



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT RECEIVES AWARD FOR PFAS TREATMENT STUDY TO REMOVE CHEMICALS FROM WATER

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (September 14, 2021) — The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) has been named an American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists (AAEES) 2021 award winner in its annual Excellence in Environmental Engineering and Science competition, for the recent completion of a multifaceted treatment study to address the occurrence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in local drinking water supplies.

OCWD received an Honors Award in the research category for advancing state of the art environmental engineering or science practices.

“OCWD thanks our colleagues at AAEES for this recognition. This award is a testament to our professional staff who are committed to researching and implementing the best technologies to address water quality issues,” said OCWD President Steve Sheldon. “I am proud of the work we have done to swiftly and proactively address PFAS and we remain committed to sharing our research results with the water industry and its partners.”

PFAS are a group of thousands of manmade chemicals, including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS), that are used to make carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, food packaging, cookware, and other materials to make them non-stick and/or resistant to water, oil, and stains. PFAS have been detected in the Orange County Groundwater Basin. Despite playing no role in releasing PFAS into the environment, cities and water agencies must find ways to remove it from their local water supplies.

In December 2019, OCWD accelerated efforts to address PFAS, launching the nation's largest pilot project to test 14 different types of treatment media, including granular activated carbon, ion exchange, and novel alternative adsorbents, with the goal of identifying reliable and cost-effective solutions to remove PFAS from water. In collaboration with study partners Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. and Battelle, the OCWD PFAS Treatment Study additionally included a significant amount of laboratory-scale testing, modeling, and treatment system cost estimation. The pilot-scale testing is now entering its second phase to test additional adsorbents including some just emerging into the marketplace.

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OCWD, cities and retail water agencies in Orange County provide reliable high-quality drinking water to residents throughout Orange County and will continue to meet and exceed all state and federal drinking water standards and regulations. OCWD and 10 of Orange County's public water agencies have filed a lawsuit to ensure PFAS costs are borne by the companies that developed and manufactured PFAS and PFAS-containing products, thereby profiting from their widespread use and inevitable release to the environment, and not by ratepayers.

Award winners will be announced on October 21 at the 2021 AAEEES Awards Ceremony and Conference.

To learn more about how OCWD is addressing PFAS in Orange County, please visit the [District's website](#).

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, like @OCWaterDistrict on Facebook, follow @OCWDWaterNews on Twitter, follow @OCWD on Instagram, and follow Orange County Water District on LinkedIn.

About American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists

The American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists® is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) organization serving the Environmental Engineering and Environmental Science professions by providing Board Certification to those who qualify through experience and testing. The Academy also provides training through workshops and seminars, participates in accrediting universities, publishes a periodical and other reference material, interacts with students and young professionals, sponsors a university lecture series, and rewards outstanding achievements through its international awards program. For more information, please visit www.aaees.org.

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