

**Opinion-Editorial
May 2015****Apple Valley deserves new narrative on water**

By Tony Penna, Vice President and General Manager, Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company

Since last fall Apple Valley Ranchos has spent a lot of time and resources to educate the Apple Valley community about the slippery slope of eminent domain as it relates to the Town government's attempted takeover of a private business. Our elected leadership at Town Hall has been doing the same.

By now it should be obvious to anyone reading the newspaper, listening to the radio, surfing the Internet or just driving by your local bus stop that this community is in the early stages of what could become a very long, costly and heated debate over water and who provides it.

The epic drought our state is experiencing has triggered a new round of mandatory water restrictions that affect all of us. Yes, many of us will need to change our habits and lifestyles. In fact, one might say we are all going to have a new relationship with water. The water challenges we face in Apple Valley and throughout the High Desert are complicated, but solutions exist that will require a cooperative, inclusive community. It is going to take all of us working together to respond appropriately to the state's new mandatory water restrictions.

This drought is just one opportunity for Apple Valley to come together. It is an opportunity to tap in to our potential and collaborate to solve our immediate water supply challenges together. That's why I am asking the Town of Apple Valley and the Town Council to give serious consideration as to how we might come together to address challenges rather than create new ones.

All of us need to face our water challenges. The Town, the residents, the businesses and Ranchos all working together need to shift our efforts from fighting about water and dividing this community, to talking about water and coming together to solve the immediate challenges we face.

Apple Valley Ranchos is a good company with good people who care about their work and realize the significance of what they do every day, all year long as we have done since 1945. The Town Council and staff provide necessary and critical services for this community.

Why can't we take the best of all of us and work together to solve real water challenges instead of creating new ones?