



ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT RECOGNIZED FOR LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION IN WATER REUSE

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (October 18, 2016) — The Orange County Water District (OCWD) was recently awarded the Exceptional Utility Leader in Water Reuse and Conservation from the International Desalination Association (IDA). It was recognized for its leadership and innovation in advancing water reuse. OCWD operates the world’s largest water reuse facility of its kind, the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), which has brought more than 200 billion gallons of reliable water to Orange County and has influenced similar projects worldwide.

“It is an honor to receive this award for a project that serves as a global model for water sustainability,” said OCWD President Cathy Green. “As California enters a sixth year of drought, more projects like the GWRS are projected to come online. Water reuse is a vital component to long-term water reliability and there is tremendous opportunity to expand it. In California, more than 1.3 billion gallons of treated wastewater is discharged to the ocean every day and OCWD has long recognized the value of wastewater as a resource. That is why it has made, and continues to make, significant investments in the GWRS. In fact, the OCWD Board just approved moving forward with plans for a final expansion of the project,” she added.

The GWRS has been operating since January 2008. It takes treated wastewater and purifies it through a three-step process consisting of microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light with hydrogen peroxide. The end result is ultra-pure water that meets or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards. The original project produced 70 MGD and a 30-MGD expansion was implemented in mid-2015, which brought the total production to 100 MGD or enough water for 850,000 people annually. It is projected that a 30-MGD final expansion of the GWRS will go online in 2022 and will have an ultimate production capacity of 130 MGD, enough water for 1 million people.

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The GWRS has garnered more than 40 awards including the prestigious international 2014 Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize and the 2008 Stockholm Industry Water Award. To view a complete listing of awards, please visit <http://www.ocwd.com/news-events/awards/>. It has also been featured on CBS' "60 Minutes," National Geographic, CNN and many other prominent news outlets.

The IDA award was presented at the IDA International Conference on Water Reuse and Recycling in Nice, France and received by OCWD Director of Water Production/GWRS Mehul Patel. Mr. Patel also presented to an international audience at the conference to share information and lessons learned about the GWRS. Representatives from cities, states and countries have met with OCWD staff to learn from the GWRS blueprint to create water sustainability in their communities that foster economic viability and protect public health. To learn more about OCWD and the GWRS, please visit <http://www.ocwd.com/gwrs/>.

About OCWD

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 and receive approximately 75 percent of their water supply from it: 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 and its Board of Directors, call (714) 378-3200 or visit www.ocwd.com.

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