



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT AND SERRANO WATER DISTRICT RECOGNIZED BY AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS FOR PFAS WATER TREATMENT PLANT

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (March 31, 2021) — Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) and Serrano Water District (SWD) were recognized by the American Society of Civil Engineers-Orange County (ASCE-OC) for their work on the Serrano Water District PFAS Treatment Plant. Featured as an outstanding project during a virtual program on March 18, the award highlights the agencies' proactive efforts to remove per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from groundwater supplies.

“Behind all great projects are great people,” said OCWD President Stephen R. Sheldon. “I would like to recognize Director of Engineering Chris Olsen, Senior Engineer Ben Smith and the many dedicated staff who made this critical water quality project possible. The District remains steadfast in our mission to protect and manage the Orange County Groundwater Basin because of the daily efforts of our employees. Although PFAS contamination was caused by chemical manufacturers, and not by water agencies, we are doing an outstanding job of swiftly responding to this issue and implementing effective solutions.”

The District initiated focused efforts to address PFAS following a lowering of the state's health advisory levels for two legacy PFAS chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), in February 2020. The state's action prompted Orange County water agencies, such as SWD, who pump water from the Basin to take dozens of wells out of service and rely on more expensive imported water for their primary drinking water supply. OCWD will design and construct 10 PFAS treatment plants, including SWD's, with the goal of getting plants online within two years to fully utilize the Basin again.

“Our agency proactively took two impacted wells out of service in order to continue providing high quality, reliable water,” said Serrano Water District General Manager Jerry Vilander. “Through a collaborative process with OCWD and our community members, the PFAS treatment plant will support our priority to get drinking water wells back in operation later this year to continue our legacy of providing a sustainable water supply to the residents and businesses we serve.”

OCWD, cities and retail water agencies in Orange County take seriously the duty to 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.

To protect ratepayers and ensure PFAS costs are borne by the companies that developed and manufactured PFAS, OCWD and 10 of Orange County's public water agencies have filed a lawsuit.

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 Serrano Water District

[Serrano Water District](#) is an independent water district established in 1927 under the California Water Code, with a five-member elected Board of Directors. The District's mission is to Supply our customers with quality drinking water through a cost-effective system that ensures uninterrupted supply while keeping rates low. The District serves potable water to a population of 6,464 people in the City of Villa Park and a small area of the City of Orange within a 4.7 square mile area.

About American Society of Civil Engineers

The [American Society of Civil Engineers \(ASCE\) Orange County Branch \(OCB\)](#) is part of a global civil engineering community. The OCB has over 2,500 members in Orange County, California and is currently the fourth largest branch within ASCE. The OCB is part of the ASCE Los Angeles Section, which has a total of seven branches. ASCE has a total of 10 Regions, nine of which are within the nation and Region 10, which comprises the rest of the globe. ASCE was founded in 1852, has over 140,000 members and is the oldest national engineering organization in the nation.