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PROGRESS REPORT

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Merced

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Irrigation Practice

1954 was the shortest water season for the MID in 20 years. 1955 promised to be as bad or worse - an intensive educational campaign on proper water use was launched in late 1954 and continued through the 1955 season.

a. School for ditchtenders, March 1955 - 40 attended.
b. Publication "Basics of Irrigation" distributed to farmers by ditchtenders.
c. Five grower meetings held on water conservation.
d. Eight news stories put out to local papers.
e. Seven radio programs devoted to this topic.
f. Many farm, office, and telephone calls on individual water use problems.

Merced County irrigators can extend their water season and improve their crops by closer adherence to proper irrigation practices. There remains much to be done in education on these practices.

MID water use practices were improved in 1955 as compared to 1954. Note following figures:

	1954	1955
Length of Irrig. Season (days)	168	177
Av. Dist. water use/day (ac-ft)	3,588	3,384
Av. No. acre-feet saved per day	-	204
Seasonal Saving (acre-ft.) (177 x 204)	-	36,108

The 1955 season was extended 10½ days by the better water use practices which this office helped to bring about through its educational campaign.

Much of the result can be attributed to the MID Board of Directors who issued regulations in 1955 and 1956 for stricter water use, including night irrigation of all crops and less spillage back to the river.