



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN FULLERTON MAKES HISTORY AS ORANGE COUNTY'S FIRST OPERATING PFAS EXTRACTION PLANT

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (June 30, 2021)** – The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) and the City of Fullerton have begun operation of the Kimberly Well 1A PFAS Treatment Plant, Orange County's first wellhead filtration treatment plant to remove perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) from local well water.

PFOA and PFOS are manmade, heat-resistant chemicals that are prevalent in the environment and were once commonly used in consumer products to repel water, grease, and oil. They are part of a larger group referred to as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Due to their prolonged use, PFAS are being detected in water sources throughout the United States, including the Orange County Groundwater Basin.

"OCWD cannot be prouder of our amazing staff that designed and deployed this state of the art PFAS treatment system in record time to combat the PFAS chemicals which were released into the environment by third parties," said OCWD President Steve Sheldon. "We worked closely with the city of Fullerton to construct this treatment facility to remove PFOA and PFOS from groundwater while continually meeting all state and federal drinking water standards. I want to commend our professional staff on a job very well done."

The Kimberly Well 1A PFAS Treatment Plant uses an ion exchange treatment system made of highly porous resin that acts like powerful magnets that adsorb and hold onto contaminants. During treatment, contaminants such as PFOA and PFOS are removed. Construction began in November 2020 and the facility treats up to 3,000 gallons of water per minute.

Last year, dozens of wells in Orange County were removed from service after the state of California lowered the Response Level advisories of PFOA and PFOS. This drove local water suppliers to rely on imported water from Northern California and the Colorado River to meet the needs of their customers.

"Bringing this treatment facility online is very important. It means Fullerton can increase its use of local groundwater, which is less expensive and more reliable than imported water," said OCWD Director and City of Fullerton Mayor Bruce Whitaker.

The Fullerton facility is the first of 25 PFAS treatment facilities being designed and constructed by OCWD in the next two years. OCWD is funding 100% of design and construction costs and 50% of operation and maintenance costs for its water suppliers like Fullerton. The District and

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10 Orange County public water agencies filed a lawsuit against the manufacturers of PFAS, seeking to protect ratepayers and ensure that the associated costs, including but not limited to treatment and replacement water, are borne by the companies that developed and manufactured PFAS.

For additional information on OCWD's comprehensive and robust PFAS response, please visit [www.ocwd.com/what-we-do/water-quality/pfoapfos](http://www.ocwd.com/what-we-do/water-quality/pfoapfos).

### **About Orange County Water District**

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](http://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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