Control Board's drinking water division awarded the same amount.

"They were anxious to make things happen," said Interim City Manager Mario Krstic. "They streamlined the process. I think the secretary's visit had something to do with that."



Tom Collishaw, president and CEO of Visalia-based Self-Help Enterprises community development organization, echoed the sentiment.

“There’s no question that the visibility provided during the secretary’s visit helped make it a priority,” he said.

It helped that Farmersville had already studied the topic of bringing city services to the Cameron Creek neighborhood, allowing officials to quickly answer questions posed by federal and state bureaucrats awarding the money.

The water main project will finish next month. Once engineers test it and give the OK, residents can hook up within weeks, the city said.

To date, about three-fourths of the owners of the 105 homes in Cameron Creek have said they’ll sign up for city water service.

Robert Sams, a semi-retired truck driver and 30-year resident, said his well went dry two months ago.

“Oh yeah,” he said, when asked if he’ll sign up for city water. “The well I got is not real deep. There’s several wells that are dry here. I’m just happy the city agreed to hook us up.”

MUSIC VIDEO: Karen Robertson, a singer-songwriter and co-lead pastor at Visalia First Assembly of God Church in Visalia, is filming her first music video Sunday for her single “I Collide Into You,” to be released this spring by Rio Entertainment and the church.

Anyone 18 or older who wants to part of the production can register at v1ag.com, or sign up at the door. Filming starts at 6 p.m. at Visalia First Assembly, 3737 S. Akers St. Information: (559) 733-9070.

FIRE STATION: Visalia officials broke ground last week on a new fire station in the city’s southwest.

Fire station 53 will be at the southeast corner of Walnut Avenue and Atwood Court (east of Akers Street), on what was once a part of the College of the Sequoias farm.

The new station will reduce emergency response times, Fire Chief Doug McBee said.

The \$2.2 million project is funded by Measure T, the city’s quarter-cent sales tax.

Lewis Griswold covers the news of Tulare and Kings counties for The Bee. His column runs Sunday. He can be reached at (559) 441-6104, lgriswold@fresnobee.com or [@fb_LewGriswold](https://twitter.com/fb_LewGriswold) on Twitter.

Copyright

© 2015 www.fresnobee.com and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved. <http://www.fresnobee.com>