



# UNDERGROUND

Fall 2002

## ORANGE COUNTY GROUNDWATER BASIN OVERDRAFTED DUE TO INCREASED PRODUCTION AND RECENT DRY YEARS

AGWA member agency Orange County Water District (OCWD)'s Board is taking action to ad-

dress the condition of the groundwater basin's overdraft of more than 400,000 acre-feet--200,000 acre-feet more than the target overdraft level, but 300,000 acre-feet less than the lowest overdraft in agency records. The overdraft was caused by increased groundwater production and drier conditions over the past three years, which reduced the amount of local water available to refill the basin.

The OCWD Board is reviewing possible solutions that include:

- Lowering the amount of groundwater used in north-central Orange County.
- Improving the agency's ability to put more water into the groundwater basin.
- Determining what the best level for water in the groundwater basin is.
- Encouraging more residential and business conservation.
- Developing a new "zero-based" basin management strategy that links the amount of future groundwater use with guaranteed water available, along with the capability of OCWD to put that water into deep aquifers.

"In recent times, we did whatever we could to provide 75 percent of the north-central cities' water supplies from the groundwater basin," said OCWD Board President Jerry A. King. "Annual pumping has increased today to the point that we

*(Continued on next page)*

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- ORANGE COUNTY GROUNDWATER BASIN OVERDRAFTED DUE TO INCREASED PRODUCTION AND RECENT DRY YEARS
- GLENDALE CONTINUES TO REMOVE CHROMIUM-6 FROM WATER SUPPLY
- CADIZ PROGRAM RECEIVES FINAL FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL
- WRD COMPLETES ANOTHER WELL PROJECT
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE \$10,000 IN GRANTS
- ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT SUPPORTS PROPOSITION 50--WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ISSUE
- GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION HOSTS SYMPOSIUM ON GROUNDWATER CONTAMINANTS

Comments, story suggestions and articles are encouraged. Please call: (714) 964-1668, fax (714) 964-4614

or e-mail: [greenliefcomm@socal.rr.com](mailto:greenliefcomm@socal.rr.com)  
Visit the AGWA website at: [www.agwa.org](http://www.agwa.org)

must back off providing 75 percent of the supply until we can improve our ability to acquire new water and build facilities to put water into the ground."

Groundwater costs about \$127 per acre-foot plus about \$50 for energy costs to extract the water from the ground. In comparison, imported water from northern California and the Colorado River costs \$450 per acre-foot.

As a result of OCWD addressing the overdraft, cities that use groundwater will need to buy more imported water in the future at a higher cost. Groundwater rates will also increase due to the need to develop new and improved ways to get water into the aquifers.

Some of the other strategies to improve future basin water levels include improving OCWD's ability to recharge Santa Ana River and imported water in the future, buying additional land for percolation basins, obtaining discounted imported water to decrease the use of the basins, storing regional water supplies in the basin and developing an experimental vehicle to clean percolation lakes.

To address the current drought in southern California, OCWD is asking residential users to go to the OCWD website ([www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com)) for easy conservation measures. Additionally, OCWD is encouraging the purchase of front-loading washers, ultra low-flush toilets, and faucet and shower aerators.

This year, OCWD member agencies could take 75 percent of their water demand from the basin. How much groundwater the cities can take next year will be determined in the next few months as various solutions to fill the basin are explored. Unfortunately, this change could result in higher retail water rates.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## **GLENDALE CONTINUES TO REMOVE CHROMIUM-6 FROM WATER SUPPLY**

The city of Glendale is expected to receive \$500,000 from the federal government in the coming year to help remove chromium-6 from its drinking water supply. The funds are earmarked in the U.S. EPA's annual spending bill, recently approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Glendale, which received \$750,000 in the FY2002 spending bill to work on its chromium-6 problem, is pumping and treating groundwater from wells that are part of the city's groundwater cleanup project. U.S. EPA has insisted that all wells be pumped as part of the Superfund project to remove volatile organic compounds from the groundwater. Currently, 95 percent of the groundwater is being treated and delivered to the city, while about 5 percent of the water containing high levels of chromium-6 will, beginning in late fall, go to a recycled water system.

