



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### DRINKING WATER REMAINS CLEAN AND RELIABLE AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif.** (March 20, 2020) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) wants to assure the public that the presence of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has not been detected in drinking-water supplies and has no impact on the quality or supply of tap water. Today, the District [released a video](#) assuring the public that Orange County tap water remains clean and reliable.

“COVID-19 has impacted all of our daily lives, but one thing it will not impact is your water,” said OCWD President Vicente Sarmiento. “OCWD, along with the water retailers it serves, make sure that your water meets or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards. As always, you can trust and enjoy what comes out of your tap.”

California has some of the highest required levels of treatment for drinking water in the country. And per drinking water regulations established by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, your tap water is treated specifically to remove or kill pathogens, including viruses.

Locally, OCWD manages the Orange County Groundwater Basin which supplies up to 77% of drinking water to north and central Orange County. It tests water from approximately 1,500 locations throughout the basin, analyzes more than 20,000 samples each year and reports more than 400,000 results to ensure your water meets rigorous water quality standards.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the public to rush to purchase mass quantities of bottled water. While it is always advisable to stock bottles of water at home in case of an emergency impacting the water supply, COVID-19 will not disrupt water service to the 2.6 million people in OCWD’s service area or for the millions of people who rely on public water systems across the country.

Additional information regarding the continued quality and reliability of tap water may be found at OCWD’s newly created [COVID-19 webpage](#).

The District, like many organizations across the country, is taking action to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 amongst its workforce and the community. Its [response plan](#) includes activating its Emergency Operations Center at a low level, suspending tours and events, implementing social distancing requirements, closing the doors to the public, and hosting its board and committee meetings in a virtual format. The District conducted its March 18 board meeting through web conferencing platform Zoom. President Sarmiento, Second Vice President Stephen R. Sheldon, General Manager Michael R. Markus, General Council Jeremy Jungreis, District

Secretary Janice Durant, and five staff members from the engineering, finance, information services, and water quality departments [attended the meeting in person](#), while OCWD's eight additional board members, staff and the general public participated by phone. Instructions for how to participate in meetings will be listed at the top of each meeting agenda.

"Thank you to everyone who participated in OCWD's first virtual board meeting," added President Sarmiento. "I am thankful we live in an age where technology allows our board, staff and members of the public to participate in the government process while protecting our individual and collective health."

The District's COVID-19 policy will remain in effect through April 30, 2020 and is subject to change based on new information and guidance released by federal, state and county health officials.

### **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](http://www.ocwd.com), like [@OCWaterDistrict](#) on Facebook, follow [@OCWDWaterNews](#) on Twitter, and follow [@OCWD](#) on Instagram.

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