

# Imperial Irrigation District

## Energy History

*After discovering its potential for low-cost hydroelectric energy from its five falling water drops along the All-American Canal, IID entered the power industry in 1936. Today, IID serves electricity to more than 150,000 customers in Imperial County and parts of Riverside and San Diego counties.*

*IID's first power customers were served electricity from a diesel generation plant in Brawley. With the purchase of the Nevada-California Electric Company in 1943, IID expanded its power system to include the Coachella Valley. By that time, Drops 3 and 4 of the All-American Canal were generating hydroelectric power.*



## How it all got started...

*The 1928 passage of the Boulder Canyon Project Act was the springboard for hydroelectric power in the Coachella and Imperial valleys. Part of the Act required the Secretary of the Interior to obtain local guarantees of repayment for the construction costs of the All-American Canal.*



## **Imperial Valley**

*IID recognized the Imperial Valley could repay their share of the construction loans if they were given the right to utilize the power possibilities of the canal. The Secretary of the Interior and the IID signed such an agreement in 1932, and construction of the All-American Canal began in 1934. Just two years later, in 1936, the IID entered into the electrical power business. Launched in conjunction with the construction of the All-American Canal, IID was able to harness hydroelectric power generated from falling water drops on the All-American Canal.*

## **Coachella Valley**

*Prior to 1920, Coachella Valley residents recognized the need for a supplemental water supply from the Colorado River, not only for the 10,000 to 12,000 acres being irrigated from a limited underground supply of water, but also to permit irrigation of approximately 100,000 acres of fertile, undeveloped desert lands. Because of this need for supplemental water, Coachella worked with the Imperial Valley for the All-American Canal legislation.*

*Congress authorized construction; however, in negotiating repayment contracts with the United States, it was necessary that both the water and power rights of Imperial Irrigation District and the Coachella Valley Water District be determined. According to the terms of a 1934 agreement between Imperial and Coachella, Imperial Irrigation District was given first right to deliver water through the All-American Canal and a 99 year lease on whatever power rights Coachella might have on the canal. As rental for power rights, IID agreed to pay Coachella a percentage of the net proceeds from its power system.*

*Coachella, in turn agreed to make available to Imperial—whenever the latter was ready to serve power in Coachella Valley—signed three-year contracts representing 80 percent of the power business in the northern valley. This latter provision became an important factor in bringing about an agreement with the private power company for the sale of its properties.*