Glendale, along with Burbank, Los Angeles, San Fernando and the AWWA Research Foundation, are now participating in a \$400,000 study to develop a technology to remove trace levels of chromium-6 from water supplies.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## **CADIZ PROGRAM RECEIVES FINAL FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL**

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released its Record of Decision for the proposed Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program. Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's Board of Directors has scheduled three meetings to review documents associated with the proposed program.

The Department of the Interior recently signed a Record of Decision setting forth the Interior's decision to issue a right-of-way grant for a pipeline and power facilities located on federal lands to allow for the proposed program, which would be located in San Bernardino County.

Following the approval, the Metropolitan Water District Board of Directors has scheduled the following meetings associated with the proposed Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program:

October 7 - Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee, to review the right-of-way determination as contained in the recent Record of Decision issued by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

October 22 (tentative) - Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee, to review the Cadiz project's environmental impact report.

November 18 - Legal, Claims and Personnel Committee, to review the proposed contract with Cadiz Inc.

The Cadiz project has been developed by Metropolitan Water District, in cooperation with Santa Monica-based Cadiz Inc., to use the groundwater basin underlying part of the Cadiz and Fenner Valleys in San Bernardino County to store Colorado River water for later use. The project also includes potential for export of native or indigenous groundwater under specified conditions to Metropolitan's customers for use in dry years.

The project requires a right-of-way from Interior's BLM for a 34.6-mile pipeline and power distribution facilities that would cross public lands be-

tween Metropolitan's Colorado River Aqueduct and Cadiz Inc.'s private lands. The recent action sets forth Interior's decision to issue a right-of-way grant and temporary use permit, which will require Metropolitan to comply with a wide array of some 130 terms and conditions to mitigate the project's impacts. Once the Metropolitan Board agrees to these conditions, Interior could then issue the right-of-way grant and permit to the Water District. The right-of-way grant and permit will be effective when it is officially approved and signed by Metropolitan, as well as by the Department of the Interior.

A key mitigation measure required is the adoption of the detailed Groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan, developed cooperatively by BLM, the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Geological Survey, Metropolitan and the County of San Bernardino. The plan provides for an extensive system of monitoring facilities and is designed to ensure protection of critical resources, including springs within the NPS' Mojave National Preserve and surrounding BLM managed lands, the aquifer system, brine resources of Bristol and Cadiz Dry Lakes, and air quality within the Mojave Desert region. The Plan would be overseen by Metropolitan and BLM with advice from a technical review panel made up of expert advisors from federal, state, and local agencies as necessary.

The Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program, proposed in 1999, has been analyzed in draft, supplement to the draft, and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

In issuing the decision, Rebecca Watson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management, said the Department acknowledges the concerns raised by Senator Dianne Feinstein and others regarding the project's potential impacts on groundwater resources as well as the Senator's request for a cap on the amount of water that could be transported across the right-of-way. "Whether the Department of the Interior has the authority to cap the groundwater resources of California raises

*(Continued on next page)*

serious legal questions," Watson said. "We believe that the management plan, which is based on science and a strong monitoring program, will assure the necessary protection of the natural resources for which we are responsible."

The Cadiz Record of Decision, the FEIS/EIR, and the Groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan are available online at [www.ca.blm.gov/news/pdfs/cadiz\\_2002/](http://www.ca.blm.gov/news/pdfs/cadiz_2002/) and [www.mwd.h20.com](http://www.mwd.h20.com). Copies of the Record of Decision are being mailed to interested parties of record. Copies are also available at local public libraries and are available upon request from BLM's Desert District Office at (909) 697-5200, the BLM's Needles Office at (760) 326-7000 or Metropolitan at (213) 217-6981.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## WRD COMPLETES ANOTHER WELL PROJECT

AGWA member agency Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) recently completed construction of another series of wells that will provide valuable information on the quality and quantity of groundwater in the West Coast Basin. Officials from WRD and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) have been working at the well location in Gardena and wrapped up construction in early September.

"These wells are our eyes into the groundwater basin," said Ted Johnson, WRD senior hydrogeologist. "This is how we see what's going on underground to effectively manage these valuable water resources."

