



# ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

*75 Years of Serving Orange  
County's Groundwater Needs*

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT RECEIVES 2008 CLAIR A. HILL AWARD FROM  
THE ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES**

*Groundwater Authority Recognized for New Innovative Water Purification Facility*

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif.** (May 9, 2008) — The Orange County Water District (OCWD) received the Clair A. Hill Award for excellence in water management and innovation from the Association of California Water Agencies. The award was presented to the District during the annual ACWA Spring Conference & Exhibition, where nearly 2,000 water officials are gathered through Friday for programs and panel discussions on a variety of key water issues. OCWD was selected from among six finalists to receive the award.

The first agency to win the distinguished award twice, OCWD was acknowledged for its new water purification facility, the Groundwater Replenishment (GWR) System. The facility is the largest indirect potable reuse project of its type in the world and helps improve water supply reliability by providing a 72,000 acre-foot per year supply of new water for the Orange County groundwater basin, enough water for 500,000 Orange County residents each year. Additionally, the GWR System reduces the amount of water sent to the ocean, protecting the region's vital coast while recycling a precious resource.

"We are honored to accept this award from the Association of California Water Agencies," said Stephen R. Sheldon, OCWD board president. "As 2008 marks our 75th anniversary of supplying Orange County's water, it means a great deal to be acknowledged by our colleagues for our leadership in groundwater management and innovation."

The GWR System purifies highly treated wastewater using microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light with hydrogen peroxide. The ultra-pure water is injected into a seawater intrusion barrier and pumped to groundwater recharge facilities, where it percolates into the groundwater basin and eventually becomes part of the region's drinking water supply.

The new facility is a joint project between OCWD and the Orange County Sanitation District. OCWD Director Jan Debay accepted the award on behalf of the District. "The GWR System project is an excellent example of public agency cooperation. We hope to see more agencies work together to increase water independency and locally-controlled water supplies," she noted.

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The Clair A. Hill award is sponsored by CH2M Hill in memory of Clair A. Hill, an engineer, visionary and founder of CH2M Hill. The District received the award for the first time in 2000 for its Children's Water Education Festival, which hosts more than 6,000 children annually.

OCWD is committed to enhancing Orange County's groundwater quality and reliability in an environmentally friendly and economical manner. The following cities utilize the groundwater basin managed by OCWD: 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

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**EDITORIAL NOTE:**

A photograph of OCWD directors Jan Debay and Irv Pickler is attached to this e-mail, or can be obtained by contacting Gina DePinto at (714) 378-3228 or [gdepinto@ocwd.com](mailto:gdepinto@ocwd.com).