

Opening of AVEK's Lab Makes Customers A Priority



10/3/2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dwayne Chisam, General Manager

October 3, 2018

Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency

Email: info@avek.org • Tel. (661) 943-3201

PALMDALE, CA: In little more than a month since the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency opened its new and improved laboratory, an unimaginable number of tasks were accomplished by the AVEK team and the three-member lab staff.

Beginning on Friday, Aug. 10, "we moved all lab equipment and materials," said Justin Livesay, the laboratory director. He credited his staffers, Michelle Barone, the principal analyst; and Jordan Wray, a senior laboratory technician, for making the transition as quick and seamless as possible.

On Monday, Aug. 13, AVEK's larger State-of-the-Art lab officially opened.

"Our first priority was getting the equipment necessary for our daily public customers up and running. By scheduling the move for Friday, we were able to allow equipment to stabilize in the new lab over the weekend, prior to receiving our first water samples for testing," Justin said.

He explained that AVEK staff did not want to close the lab during regular business hours for any reason. Many of the agency's customers are local public water suppliers who rely on AVEK to get their water quality samples analyzed with the results reported to state officials in a timely manner.

"By completing the move and having all equipment operational over the weekend, we were able to avoid any disruptions or inconveniences to our customers' normal sampling schedules," Justin noted.

“Our analysts, Michelle and Jordan, did an excellent job of getting all of our supplies unpacked and put away, and all lab equipment has been installed, tested, and verified to be in proper working order.”

Laboratory staff has not needed to utilize the old lab since the move.

Lab equipment includes incubators for bacteriological analysis as well as general chemistry equipment such as pH meters, turbidity meters and conductivity meters. In addition the lab uses more complex instruments such as a total organic carbon (TOC) analyzer to measure the amount of disinfection byproduct precursors in the influent and effluent treatment plant water; an ion chromatograph (IC) for measuring the amount of bromate being produced during the ozonation process; and a GC/M instrument used for measuring trihalomethanes (THMs).

The new lab provides AVEK with the additional space needed to process water samples associated with the agency’s expansion and addition of water banks, and also allows AVEK the capacity to handle potential future expansion of lab services throughout the Antelope Valley.

The new lab features chemical safety upgrades, improved environmental controls, and a dedicated customer lobby.

#