The Gardena project is one of 35 locations that have been targeted by WRD and USGS. This cooperative study between the two agencies began in 1995 and has produced about 175 new wells located in communities throughout southern Los Angeles County. Each location has between four to six wells, which range in depth from 100 feet to 1,500 feet. Wells at four other locations will be drilled later this year. They will be located in Compton, Long Beach, Norwalk and Whittier.

The data collected from the wells is critical to the operation of WRD, which is responsible for managing two of the most utilized groundwater basins in Southern California.

Besides measuring water quality and water levels, the water district will obtain information on the depth and thickness of the drinking water aquifers. USGS officials will initially take water samples from the wells and forward the results to WRD. After that, WRD will collect water quality samples from the wells twice annually and measure water levels at least four times daily with automatic data loggers, according to Johnson. This information along with other water quality data is compiled by the WRD and published in an annual report that is available to pumpers and to the public.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE \$10,000 IN GRANTS

Two community-based, non-profit organizations each received a \$5,000 grant for water-related projects at a recent work session meeting of AGWA member agency Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD)'s board of directors.

Recipient organizations were the TODEC Legal Center of Perris and the Riverside County Youth Museum (KidZone) in Hemet.

According to Marion Ashley, EMWD director and member of the Metropolitan board of directors, the TODEC project is an "educational public outreach program on water awareness, water quality and conservation issues that is targeted at limited- and non-English speaking Riverside County residents. It is a project that is badly needed."

EMWD board president Rodger Siems noted that the grant for the Riverside County Youth Museum "will help the museum upgrade its interactive Waterworks exhibit, which explores water resource topics including quality, reliability, reclamation and conservation. The museum is a tremen-

*(Continued on next page)*

dous resource for schools as well as for individual youngsters."

The grants were provided by the Community Partnering Program of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. As a member agency of Metropolitan, EMWD contributed to the funding of the grant program. EMWD also provided supportive information when the TODEC and Youth Museum applications were under consideration by Metropolitan staff.

Luz Ayala, executive director, accepted the grant on behalf of TODEC. The Youth Museum grant was accepted by Cheryl Bohman, museum manager.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## **ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT SUPPORTS PROPOSITION 50--WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ISSUE**

The Orange County Water District (OCWD) Board of Directors voted unanimously in September to support Proposition 50, which will be on the November 2002 ballot. If passed, Proposition 50 - "Californians for Clean Water and Coastal Protection" will reduce water pollution, protect drinking water quality, clean up beach pollution and ensure a stable, reliable, secure water supply for California.

"In an arid region like Southern California, it is important we look out for the future of our citizens by supporting ballot measures that will help fund programs that will benefit our grandchildren and great grandchildren," said Jerry A. King, OCWD board president. "Proposition 50 will provide funding opportunities to help Orange County Water District gain new water supplies, expand water projects that help the environment and address aging infrastructure."

According to OCWD, Proposition 50 will help California water agencies by providing the opportunity to fund programs to clean up contaminated

water supplies, replace outdated equipment with state-of-the-art technologies, and develop new sources of water-- including recycling, conservation, water reclamation and desalination. It will also provide the opportunity to enhance the environment and naturally purify our water sources. The bond also provides grant opportunities to help increase security for our water distribution systems, clean our beaches and protect endangered species.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## **GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION HOSTS SYMPOSIUM ON GROUNDWATER CONTAMINANTS**

The Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRA), in conjunction with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, is developing the Fifth Symposium in its Series on Groundwater Contaminants, "Biological Treatment of MTBE Contamination in Groundwater: Ex-situ and In-situ Challenges." The Symposium will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in San Jose, Calif., on Oct. 17, 2002.

Methyl-tertiary butyl-ether, or MTBE, has received nationwide attention as a groundwater contaminant in recent years, especially in California due to highly publicized impacts to drinking water supply wells in Santa Monica and South Lake Tahoe. While MTBE was initially thought to be resistant to biodegradation in groundwater aquifers, this perception has changed dramatically in the last five years. Recent and ongoing studies indicate that MTBE is subject to biodegradation under a range of environmental conditions. In fact, a number of innovative treatment technologies that have been tested at bench-scale and pilot-scale levels and applied in the field rely exclusively on biologically-based principles for the removal of MTBE from contaminated media.

