



ORANGE COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

# PRESS RELEASE

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## ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT AND ORANGE COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR WATER RECYCLING PROJECT

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif.** (March 13, 2024) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD, the District) and the Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) were selected by the WaterReuse National Association to receive the 2024 “Community Water Champion Award.” This award recognizes OCWD and OC San for the completion of the world’s largest potable reuse project of its kind, the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), and for its continued dedication and commitment to water reuse.

During the final expansion of the GWRS, completed in early 2023, two major milestones were achieved: recycling 100% of OC San’s reclaimable wastewater flows and producing 130 million gallons of high-quality water every day. The purified water is recharged into the Orange County Groundwater Basin, managed by OCWD, and eventually becomes part of the region’s drinking water supply that serves 2.5 million people.

“We are so proud of this innovative project that has been decades in the making,” said OCWD President Cathy Green. “Thank you WaterReuse for highlighting OCWD and OC San for our long-standing partnership and commitment to serve our communities by providing a reliable water supply.”

The GWRS came online in 2008 and has produced more than 430 billion gallons of water and counting. It increases drinking water supplies in Orange County and decreases the need to import water from northern California and the Colorado River, providing a cost-effective and energy-efficient alternative. The GWRS provides the region with water it can count on and serves as a model project for other regions throughout the United States and the world.

“From what was once the “unthinkable” – purifying wastewater into drinking water – is now the model for water reuse, and it is happening right here in Orange County,” said OC San Board Chairman Chad P. Wanke. “We are proud that the GWRS has again made history with the final completion that recycles all of our agency’s reclaimable wastewater flows.”

Learn more or book a facility tour by visiting [www.ocwd.com/gwrs](http://www.ocwd.com/gwrs).

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*The Orange County Water District manages the local groundwater basin serving 2.5 million people in north and central Orange County. For more information about OCWD, please visit [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com) and follow @OCWaterDistrict on social media.*

*OC San is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County. OC San is a special district*

*that is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors composed of 20 cities, four special districts, and one representative from the Orange County Board of Supervisors. OC San has two operating facilities that treat wastewater from residential, commercial, and industrial sources. For more information on OC San please visit [www.ocsan.gov](http://www.ocsan.gov). Follow @OCSanDistrict on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and Orange County Sanitation District on LinkedIn.*