



**PROVIDING WATER, ENERGY,
& RECREATION RESOURCES**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Art Contest to Help Merced I.D. Promote Canal Safety Program

MERCED, Calif. – The Merced Irrigation District is sponsoring an art contest for all Merced County youths in order to publicize canal safety.

The contest is just one of a number of activities the District has planned for this summer to help teach children and their parents about the potential dangers of playing near or swimming in irrigation canals.

The theme of the District's Canal Safety Program is "Stay Smart, Stay Safe, Canals Are Not for Play."

All contest entries should include this theme. The contest deadline is Friday, May 30.

MID will award \$150 to a grand prize winner, and \$75 to the winner in each of three age groups: 7 and under, 8-12, and 13-18.

Winning entries in the art contest will be used in the 1997 Canal Safety Program poster and other informational materials.

"It's very important that children and parents understand the dangers associated with irrigation canals," said Robert Blum, MID Director of Administrative Services. "A canal may look like a nice play to swim, but don't be fooled. Canals can be very, very dangerous."

The District uses more than 750 miles of irrigation canals to bring water to area growers. It is against the law to play near or in canals, and the Merced County Sheriff's Department patrols the canals regularly.

For more information on the art contest or to receive an entry form, contact MID at 722-5761.