



- **Board of Directors**
Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

5/13/2025 Board Meeting

7-4

Subject

Award a \$457,498 construction contract to IPI Construction to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in the control rooms at the Joseph Jensen Water Treatment Plant; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is categorically exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

The occurrence of wildfires in the vicinity of the Joseph Jensen Water Treatment Plant (Jensen plant) has increased in recent years. During these fire events, smoke and embers travel onto the plant site, prompting staff to use enhanced respiratory personal protective equipment in the main and secondary control rooms so that they can maintain critical plant operations. The existing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in both control rooms require upgrades to mitigate smoke infiltration, enhance personnel safety, and increase operational resiliency.

This action awards a construction contract for upgrades to the HVAC systems at the Jensen plant's primary and secondary control rooms to mitigate smoke infiltration. See **Attachment 1** for the Allocation of Funds, **Attachment 2** for the Abstract of Bids, **Attachment 3** for the Subcontractors for Low Bidder, and **Attachment 4** for the Location Map.

Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Award a \$457,498 construction contract to IPI Construction for upgrades to the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in the control rooms at the Joseph Jensen Water Treatment Plant.

Fiscal Impact: \$800,000 in capital funds. All costs will be incurred in the current biennium and have been previously authorized.

Business Analysis: This option will enhance worker safety and the resiliency of the Jensen plant.

Option #2

Do not proceed with this project at this time.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: This option would forgo an opportunity to enhance worker safety and resiliency at the Jensen plant. Under this option, staff would continue to rely solely on the use of respiratory personal protection equipment when air quality within the control rooms is impacted by wildfire smoke.

Alternatives Considered

Staff considered procuring the HVAC equipment and utilizing Metropolitan forces for installation and commissioning. After assessing the current in-house construction support commitments and upcoming maintenance needs of critical water delivery and conveyance facilities, staff recommends the use of a contractor to procure and install HVAC equipment. The selected alternative will maintain staff's ability to meet construction

deadlines for ongoing projects while maintaining enough reserve capacity to perform annual maintenance at other Metropolitan facilities. This approach will also minimize operational disruptions and ensure timely construction completion.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8121: General Authority of the General Manager to Enter Contracts

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

By Minute Item 53598, dated April 9, 2024, the Board appropriated a total of \$636.6 million for projects identified in the Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2024/2025 and 2025/2026.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action to award the contract to upgrade the HVAC system is exempt under CEQA because it involves repair, maintenance, and minor alterations of existing public structures, facilities, and mechanical equipment involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. In addition, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15302).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The Jensen plant was placed into service in 1972. It treats raw water from the West Branch of the California State Water Project and delivers it to Metropolitan's Central Pool and exclusive service areas on the west side of the distribution system. The Jensen plant is located in Granada Hills and is surrounded by vegetated undeveloped hills and mountains prone to wildfire.

The Jensen plant's primary control room is backed up by a secondary control room located in the ozone generation building. Staff responsible for operating the plant is located in one of the two control rooms at all times. The HVAC systems for each control room meet minimum code requirements, but they were not designed to filter and remove smoke infiltration caused by wildfires. During the last three major fire events near the Jensen plant, the Saddle Ridge Fire in October 2019, the Victor Fire in July 2023, and the Hurst Fire in January 2025, smoky conditions in both control rooms caused plant staff to rely on N100 particulate masks and self-contained breathing apparatus with emergency oxygen bottles so that they could safely operate the plant during the smoky conditions. Poor air quality conditions remained at the plant site for several days after the fires were contained.

An upgraded HVAC system with smoke infiltration control was installed at the Diemer plant's control room in 2017 following wildfires near that plant site. The enhanced HVAC system has successfully allowed staff to safely continue plant operations through heavy smoke conditions during a nearby wildfire event in October 2020. The proposed enhancements to the Jensen HVAC system will mimic the improvements that were made at the Diemer plant.

Final design for the HVAC system upgrades at the Jensen plant's control rooms has now been completed, and staff recommends the award of a construction contract at this time.

Jensen Control Room HVAC System Upgrades – Construction

The scope of the construction contract includes furnishing and installation of HVAC equipment with enhanced smoke filtration control at the Jensen plant's primary and secondary control rooms. The work also includes modifications to the existing HVAC ductwork, support structures, and electrical system; replacement of the control room entry double doors; sealing and repairing openings in ceiling tiles, walls, and floors; and abatement of asbestos and lead-containing materials. Metropolitan forces will modify programming within the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system and relocate the plant's control room functions to facilitate construction.

