

PRESS RELEASE



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(Images available upon request)

OC Agencies set GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ Title for Most wastewater recycled into drinking water in 24 hours

***Groundwater Replenishment System Celebrates 10th Anniversary with Record and
Community Event Attended by Hundreds***

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA (February 16, 2018) – The Orange County Water District (OCWD) and Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD) today succeeded in the attempt to set a GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ title for the *Most wastewater recycled to drinking water in 24 hours*.

The GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title was achieved by the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), which is the world’s largest water purification facility of its kind. This achievement commemorates the 10th anniversary of the facility, a collaboration between the two districts.

“Recycling wastewater is critical to protecting and effectively managing our local water supplies at a time when we are facing extreme weather and droughts,” said OCWD President Denis Bilodeau. “We hope this achievement will raise awareness and better understanding of the importance of facilities like the GRWS because the potential of water recycling in California, and around the world, is tremendous.”

“This is a time to celebrate and learn about this proven technology that is so vital to sustaining our communities and our natural environment,” said OCSD Board Chairman and GWRS Steering Committee Vice-Chair Greg Sebourn. “We have the technology now to produce safe drinking water that ensures long-term reliability of local supplies.”

The GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title attempt to produce the most wastewater recycled into drinking water in 24 hours started at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 15. The successful completion of the GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title attempt was announced Friday, Feb. 16, during the Winter Fest, a public event that was held at the GWRS facility. The celebration included a community toast with recycled water from the facility.

“This was an incredible attempt that impacted the local community and environment. It provided perspective on the process of making water safe for consumption,” said Philip Robertson, official GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS adjudicator. “We congratulate the efforts of Orange County Water District and Orange County Sanitation District and welcome them into the Guinness World Records family.”

Currently, regulations limit the use of advanced purified water to replenish groundwater basins even though the GWRS facility creates water that exceeds state and federal drinking water standards. California law AB 2022, adopted in 2016, seeks to expand the public’s awareness of water treatment advancements by allowing agencies such as OCWD to bottle highly purified recycled water to be handed out for free as an educational tool. The water is so pure, it is near-distilled in quality. The awareness effort is occurring as the state marches toward direct potable reuse of this water.

Around the world there are facilities similar to the GWRS, but the Orange County facility is considered the largest of its kind. The GWRS currently produces 100 million gallons a day of highly purified recycled water to inject into the Orange County Groundwater Basin, managed by OCWD, to increase local drinking water supplies and to prevent seawater intrusion. Work will soon be under way to expand its capacity to produce 130 million gallons a day of purified recycled water—enough for 1 million people.

“For more than a century, California has relied on rivers like the Colorado and Sacramento for our water. Today, we demonstrated we have new rivers to utilize,” said renowned climate expert and scientist Bill Patzert, who emceed the celebration program. “It makes perfect sense to use the technology we have today to use the water we have right in our backyard and recycle it for drinking water.”

For more information about the GWRS, visit www.ocwd.com/gwrs.

About the Orange County Water District

The District 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 and receive approximately 75 percent of their water supply from it: 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 the Orange County Water District and its board of directors, call (714) 378-3200 or visit www.ocwd.com.

About the Orange County Sanitation District

OCSD is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County. OCSD is a special district that is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors comprised of 20 cities, four special districts, and one representative from the Orange County Board of Supervisors. OCSD has two operating facilities that treat wastewater from

residential, commercial and industrial sources. For more information, about the Orange County Sanitation District visit www.ocsd.com or call (714) 962-2411.

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