



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT REDUCES ELECTRICITY USE TO FREE UP POWER GRID DURING HEATWAVE

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (Aug. 31 , 2020) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) is doing its part to save energy during the current heatwave by voluntarily reducing its electricity use. By temporarily lowering water production of its Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), the world’s largest water reuse project, to 15 million gallons per day the District reduced its daily electricity use from an average of 17 megawatts to five megawatts, saving 60 megawatts of power over a five-day period, Aug. 14-18.

“We’re committed to doing the right thing for the 2.5 million people in our service area and our actions often transcend water. As a member of the Orange County community we were proud to do our part to help free up much needed power for Orange County residents, and the region, during recent triple-digit temperatures,” said OCWD President Vicente Sarmiento.

On Aug. 14, the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) issued a Stage 3 System Emergency Notice after electricity reserves hit deficient levels. CAISO manages the flow of electricity across the power lines that make up 80% of the state’s electricity grid, and it oversees the bulk electricity market generated by its member agencies, such as Southern Californian Edison (SCE).

The District belongs to SCE’s Demand Response program, which provides participants money back when they voluntarily lower their electrical usage during peak events, such as the current heatwave. OCWD contracts with third-party Demand Response provider Enel X, which pays the District up to \$900,000 per year to reduce electricity to five megawatts within 30 minutes of notification. From Aug. 14 -18, the District was called upon by Enel X to voluntarily shed its electrical load through official Demand Response events initiated by SCE. Demand Response outages can last up to six hours and be called up to 10 times per month.

The GWRS produces an average of 100 million gallons of pure water every day. Temporary reductions in water production, like the recent Demand Response event, do not negatively impact operations or local water availability. Since 1933, OCWD has been steadfast in its mission to provide safe and reliable water for the region.

About 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, like @OCWaterDistrict on Facebook, follow @OCWDWaterNews on Twitter, and follow @OCWD on Instagram.

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