

US EPA Press Release

**U.S. EPA APPLAUDS ORANGE COUNTY FOR WASTEWATER PURIFICATION
*Water District's Treated Sewer Water Exceeds Federal Drinking Water Standards***

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LOS ANGELES – The Orange County Water District is being awarded the prestigious Water Efficiency Award by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in recognition of the district's leadership in wastewater purification for groundwater replenishment.

The southern California district supplies water to more than 20 cities and water agencies, serving more than 2.3 million Orange County residents. Since 1933, the agency has replenished and maintained the groundwater basin at safe levels while more than doubling the basin's annual yield. This important source of water provides local groundwater producers with a reliable supply of high-quality water.

Water efficiency is critical to the growing U.S. economy and quality of life. The EPA's Water Efficiency Award honors agencies and institutions that reduce, reuse and recycle water through leadership, innovation and water saved.

"Water is America's greatest liquid asset," said Benjamin H. Grumbles, EPA's assistant administrator for water. "EPA commends these water champions for saving water and energy, and increasing the health and wealth of communities and ecosystems."

"OCWD is honored to receive the Water Efficiency Award from the U.S.EPA," said OCWD President Stephen R. Sheldon. "We take great pride in the fact that OCWD is recognized world-wide for its leadership and innovation in groundwater management, and with projects like the Groundwater Replenishment System and its predecessor Water Factory 21. That leadership will prove important to Orange County as the demand increases statewide for water resources, capital funding and water rights."

The district's triple purification process of microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and ultraviolet and hydrogen peroxide treatment produces water able to meet, and in some cases, exceed state and federal drinking water standards. Once purified, the water is sent to spreading basins. The newly purified water seeps into the ground, like rain, and blends with groundwater.

The EPA's Water Efficiency Award is honoring agencies and companies across the US. For more information, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/water/wel/>