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Orange County Water District General Manager Recognized for Innovative and Pioneering Work in Sustainable Groundwater Management

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (June 5, 2017) - Orange County Water District (OCWD, the District) General Manager Mike Markus was recently presented with the Environmental & Water Resources Institute (EWRI) Pioneers in Groundwater Award at the Groundwater Council Luncheon and Awards following his plenary lecture on OCWD's award-winning model for water resource management.

The Pioneers in Groundwater Award recognizes and honors an individual with pioneering contributions in the teaching, research and/or practice of groundwater science and engineering. Only one award is given per year by EWRI, which was created in 1999 to serve as the recognized leader within the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) for the integration of technical expertise and public policy in the planning, design, construction, and operation of environmentally sound and sustainable infrastructure impacting air, land and water resources.

"With more than 38 years of experience and expertise in large project implementation and water resource management, we are fortunate to have Mike at the helm who's helped position OCWD as a leader in water reuse and groundwater management," said OCWD President Denis Bilodeau. "During his 28-year career at the District, Mike has been responsible for managing the implementation of the \$480 million Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) and oversight of the \$142 million GWRS Initial Expansion. The GWRS is the world's largest water reuse project of its kind and is a global model for water reliability. It has been instrumental in paving the way for widespread acceptance of water reuse," he added.

Mike is an advocate for water reuse and holds leadership roles in the industry to collaborate and share information to continue the momentum for these projects which are critical to long-term water reliability. Mike serves on the board of directors of the American Academy of Water Resource Engineers, the California Section of the WaterReuse Association and the Water Environment and Reuse Foundation.

In a continued effort to share his experience and knowledge, Mike has authored several technical publications and has provided presentations to legislators, influencing standards for both water reuse and groundwater management. He is widely sought out regularly by media and for local, national and international speaking engagements as an expert on advanced wastewater purification.

"This award is a testament to the innovative work of the entire OCWD staff and board," said Mike Markus. "Decades of sound planning and investment have put us at the forefront of groundwater management and water reuse. We are committed to high standards for water reliability and I look forward to continuing to lead OCWD on the path to creating a sustainable water supply for generations to come," he added.

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Mike holds a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and a Master of Science degree in civil engineering from the University of Southern California. He is also a registered civil engineer in the state of California and a member of ASCE.

To view Mike's complete bio, visit <https://www.ocwd.com/about/departments/executive-bios/michael-r-markus-general-manager/>. To learn more about the District and the award-winning GWRS, please visit www.ocwd.com.

About Orange County Water District (OCWD)

The Orange County Water District is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly and economical manner. The following cities rely on the groundwater basin, managed by OCWD, to provide 75 percent of their water demands: 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.

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