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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT CELEBRATES CALIFORNIA WATER PROFESSIONALS APPRECIATION WEEK OCT. 3-11, 2020

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (Oct. 2, 2020) —Dedicated teams of planners, engineers, water quality specialists, technicians, and other water professionals have built and maintained the systems to guarantee that when your tap is turned on, clean water flows freely and abundantly. California Water Professionals Appreciation Week, Oct. 3-11, 2020, is an exciting occasion to showcase the ‘people behind the pipes’ throughout this state and an opportunity to highlight rewarding careers in the water industry and cultivate the next generation of water leaders.

“High-quality, reliable water allows our economy and our communities to thrive,” said OCWD President Vicente Sarmiento. “I would like to thank the 225 employees at the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) and the water professionals of the 19 retail agencies we serve. They deserve recognition not only during this week, but every day.”

In north and central Orange County, 77% of the drinking water comes from the Orange County Groundwater Basin, managed by OCWD. Below are some of the District’s notable achievements that are made possible by the hard work and dedication of its employees and the leadership of its board of directors.

- A leader in groundwater management, the District operates one of the most advanced recharge systems to fill the basin and has doubled its yield through careful planning and efficient investment.
- The District’s Philip L. Anthony Water Quality Laboratory (Lab) tests for more than 500 compounds, while required to test for only 109.
- The Lab analyzes more than 20,000 samples each year and reports more than 400,000 results.
- OCWD water quality and lab staff provide regional sampling and testing of more than 200 drinking water wells.
- The District operates the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), the world’s largest state-of-the art water purification project.
- OCWD is expanding the GWRS to produce 130 million gallons daily by 2023, enough water for 1 million people.
- OCWD launched the nation’s largest PFAS Pilot Program and became the first public agency laboratory in California to achieve state certification to analyze for PFAS in drinking water.

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- The District manages one of the largest constructed wetlands in the region, Prado, which enhances water quality, provides habitat for endangered species and other wildlife, and enables OCWD to capture stormwater for recharge.
- The District’s favorable financial position has allowed it to provide greater water reliability for the region by financing and securing funding for critical capital projects.

“I’m honored to be a part of the Orange County Water District and I’m proud of all that we have accomplished together to benefit the 2.5 million people we serve,” added Sarmiento. “Whether confronting a pandemic, a drought, or other challenge, California’s essential workers are always up for the job of providing safe, reliable water 24/7, 365 days a year—and for that, we say thank you.”

About Water Professionals Appreciate Week

Water Professionals Appreciation Week was established in 2017 by Senate Concurrent Resolution 80, by Senator Bill Dodd (D-Napa). It was created to highlight the important role of water industry professionals and local public water agencies in ensuring safe and reliable tap water, wastewater and recycled water for California. Recent labor studies estimate that 60,000 people work in California’s water industry and it needs roughly 6,000 new employees each year due to turnover.

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 77% 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. For more information about OCWD, please visit www.ocwd.com, like @OCWaterDistrict on Facebook, follow @OCWDWaterNews on Twitter, follow @OCWD on Instagram, and follow Orange County Water District on LinkedIn.

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