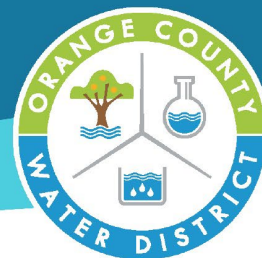
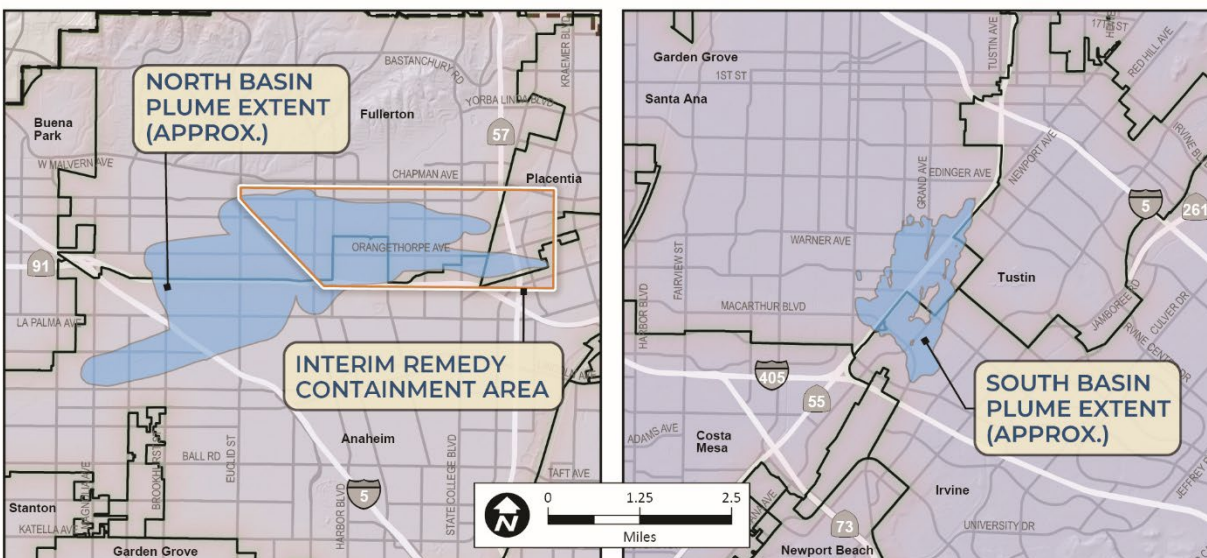


# North & South Basin Groundwater Cleanup Update June 2026



The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) manages and protects the Orange County Groundwater Basin which underlies north and central Orange County, and from which 19 cities and retail water districts draw their water supply. OCWD implements a proactive groundwater and surface water monitoring program to protect the quality of the groundwater basin and to ensure the water it provides meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Industrial chemicals have impacted areas in the northern and southern parts of the groundwater basin; areas referred to as the **North Basin** (portions of Fullerton, Anaheim, Placentia, and Buena Park) and **South Basin** (portions of Santa Ana, Tustin, and Irvine). Higher contaminant concentrations are primarily in the shallow aquifers and impacted wells have been turned off. This update is provided to inform stakeholders of how OCWD is working with state and federal regulatory agencies to clean up the pollution.



Below is an update on activities in and around the North Basin and South Basin areas.

## North Basin

- The North Basin plume of contaminated groundwater is a National Priorities List (Superfund) site overseen by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- EPA is developing an Interim Remedy to contain parts of the plume with elevated contaminant concentrations.
- With its activities completed on the North Basin Interim Remedy Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS), OCWD continues to provide data and technical support to EPA and state agencies.
- EPA finalized the FS Report describing and evaluating alternatives for the Interim Remedy in October 2025.
- EPA's Proposed Plan was released for public review in January 2026 and includes installing ~17 extraction wells, installing ~17 injection wells, building a centralized treatment plant, groundwater monitoring, and restricting groundwater use in the most contaminated area.

- EPA solicited public comments through March 23, 2026. EPA will consider public comments on the Proposed Plan before making a final decision on the Interim Remedy, which will be documented in a Record of Decision (ROD), anticipated this fall.
- Following issuance of the ROD, EPA will pursue implementation of the Interim Remedy by the companies responsible for the contamination.
- For additional information on the North Basin remedial program, please refer to the EPA's Superfund website (see link below).

## South Basin

- The South Basin Groundwater Protection Project (SBGPP) is led by OCWD which conducted a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The RI and FS Reports were reviewed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the FS Report was finalized in January 2023.
- OCWD prepared a Draft Interim Remedial Action Plan (IRAP) and Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed project to remediate shallow groundwater contamination. These documents were made available for public review and comment, including public meetings held in January 2025.
- After reviewing responses to public comments on the Draft IRAP and Draft Program EIR, OCWD's Board of Directors, at its June 4, 2025 meeting, certified the Final Program EIR, approved the IRAP (Proposed Plan), and authorized the Record of Decision, selecting the proposed SBGPP remedy comprising a series of groundwater extraction well alignments, treatment systems, discharge of treated water to the sewer system and OCWD's Groundwater Replenishment System, and recharge to the groundwater basin.
- The Interim Remedy will be completed in four phases. The first, a Pre-Design Investigation Work Plan commenced in January 2026 and is expected to conclude in September 2027. It will be followed at a later date by a Pre-Design Investigation, Interim Remedy Design, and Interim Remedy Construction.
- South Basin documents may be accessed via OCWD's website (see link below) and are also available for public review at the following locations:
  - Santa Ana Public Library, 122 N. Newhope St., Santa Ana, CA 92703
  - Delhi Center, 505 E. Central Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92707
  - OC Library - Heritage Park, 14361 Yale Avenue, Irvine, CA 92604
  - Tustin Public Library, 345 East Main Street, Tustin, CA 92780

## Additional Information

For additional information, please contact Roy Herndon, chief hydrogeologist at [rherndon@ocwd.com](mailto:rherndon@ocwd.com) or (714) 378-3260.

- EPA North Basin website: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/orange-county-north-basin>
- North Basin general information and past updates: <https://www.ocwd.com/what-we-do/water-quality/groundwater-cleanup/north-basin/>
- South Basin general information and past updates: <https://www.ocwd.com/what-we-do/water-quality/groundwater-cleanup/south-basin/>