The symposium will showcase experts discussing

*(Continued on next page)*

recent reports of both *ex-situ* and *in-situ* MTBE bioremediation case studies. Speakers will focus on the use of molecular, isotopic and other innovative tools for evaluating the success of *in-situ* bioremediation in the field, and the program will provide information via a panel of speakers on the regulatory acceptance of bioremediation as a remedial action for MTBE. Speakers will also discuss the potential for success of intrinsic biodegradation as a component of natural attenuation, and a panel of attorneys and regulators have been invited to debate emerging issues related to MTBE during lunch.

For more information, please contact GRA's Executive Director, Kathy Snelson, at [executive\\_director@grac.org](mailto:executive_director@grac.org).

### WATER DROPS...

- U.S. EPA has released final guidance on implementing the revised arsenic rule promulgated on Jan. 22, 2001. It retains the agency's Jan. 25, 2002, guidance on calculating compliance (i.e., when the standard takes effect in 2006, a violation occurs at or above 0.0105 mg/L) and continues to require water suppliers to include, as of Feb. 22, 2002, an updated informational statement in their annual Consumer Confidence Reports when arsenic levels range from above 0.005 mg/L to 0.010 mg/L and a health effects statement when levels range from above 0.010 mg/L to 0.050 mg/L.
- President Bush on Aug. 13 rejected \$5.1 billion of the \$28.9 billion in emergency spending in a bill (HR 4775) he signed into law on Aug. 2 (Public Law 107-206), including \$50 million for U.S. EPA to help small- and medium-sized water utilities complete vulnerability assessments as required by the Bioterrorism Act Bush signed in June. The action also voided up to \$5 million earmarked for "qualified organizations" to help rural water systems complete vulnerability assessments, \$1.25 million for the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority to install remote monitoring of

water supplies for toxins, \$108 million for the Army corps of Engineers to secure its dams and reservoirs and \$9.5 million for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to enhance the capacity of states to respond to chemical terrorism.

- On September 23, Gov. Davis signed SB 1653, authored by Sen. Jim Costa (D-Fresno), creating a formal governing body for the seven-year-old, CALFED Bay-Delta program. The new entity will be known as the California Bay-Delta Authority.
- In August, Attorney Deborah Dentler was seated as a member of the board of directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Dentler is one of four directors representing the city of Los Angeles on Metropolitan's 37-member board. She replaces George Wein, who had served on Metropolitan's board since October 1993. An attorney for 22 years, Dentler has a private law practice in Glendale, specializing in the preparation of criminal and civil writs and appeals and advising non-profit organizations.

[PRINT VERSION](#)

## **ORANGE COUNTY GROUNDWATER BASIN OVERDRAFTED DUE TO INCREASED PRODUCTION AND RECENT DRY YEARS**

AGWA member agency Orange County Water District (OCWD)'s Board is taking action to address the condition of the groundwater basin's overdraft of more than 400,000 acre-feet--200,000 acre-feet more than the target overdraft level, but 300,000 acre-feet less than the lowest overdraft in agency records. The overdraft was caused by increased groundwater production and drier conditions over the past three years, which reduced the amount of local water available to refill the basin.

The OCWD Board is reviewing possible solutions that include:

- Lowering the amount of groundwater used in north-central Orange County.
- Improving the agency's ability to put more water into the groundwater basin.
- Determining what the best level for water in the groundwater basin is.
- Encouraging more residential and business conservation.
- Developing a new "zero-based" basin management strategy that links the amount of future groundwater use with guaranteed water available, along with the capability of OCWD to put that water into deep aquifers.

"In recent times, we did whatever we could to provide 75 percent of the north-central cities' water supplies from the groundwater basin," said OCWD Board President Jerry A. King. "Annual pumping has increased today to the point that we must back off providing 75 percent of the supply until we can improve our ability to acquire new water and build facilities to put water into the ground."

Groundwater costs about \$127 per acre-foot plus about \$50 for energy costs to extract the water from the ground. In comparison, imported water from northern California and the Colorado River costs \$450 per acre-foot.

As a result of OCWD addressing the overdraft, cities that use groundwater will need to buy more imported water in the future at a higher cost. Groundwater rates will also increase due to the need to develop new and improved ways to get water into the aquifers.

