Anthony “Butch” Araiza, General Manager of West Valley Water District, will retire after reaching his 52nd year as an employee. The water district provides drinking water to customers in portions of Rialto, Colton, Fontana, Bloomington, and Jurupa Valley, as well as portions of the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.

Butch began his career with the water district in June 1963. His first job with the district started in field maintenance, digging trenches and maintaining landscaping. In the late 1960’s he ascended the ranks to water service operator in charge of irrigating the citrus groves within the District. By 1975 he found himself responsible for the entire water system as the District’s Water Superintendent. And, in 1995, the Board of Directors appointed Butch, General Manager of the water district a position he has held for 20 years.

In 2002, as General Manager of the water district, Butch became the lead member of the “Inland Empire Perchlorate Task Force,” which is responsible for coordinating the investigation and response to a serious perchlorate water contamination crisis that affected 20 drinking water wells and 500,000 people in the Inland Empire. Under his direction, the water district has been successful in securing federal and state grants for new technologies to treat contaminated drinking water. Butch currently leads the effort to implement both traditional and innovative treatment technologies to restore safe and affordable drinking water to resident in the Rialto-Colton Water Basin. Recently, Butch has been a voice speaking up for the region’s water needs as California is facing a punishing fourth year of extreme drought, as well as struggling with other Inland Empire leaders’ to secure state funding.

Butch has a long history of participating in community and charitable organizations, including the American Water Works Association, the Association of California Water Agencies, Lytle Creek Water Conservation Association (Chair), Inland Counties Water Association (Past-President), Upper Santa Ana Water Resources Association (President), Rialto Groundwater Basin Association (Chairman), the City of Rialto Planning Commission, The Rialto Rotary (Past-President), the Friends of Rialto Police K-9’s (Board Member), Rialto Unified School District – Measure H and Y Bond Committees, and the San Bernardino Harley Owners Group.

Butch has been a resident of Rialto for 71 years. He graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1961 and attended both San Bernardino Valley College and Cal State San Bernardino.