



ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

75 Years of Serving Orange County's
Groundwater Needs

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Gina Pineda, (714) 378-3323, gpineda@ocwd.com

ORANGE COUNTY CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL SEEKS SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Two-Day Festival Hosts 5,000 Students; Presenting Sponsors Include Disneyland Resort, National Water Research Institute and Santa Ana Watershed Association

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. – (Jan. 5, 2009) The Orange County Water District's (OCWD) Groundwater Guardian Team will present the 13th annual Children's Water Education Festival April 28 and 29, 2009, at the Nixon Library & Birthplace Foundation in Yorba Linda. The Festival, which is the largest of its kind in the nation, educates Orange County's fourth, fifth and sixth grade students about water and the environment.

Sponsors, water retailers and municipalities, and presenters from Los Angeles to San Diego make the event possible for local educators and students. Community support of the Festival is essential to its continued success; many students would not be able to attend otherwise. This year's presenting sponsors include Disneyland Resort, the National Water Research Institute (NWRI), and Santa Ana Watershed Association (SAWA).

"The event is more than an opportunity to educate students about protecting and preserving our environment, groundwater and drinking water resources," said Frank Dela Vara, Director, Environmental Affairs and Conservation for the Disneyland Resort, a Festival sponsor for 12 years. "It is a chance to plant seeds of knowledge that will help empower our youth to make a difference."

The Festival is a fun, environmental education program designed to teach students about the interdependence of water, soil, plants, trees, animals and humans. Interactive displays and activities feature topics like the water cycle, groundwater and surface water protection, wetlands preservation, recycling, pollution prevention and water treatment, distribution and conservation, and local environmental issues. The Festival also focuses on local water reuse issues and recommends ways students can protect and preserve our local water and environmental resources.

Conducting a Festival of this size requires more than 400 volunteers, staff and presenters, as well as in-kind and cash donations. Many of the schools that attend do not have transportation for field trips and must charter one or more busses. An easy way for individuals in the community to support their neighborhood school is to underwrite transportation costs, generally \$300 to \$500 per bus. Contributions are tax deductible.

-MORE-

CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL ADD 1-1-1

In-kind donations needed for this year's Festival include imprinted t-shirts, crayons, markers, color pencils, beads, string, butcher paper, napkins, cups, spoons, paper table cloths, plates, lemon-lime soda, chocolate sprinkles, drinking straws, a variety of seed packets, soil, and plastic cups with lids.

In addition to cash and in-kind donations, presenters are needed to staff the Festival's interactive booths. Through hands-on activities students learn about the world in which they live and what they can do in their homes, communities and schools to help protect our natural resources. Are you an environmental, groundwater, drinking water or ocean expert? Festival organizers can provide you with the right tools, activities and partners to staff an activity booth. Volunteers also are needed during the two-day festival to help with a range of activities, from staffing registration tables to directing students to their next activity. The Festival is looking for 200 volunteers to work each day.

To sponsor, donate supplies, present an activity or volunteer, contact Gina Pineda at (714) 378-3323. Information and registration forms are available at <http://www.ocwd.com/Childrens-Water-Ed-Festival/ca-25.aspx>.

-30-

Orange County Water District (OCWD) manages the large groundwater basin that underlies north-central Orange County that provides most of the water for 2.3 million citizens. The District is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly manner. OCWD is a special district, separate from the County of Orange, that supplies water to retailers in the cities of Anaheim, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Newport Beach, Orange, Placentia, Santa Ana, Seal Beach, Stanton, Tustin, Villa Park, Westminster and Yorba Linda. For more information about the Orange County Water District, visit www.ocwd.com on the Internet.