Some of the other strategies to improve future basin water levels include improving OCWD's ability to recharge Santa Ana River and imported water in the future, buying additional land for percolation basins, obtaining discounted imported water to decrease the use of the basins, storing regional water supplies in the basin and developing an experimental vehicle to clean percolation lakes.

To address the current drought in southern California, OCWD is asking residential users to go to the OCWD website ([www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com)) for easy conservation measures. Additionally, OCWD is encouraging the purchase of front-loading washers, ultra low-flush toilets, and faucet and shower aerators.

This year, OCWD member agencies could take 75 percent of their water demand from the basin. How much groundwater the cities can take next year will be determined in the next few months as various solutions to fill the basin are explored. Unfortunately, this change could result in higher retail water rates.

## **GLENDALE CONTINUES TO REMOVE CHROMIUM-6 FROM WATER SUPPLY**

The city of Glendale is expected to receive \$500,000 from the federal government in the coming year to help remove chromium-6 from its drinking water supply. The funds are earmarked in the U.S. EPA's annual spending bill, recently approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Glendale, which received \$750,000 in the FY2002 spending bill to work on its chromium-6 problem, is pumping and treating groundwater from wells that are part of the city's groundwater cleanup project. U.S. EPA has insisted that all wells be pumped as part of the Superfund project to remove volatile organic compounds from the groundwater. Currently, 95 percent of the groundwater is being treated and delivered to the city, while about 5 percent of the water containing high levels of chromium-6 will, beginning in late fall, go to a recycled water system.

Glendale, along with Burbank, Los Angeles, San Fernando and the AWWA Research Foundation, are now participating in a \$400,000 study to develop a technology to remove trace levels of chromium-6 from water supplies.

## **CADIZ PROGRAM RECEIVES FINAL FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL**

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released its Record of Decision for the proposed Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program. Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's Board of Directors has scheduled three meetings to review documents associated with the proposed program.

The Department of the Interior recently signed a Record of Decision setting forth the Interior's decision to issue a right-of-way grant for a pipeline and power facilities located on federal lands to allow for the proposed program, which would be located in San Bernardino County.

Following the approval, the Metropolitan Water District Board of Directors has scheduled the following meetings associated with the proposed Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program:

October 7 - Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee, to review the right-of-way determination as contained in the recent Record of Decision issued by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

October 22 (tentative) - Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee, to review the Cadiz project's environmental impact report.

November 18 - Legal, Claims and Personnel Committee, to review the proposed contract with Cadiz Inc.

The Cadiz project has been developed by Metropolitan Water District, in cooperation with Santa Monica-based Cadiz Inc., to use the groundwater basin underlying part of the Cadiz and Fenner Valleys in San Bernardino County to store Colorado River water for later use. The project also includes potential for export of native or indigenous groundwater under specified conditions to Metropolitan's customers for use in dry years.

The project requires a right-of-way from Interior's BLM for a 34.6-mile pipeline and power distribution facilities that would cross public lands between Metropolitan's Colorado River Aqueduct and Cadiz Inc.'s private lands. The recent action sets forth Interior's decision to issue a right-of-way grant and temporary use permit, which will require Metropolitan to comply with a wide array of some 130 terms and conditions to mitigate the project's impacts. Once the Metropolitan Board agrees to these conditions, Interior could then issue the right-of-way grant and permit to the Water District. The right-of-way grant and permit will be effective when it is officially approved and signed by Metropolitan, as well as by the Department of the Interior.

A key mitigation measure required is the adoption of the detailed Groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan, developed cooperatively by BLM, the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Geological Survey, Metropolitan and the County of San Bernardino. The plan provides for an extensive system of monitoring facilities and is designed to ensure protection of critical resources, including springs within the NPS' Mojave National Preserve and surrounding BLM managed lands, the aquifer system, brine resources of Bristol and Cadiz Dry Lakes, and air quality within the Mojave Desert region. The Plan would be overseen by Metropolitan and BLM with advice from a technical review panel made up of expert advisors from federal, state, and local agencies as necessary.

