

Desert Area Water Bonds Set for Ballot

Exclusive to The Times from
a Staff Writer

Leaders in the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) hope to cure their "Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink" problem in November.

ON NOV. 1, in conjunction with the general election, AVEK leaders are planning to submit a \$69-million bond issue to the voters.

The bonds would be used to finance a comprehensive water system which would ultimately provide supplemental water to such far-flung communities as Quartz Hill, Lancaster, Rosamond, Mojave, California City, Boron, Hi Vista, and parts of the Palmdale and Pearblossom areas.

An election to authorize a \$49 million bond issue in February, 1971, failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority.

Construction inflation by the time the entire system can be built—by the mid-1980s — will mean about \$18 million in additional cost as compared with the initial proposal. Another \$2 million of the \$20-million addition to the system cost will provide some changes in the system.

Right Useless

Ironically, AVEK has a substantial entitlement to California Project water, which is flowing past the agency in the California Aqueduct, but without a water system, the agency cannot utilize its entitlement.

For the current year, the agency is entitled to 20,000 acre feet and that allocation will expand yearly to 138,400 acre feet in 1991.

Water leaders in Antelope Valley say that there is no water shortage at present, but that supplemental water is needed to halt the severe annual overdraft on the area's underground water supply.

In the meantime, agency taxpayers are paying for the water that flows by in the nearby aqueduct, but cannot use it because of the lack of a distribution system.

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