



ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

75 Years of Serving
Orange County's Groundwater Needs

NEWS RELEASE

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'FIRST WOMAN OF WATER' CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO ORANGE COUNTY WATER CONSUMERS

Garden Grove Resident Kay Barr Marks 30 Years on Board of Directors

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (Oct. 5, 2009) — The Orange County Water District (OCWD) will officially recognize Director Kathryn (“Kay”) Barr for 30 years of dedicated service at the October 7 meeting of the Board of Directors, held at the District’s Fountain Valley headquarters.

“Kay may be the first and certainly the longest standing female director of a water agency in California; maybe even the nation,” exclaimed OCWD Board President Steve Sheldon. “She has played a significant role in shaping and ensuring Orange County’s water reliability, and continues to be an asset to the Board, OCWD staff and residents of northern Orange County, supporting programs that garnered the District a reputation of innovation and leadership recognized around the world.”

Representing OCWD Division 1 (Garden Grove, Stanton, Westminster, parts of Orange), Barr has a background in public service, including serving on the City Council of Garden Grove from 1962 to 1970, and again from 1974 to 1978. She was Mayor Pro Tem from 1962 to 1969, and appointed Mayor in 1969 -- the first and only time a female served as that city’s Mayor. She also served as a member and Chairman of Garden Grove's Redevelopment Agency, as a member of the Orange County Vector Control District's Board of Trustees, and as a Director of Garden Grove Community Bank.

Professionally, Director Barr was employed as a sales representative with S & S Construction, owned her own business from 1967 to 1973, and has been involved in real estate sales for the past 19 years. Her community service includes the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce, Artificial Kidney Foundation, Garden Grove Girls' Club, and Long Beach Community Hospital. She was named Garden Grove Woman of the Year in 1976 and Cypress College Community Leader of the Year in 1980.

“It has been my honor to serve a leadership role in protecting our rights to the Santa Ana River, and supporting District programs designed to meet Orange County’s growing municipal and industrial water demands,” said Barr. “No other physical feature of Orange County has played as important a part of its history and economic development as the Santa Ana River.”

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OCWD'S KAY BARR 30 YEARS OF SERVICE ADD 1-1-1

OCWD was created in 1933 for the important task of managing flows of the Santa Ana River, which replenish the aquifer that currently supplies 62 percent of the water demand for northern and central Orange County. Significant projects in OCWD's history that Director Barr supported include the Groundwater Replenishment (GWR) System; the Advanced Water Quality Assurance Laboratory; numerous groundwater recharge improvement programs; the annual Children's Water Education Festival, which is the largest in the nation; the O.C. Water Summit; and the Hotel/Motel Water Efficiency Program.

Over the years through Board leadership, proper investments, ingenuity and hard work, the District has significantly improved the groundwater basin and the annual water yield it can provide to meet the needs of Orange County. The allowable groundwater basin pumping has nearly doubled since the 1960s.

OCWD is viewed in the water industry as the consummate authority that others strive to emulate. "We can thank Kay and the Board Members, past and present, for their vision, commitment and leadership," stated OCWD General Manager Mike Markus. "The Board has supported environmental stewardship, aggressive water quality monitoring and research, innovative basin management, state-of-the-art water recycling, and sound financial planning."

"In 30 years I have seen many changes," said Barr. "Looking forward, there are new challenges the District will face, namely threatened imported water supplies and less reliable supplies from the upper Santa Ana Watershed. Average water supplies for Southern California do not meet average water demands. But I am confident that this District and its employees will continue with its tradition of innovation to meet the water needs of Orange County."

The District is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly and economical manner. The following cities utilize the groundwater basin managed by OCWD: 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.