The Cadiz Groundwater Storage and Dry-Year Supply Program, proposed in 1999, has been analyzed in draft, supplement to the draft, and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

In issuing the decision, Rebecca Watson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Man-

agement, said the Department acknowledges the concerns raised by Senator Dianne Feinstein and others regarding the project's potential impacts on groundwater resources as well as the Senator's request for a cap on the amount of water that could be transported across the right-of-way. "Whether the Department of the Interior has the authority to cap the groundwater resources of California raises serious legal questions," Watson said. "We believe that the management plan, which is based on science and a strong monitoring program, will assure the necessary protection of the natural resources for which we are responsible."

The Cadiz Record of Decision, the FEIS/EIR, and the Groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan are available online at [www.ca.blm.gov/news/pdfs/cadiz\\_2002/](http://www.ca.blm.gov/news/pdfs/cadiz_2002/) and [www.mwd.h2o.com](http://www.mwd.h2o.com). Copies of the Record of Decision are being mailed to interested parties of record. Copies are also available at local public libraries and are available upon request from BLM's Desert District Office at (909) 697-5200, the BLM's Needles Office at (760) 326-7000 or Metropolitan at (213) 217-6981.

## **WRD COMPLETES ANOTHER WELL PROJECT**

AGWA member agency Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) recently completed construction of another series of wells that will provide valuable information on the quality and quantity of groundwater in the West Coast Basin. Officials from WRD and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) have been working at the well location in Gardena and wrapped up construction in early September.

"These wells are our eyes into the groundwater basin," said Ted Johnson, WRD senior hydrogeologist. "This is how we see what's going on underground to effectively manage these valuable water resources."

The Gardena project is one of 35 locations that have been targeted by WRD and USGS. This cooperative study between the two agencies began in 1995 and has produced about 175 new wells located in communities throughout southern Los Angeles County. Each location has between four to six wells, which range in depth from 100 feet to 1,500 feet. Wells at four other locations will be drilled later this year. They will be located in Compton, Long Beach, Norwalk and Whittier.

The data collected from the wells is critical to the operation of WRD, which is responsible for managing two of the most utilized groundwater basins in Southern California. Besides measuring water quality and water levels, the water district will obtain information on the depth and thickness of the drinking water aquifers. USGS officials will initially take water samples from the wells and forward the results to WRD. After that, WRD will collect water quality samples from the wells twice annually and measure water levels at least four times daily with automatic data loggers, according to Johnson. This information along with other water quality data is compiled by the WRD and published in an annual report that is available to pumpers and to the public.

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE \$10,000 IN GRANTS**

Two community-based, non-profit organizations each received a \$5,000 grant for water-related projects at a recent work session meeting of AGWA member agency Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD)'s board of directors.

Recipient organizations were the TODEC Legal Center of Perris and the Riverside County Youth Museum (KidZone) in Hemet.

According to Marion Ashley, EMWD director and member of the Metropolitan board of directors, the TODEC project is an "educational public outreach program on water awareness, water quality and conservation issues that is targeted at limited- and non-English speaking Riverside County residents. It is a project that is badly needed."

EMWD board president Rodger Siems noted that the grant for the Riverside County Youth Museum "will help the museum upgrade its interactive Waterworks exhibit, which explores water resource topics including quality, reliability, reclamation and conservation. The museum is a tremendous resource for schools as well as for individual youngsters."

The grants were provided by the Community Partnering Program of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. As a member agency of Metropolitan, EMWD contributed to the funding of the grant program. EMWD also provided supportive information when the TODEC and Youth Museum applications were under consideration by Metropolitan staff.

Luz Ayala, executive director, accepted the grant on behalf of TODEC. The Youth Museum grant was accepted by Cheryl Bohman, museum manager.

## **ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT SUPPORTS PROPOSITION 50--WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ISSUE**

The Orange County Water District (OCWD) Board of Directors voted unanimously in September to support Proposition 50, which will be on the November 2002 ballot. If passed, Proposition 50 - "Californians for Clean Water and Coastal Protection" will reduce water pollution, protect drinking water quality, clean up beach pollution and ensure a stable, reliable, secure water supply for California.

