



NOMINATION FORM



H. R. LABOUNTY SAFETY AWARD PROGRAM

AGENCY: Helix Water District

Employee Nominated:

Name: Michelle Berens, System Operations Manager
Milica Schipper, Engineering Manager
Larry Lyford, Water Treatment Plant Manager

Reason for Nomination: Helix Water District staff drain and clean the sedimentation basins located at the R.M. Levy Water Treatment Plant twice per year. As part of each cleanup, staff must enter the 14 basin launders (seven launders each on the western and eastern sedimentation basins). When the plant was originally designed, consideration was not given to how to safely access the launders which are approximately 15 feet above the basin floor. It was impossible to access them with a portable ladder placed on the floor of the drained basin. Therefore, past practice was to climb over the guardrail which set up the potential for an employee fall resulting in a serious injury, or worse.

Michelle, Milica, and Larry worked together to come up with a solution to safely access the launders. The permanent guardrail was modified so that a swinging gate is now positioned directly in front of each launder. Each gate has a lockable tab because the walkway is traversed by thousands of fifth grade students which tour the Plant annually. The most ingenious part of the project was the design and construction of the portable ladder to safely get down from the walkway and into the launder. A permanent ladder at each launder was impractical (due to conflict with the gate) and costly. The portable ladder was designed to be high strength, yet lightweight to minimize potential for a strain when moving in and out of place. It was also designed to securely lock into position. Finally, the design included a handrail to minimize the potential for an employee slipping using the ladder. Staff worked closely with the fabricator to ensure the design was exactly what was needed.

The new access gates and ladder have already been used during sedimentation basin maintenance and received rave reviews from Treatment Plant Staff. Basin cleaning was previously one of the least desirable maintenance tasks due to the challenges when entering the launders. Staff is extremely appreciative of this major safety improvement and basin cleaning is now carried out more easily, efficiently, and most importantly, safely. Michelle, Milica, and Larry did an excellent job solving a unique problem.

Nominated by: Tim Ross, Engineering Manager

Signature: _____

Date: 2/12/18

Reviewed by:

Brian Oney, Director of Water Quality/System Ops

Signature: _____

Date: 2/12/18

General Manager:

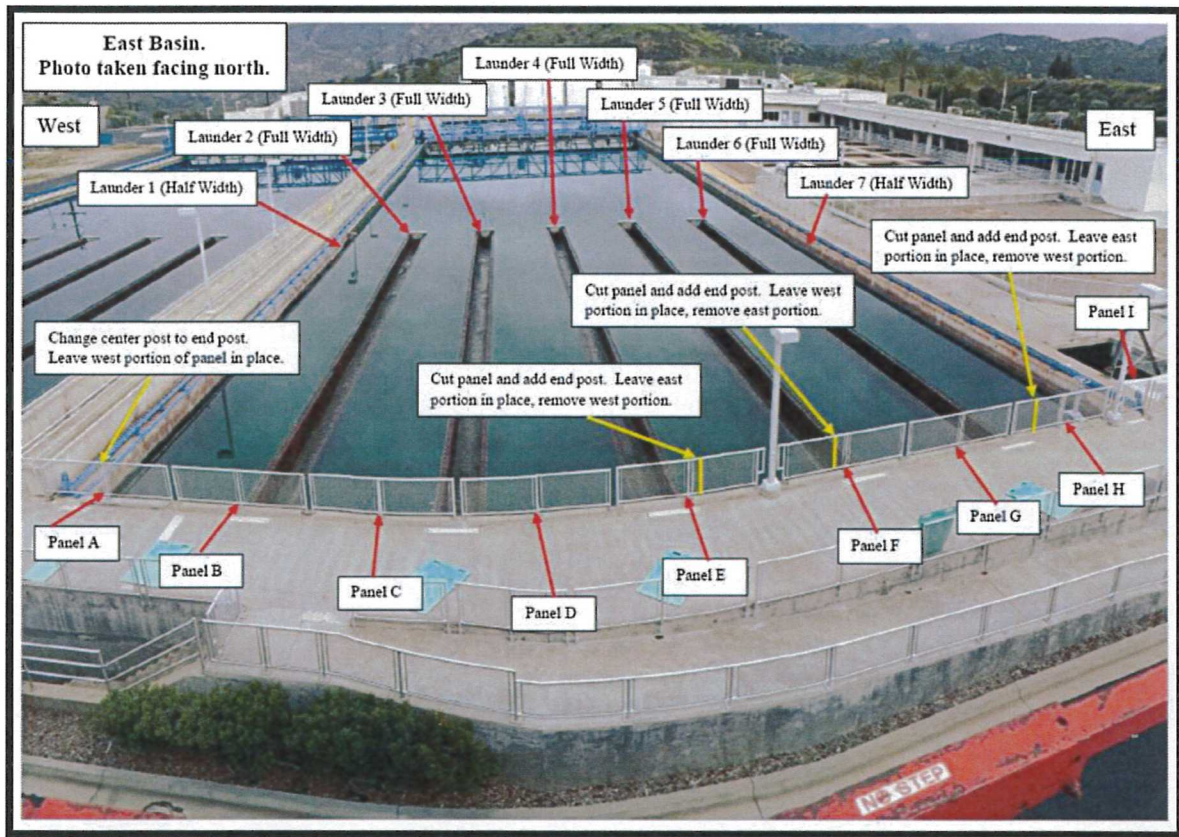
Carlos V. Lugo

Signature: _____

Date: 2/12/2018



Helix Water District
H.R. LaBounty Safety Award Nomination
Launder Gates and Access Ladder



Original Guardrail Panel in
Front of Launder



Empty Basin - Launder
Approx. 15' Above
Concrete Basin Floor



Helix Water District
H.R. LaBounty Safety Award Nomination
Launder Gates and Access Ladder



Staff Working from
Launderers



New Gate Closed with Lock



New Gate Open



Helix Water District
H.R. LaBounty Safety Award Nomination
Launder Gates and Access Ladder



Custom Portable Ladder
With Handrails



Ladder Assembly in
Place and Secure