



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ORANGE COUNTY GROUNDWATER REPLENISHMENT SYSTEM RECEIVES PROTOS
AWARD FROM PRSA**

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (July 11, 2006) – The Groundwater Replenishment (GWR) System, Orange County’s local water purification project co-sponsored by the Orange County Water District (OCWD) and the Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD), received a 2006 Protos award, the highest honor possible, from the Orange County Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). OCWD Director of Communications Ron Wildermuth accepted the award on behalf of the two agencies on June 23, 2006 at the black-tie Protos Award Ceremony held at the St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort in Dana Point.

The Protos award ceremony honored achievement in the field of public relations within Orange County in the past year. Those recognized with a Protos award must have proven that they successfully incorporated research, planning, execution and evaluation into a challenging public relations campaign.

The GWR System was selected to receive an award for its proactive speakers bureau program that has helped the project gain support within Orange County’s local community. The speakers bureau program has proven to be an effective tool in helping the GWR System garner the community support necessary to make this water purification project a reality.

“Our surveys show that the majority of the community supports the GWR System in Orange County,” said Phil Anthony, board president for OCWD. “The recognition we have received through the Protos award is a testament to all the hard work we have placed in reaching out to the community on this important water project.”

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The GWR System takes highly treated sewer water currently released into the ocean and purifies it using the same technologies that purify baby food, fruit juices, medicines and bottled water. The GWR System will create a new supply of near-distilled quality water, totaling 70 million gallons per day. The new water will be used to expand the already existing seawater intrusion barrier along the coast and to augment groundwater supplies for 2.3 million north and central Orange County residents.

More information on the Groundwater Replenishment System is available at www.gwrsystem.com.

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About Orange County Water District

Orange County Water District (OCWD) manages the large groundwater basin that underlies north-central Orange County that provides most of the water for 2.3 million citizens. OCWD is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly manner. With years of prudent planning and careful investment, OCWD has doubled the sustainable yield of the groundwater basin. Recently, the basin, larger than the largest reservoir in Southern California, sustained the county through a five-year drought. OCWD has also spent millions of dollars on studies by outside experts to ensure the quality of our groundwater. We want to be your trusted source for water quality. We will continue to plan and invest in ways to get more water into and out of the basin. OCWD is a special district, separate from the County of Orange that supplies water to residents in the cities of Anaheim, Buena Park, Cypress, Costa Mesa, 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, visit our Web site at www.ocwd.com.

About Orange County Sanitation District

The Orange County Sanitation District is a public agency responsible for safely collecting and treating wastewater (sewage) for 2.5 million people. OCSD beneficially reuses and recycles the treated wastewater and other resources resulting from the treatment process. It is a special district established by the California State legislature and governed by a 25-member board of directors. The directors are comprised of elected representatives for each of the sewer agencies or cities within OCSD's 471 square mile service area. For more information, visit our Web site at www.ocsd.com.