"In an arid region like Southern California, it is important we look out for the future of our citizens by supporting ballot measures that will help fund programs that will benefit our grandchildren and great grandchildren," said Jerry A. King, OCWD board president. "Proposition 50 will provide funding opportunities to help Orange County Water District gain new water supplies, expand water projects that help the environment and address aging infrastructure."

According to OCWD, Proposition 50 will help California water agencies by providing the opportunity to fund programs to clean up contaminated water supplies, replace outdated equipment with state-of-the-art technologies, and develop new sources of water-- including recycling, conservation, water reclamation and desalination. It will also provide the opportunity to enhance the environment and naturally purify our water sources. The bond also provides grant opportunities to help increase security for our water distribution systems, clean our beaches and protect endangered species.

## GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION HOSTS SYMPOSIUM ON GROUNDWATER CONTAMINANTS

The Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRA), in conjunction with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, is developing the Fifth Symposium in its Series on Groundwater Contaminants, "Biological Treatment of MTBE Contamination in Groundwater: Ex-situ and In-situ Challenges." The Symposium will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in San Jose, Calif., on Oct. 17, 2002.

Methyl-tertiary butyl-ether, or MTBE, has received nationwide attention as a groundwater contaminant in recent years, especially in California due to highly publicized impacts to drinking water supply wells in Santa Monica and South Lake Tahoe. While MTBE was initially thought to be resistant to biodegradation in groundwater aquifers, this perception has changed dramatically in the last five years. Recent and ongoing studies indicate that MTBE is subject to biodegradation under a range of environmental conditions. In fact, a number of innovative treatment technologies that have been tested at bench-scale and pilot-scale levels and applied in the field rely exclusively on biologically-based principles for the removal of MTBE from contaminated media.

The symposium will showcase experts discussing recent reports of both *ex-situ* and *in-situ* MTBE bioremediation case studies. Speakers will focus on the use of molecular, isotopic and other innovative tools for evaluating the success of *in-situ* bioremediation in the field, and the program will provide information via a panel of speakers on the regulatory acceptance of bioremediation as a remedial action for MTBE. Speakers will also discuss the potential for success of intrinsic biodegradation as a component of natural attenuation, and a panel of attorneys and regulators have been invited to debate emerging issues related to MTBE during lunch.

For more information, please contact GRA's Executive Director, Kathy Snelson, at [executive\\_director@grac.org](mailto:executive_director@grac.org).

### WATER DROPS...

- U.S. EPA has released final guidance on implementing the revised arsenic rule promulgated on Jan. 22, 2001. It retains the agency's Jan. 25, 2002, guidance on calculating compliance (i.e., when the standard takes effect in 2006, a violation occurs at or above 0.0105 mg/L) and continues to require water suppliers to include, as of Feb. 22, 2002, an updated informational statement in their annual Consumer Confidence Reports when arsenic levels range from above 0.005 mg/L to 0.010 mg/L and a health effects statement when levels range from above 0.010 mg/L to 0.050 mg/L.
- President Bush on Aug. 13 rejected \$5.1 billion of the \$28.9 billion in emergency spending in a bill (HR 4775) he signed into law on Aug. 2 (Public Law 107-206), including \$50 million for U.S. EPA to help small- and medium-sized water utilities complete vulnerability assessments as required by the Bioterrorism Act Bush signed in June. The action also voided up to \$5 million earmarked for "qualified organizations" to help rural water systems complete vulnerability assessments, \$1.25 million for the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority to install remote monitoring of water supplies for toxins, \$108 million for the Army corps of Engineers to secure its dams and reservoirs and \$9.5 million for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to enhance the capacity of states to respond to chemical terrorism.
- On September 23, Gov. Davis signed SB 1653, authored by Sen. Jim Costa (D-Fresno), creating a formal governing body for the seven-year-old, CALFED Bay-Delta program. The new entity will be

known as the California Bay-Delta Authority.

- In August, Attorney Deborah Dentler was seated as a member of the board of directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Dentler is one of four directors representing the city of Los Angeles on Metropolitan's 37-member board. She replaces George Wein, who had served on Metropolitan's board since October 1993. An attorney for 22 years, Dentler has a private law practice in Glendale, specializing in the preparation of criminal and civil writs and appeals and advising non-profit organizations.