A total of \$800,000 is required for this work. In addition to the amount of the contract described below, other allocated funds include: \$90,000 for Metropolitan force work as described above; \$81,000 for construction management and inspection; \$77,000 for submittals review, technical support during construction, responding to requests for information, and preparation of record drawings; \$43,000 for contract administration, environmental monitoring, and project management; and \$51,502 for the remaining budget. **Attachment 1** provides the allocation of the required funds.

Award of Construction Contract (IPI Construction)

Specification No. 2054A to upgrade the HVAC systems in the main and secondary control rooms at the Jensen plant was advertised for bids on February 3, 2025. As shown in **Attachment 2**, three bids were received and opened on March 19, 2025. The low bid from IPI Construction, in the amount of \$457,498 complies with the requirements of the specifications. The other bids ranged from approximately \$483,000 to \$977,000, while the engineer's estimate for this project was \$500,000. Metropolitan established a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level of at least 25 percent of the bid amount for this contract. IPI Construction is a certified SBE firm and thus achieves 100 percent participation. The subcontractors for this contract are listed in **Attachment 3**.

This action awards a \$457,498 contract to IPI Construction to upgrade the HVAC systems in the primary and secondary control rooms at the Jensen plant. As mentioned above, Metropolitan staff will perform construction management and inspection. Engineering Services' performance metric target range for construction management and inspection of projects with construction costs less than \$3 million is 9 to 15 percent. For this project, the performance metric for inspection is 14.8 percent of the total construction cost (\$547,498), which includes the construction contract (\$457,498) and Metropolitan force construction (\$90,000).

Project Milestone

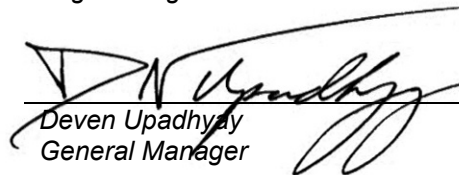
June 2026 – Completion of HVAC systems upgrades at the Jensen plant's control rooms



Mai M. Hattar
Interim Chief Engineer
Engineering Services

4/28/2025

Date



Deven Upadhyay
General Manager

4/28/2025

Date

Attachment 1 – Allocation of Funds**Attachment 2 – Abstract of Bids****Attachment 3 – Subcontractors for Low Bidder****Attachment 4 – Location Map**

Ref# es12708451

Allocation of Funds for Jensen Control Rooms HVAC System Upgrades

	Current Board Action (May 2025)
Labor	
Studies & Investigations	\$ -
Final Design	-
Owner Costs (Program mgmt., contract admin.)	43,000
Submittals Review & Record Drwgs.	77,000
Construction Inspection & Support	81,000
Metropolitan Force Construction	90,000
Materials & Supplies	-
Incidental Expenses	-
Professional/Technical Services	-
Right-of-Way	-
Equipment Use	-
Contracts	-
IPI Construction	457,498
Remaining Budget	51,502
Total	\$ 800,000

The total amount expended to date to upgrade the HVAC systems at the Jensen plant's control rooms is approximately \$600,000. The total estimated cost to complete the upgrades, including the amount appropriated to date and funds allocated for the work described in this action, is \$1.4 million.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**Abstract of Bids Received on March 19, 2025, at 2:00 P.M.****Specifications No. 2054A****Joseph Jensen Water Treatment Plant Control Room Wildfire Smoke Control**

The work includes furnishing and installation of HVAC equipment with enhanced smoke filtration control at the Jensen plant's primary and secondary control rooms, including modifications of existing HVAC ductwork, support structures, and electrical features; replacement of control room entry double doors; sealing and repair of openings in ceiling tiles, walls and floors; and abatement of asbestos and lead-containing materials.

Engineer's estimate: \$500,000

Bidder and Location	Total	SBE \$	SBE %	Met SBE¹
IPI Construction Panorama City, CA	\$457,498	\$457,498	100%	Yes
Golden Sun Firm & Co. Inc. Van Nuys, CA	\$483,875	-	-	-
Minako America Corp. Gardena, CA	\$977,700	-	-	-

¹ Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level was established at 25 percent for this contract.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**Subcontractors for Low Bidder****Specifications No. 2054A****Joseph Jensen Water Treatment Plant Control Room Wildfire Smoke Control****Low bidder: IPI Construction**

Subcontractor	Service Category; Specialty
Commerce Air Conditioning Company Tarzana, CA	HVAC
Digital Technologies Inc. Ontario, CA	Electrical
Karcher Interior Systems Inc. Orange, CA	Firestopping
Unlimited Environmental Inc. Santa Fe Springs, CA	Demolition/Abatement

