

Meet Irish Beach Water District General Manager, Charlie Acker

by Ken Weston



Charlie shows Irish Beach Water District data to his grandson, Cosmo, while his wife, Rosi, looks on.

In hopes of better understanding and appreciating the day-to-day work that keeps Irish Beach's excellent water supply flowing, I contacted Charlie Acker, the General Manager of Irish Beach Water District.

Charlie first came this way in 1975 with a friend to work on a house up on Navarro Ridge. With a background in lifeguarding, boatyard work, and sea rescue operations, he soon found gainful pursuits here. He began his water works career in '76, installing scores of windmill-driven water wells/pumps for local residents. He began working with the Elk public water system in '78, and the Irish Beach Water District in '92. In the '90s, everything was recorded by hand on a daily basis, and meticulous care of the District's operations became the legacy Charlie would

embrace as he learned the historical and functional nuances of Irish Beach Water District. Much of the water system savvy that keeps things running smoothly was in predecessor John Acquistapace's head in the 80s and 90s and resides in Charlie Acker's brain to this day. Charlie oversaw numerous Irish Beach treatment plant upgrades that began around 2002. While he was responsible for the hands-on operational functioning of the district since the '90s, he promoted to General Manager in 2014 and has run the business side of the District since. Nowadays, all of the water treatment and delivery data are electronically logged and available online. Over his decades of service, he and his crew (as many as 8) established new wells and tanks, replaced three tanks, replaced hundreds of feet of pipe, and maintained the expanded delivery infrastructure.

I asked Charlie about the most satisfying parts of his decades of service to Irish Beach Water District. He truly enjoys making things work. In the District's case, that includes the labors and technical challenges of creating new well and tank supply infrastructures that ensure the needs of the community are met now and in perpetuity. Seeing his team make a new water supply flow, overseeing the regulatory and safety clearances necessary for it to be delivered to Irish Beach taps, and ensuring that water flows in a reliable, high-grade manner are sources of particular pride and satisfaction for Charlie Acker.

Charlie's love for the communities here has manifested in years past outside his water works career. During his decades on the Mendocino coast, he contributed to the Mendocino Beacon periodical for years, and he once had a regular radio show.

Now eyeing retirement, Charlie looks forward to enjoying his two daughters' families including a new grandson(!), various political and public service interests, his continued work with the Elk Fire Department as a Training Officer, and the beauty of our Mendocino Coast.

Irish Beach Water District is grateful for Charlie Acker's generosity, enthusiasm, and dedication to our District's interests. If you see him in the community and say hi, I think you'll find him affable, sharp, and kind-hearted.

Thanks, Charlie.