



ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

NEWS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DROUGHT PROOF WATER SUPPLY PROJECT GEARS UP TO PRODUCE 100 MGD

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (June 10, 2014) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) is preparing to bring an additional 30 million gallons per day (MGD) of ultra-pure water to an area that faces drought three out of every ten years. In early 2015, the District will begin operating the Initial Expansion of the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS). Yesterday, it took a major step towards this milestone as it shut down the GWRS for an estimated 21 days to connect piping and electrical and control tie-ins necessary to incorporate the expansion into the existing facility. The project is making the world’s largest advanced water purification system for potable reuse even bigger.

Currently, the GWRS produces 70 MGD. The \$143 million Initial Expansion will create an additional 31,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of new water supplies to serve north and central Orange County. This brings the total production of the GWRS to 103,000 AFY, enough water for 850,000 people. Since its inception the GWRS has produced more than 135 billion gallons of water that has helped replenish Orange County’s groundwater basin managed by OCWD, while also providing water to its seawater intrusion barrier to protect the basin.

“The GWRS and its Initial Expansion bring multiple benefits to our service area that impact the entire state,” said OCWD President Shawn Dewane. “This project is a remarkable example of how science and technology can create a new source of clean, reliable water that decreases the region’s dependence on costly imported supplies.”

The Initial Expansion includes additional microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light treatment equipment. Pumps, electrical equipment, post treatment systems and two flow equalization tanks are also included in its design. A significant portion of this project’s infrastructure was already built into the system when it first came on-line in 2008. In fact, the ultimate capacity of the GWRS includes a final expansion that will take total water production to 130 MGD.

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In addition to creating a reliable local source of water, the GWRS Initial Expansion further reduces the amount of wastewater discharged to the Pacific Ocean, preserves the county's vital coast and provides all these benefits with fewer greenhouse gas emissions than importing water. It also improves the quality of water in Orange County's groundwater basin and diversifies regional water supplies.

The GWRS is a joint project of OCWD and the Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD). It takes highly treated wastewater and purifies it through a three-step process that includes microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light with hydrogen peroxide, resulting in near-distilled quality water. The world renowned facility has garnered more than 20 awards including the prestigious international 2014 Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize.

For more information about the Groundwater Replenishment System, call the Orange County Water District at (714) 378-3200 or go to www.gwrsystem.com.

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About Orange County Water District

Orange County Water District (OCWD) manages the large groundwater basin that underlies north and central Orange County that provides most of the water for about 2.4 million citizens. OCWD is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly manner. With more than 80 years of prudent planning and careful investment, OCWD has doubled the sustainable yield of the groundwater basin. OCWD is a special district established by the California State Legislature in 1933 and governed by a 10-member board of directors. Separate from the County of Orange, OCWD supplies water to residents 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. Go to www.ocwd.com for information.