



UNDERGROUND

Summer 2002

AGWA RELEASES REVISED MISSION STATEMENT

The Association of Ground Water Agencies (AGWA) has recently revised its mission statement. The new mission statement is as follows:

“The mission of the Association of Ground Water Agencies is to provide a unified voice for groundwater management agencies, to coordinate efforts and exchange information to enhance the effective management of groundwater resources in California.”

Specifically, AGWA’s purpose is to create a forum for the discussion of groundwater issues of interest to those entities which, either by court judgment or statute, are responsible for management of groundwater basin resources, and to take action where appropriate in connection with such issues.

AGWA’s primary objectives are to:

- promote more effective means of enhancing management of groundwater basins
- promote the reliability of existing groundwater supplies and the increase of basin yields
- promote the protection and enhancement of groundwater quality

The mission statement was updated to reflect AGWA’s current mission, goals, and objectives. For more information, log on to www.agwa.org.

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

or e-mail: greenliefcomm@socal.rr.com
Visit the AGWA website at: www.agwa.org

WRD NEARS COMPLETION OF ALAMITOS BARRIER RECYCLED WATER PROJECT

After nearly 14 months of construction, AGWA member agency the Water Replenishment District (WRD) of Southern California has announced that a state-of-the-art treatment facility to further treat recycled water before pumping it into the Alamitos Seawater Intrusion Barrier is scheduled to be completed by this December.

The \$16 million Alamitos Barrier Recycled Water Project will treat water from the Long Beach Water Reclamation Plant using microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light. The facility will produce 3,000 acre-feet of water annually (about 2.7 million gallons daily) that will be blended with imported water and pumped into the barrier to protect against seawater intrusion. A regional groundwater monitoring office will also be built on the site, located just west of the 605 Freeway and south of Willow Street.

“The project will reduce the use of imported water, thereby improving the reliability of supply to the barrier,” said Hoover Ng, the WRD’s water quality program manager. “This source of high quality, safe water is sustainable even during drought conditions.”

The benefits of this unique project include:

- Improving the reliability of water supply to the intrusion barrier.
- Decreasing reliance on costly imported water.
- Providing a more cost-effective source of water.
- Increasing recycled water use and water conservation.

The WRD and the federal government are funding the project. Also, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California has agreed to provide rebates for the project. Other agencies involved include the Long Beach Water Department—which will operate and maintain the plant—Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, AGWA member agency Orange County Water District (OCWD), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, AGWA member agency Central Basin Municipal Water District, California Department of Health Services and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The Alamitos Seawater Intrusion Barrier spans the Los Angeles and Orange County line, preventing ocean water from contaminating Los Angeles County’s central basin and Orange County’s groundwater basin. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and OCWD jointly fund the cost of operating and maintaining the barrier facilities. WRD and OCWD jointly fund the purchase of 6,500 acre-feet per year of imported water that is injected into the barrier. For more information about WRD, log on to the agency’s website at www.wrd.org.

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GROUNDWATER REPLENISHMENT SYSTEM RECEIVES \$30 MILLION CONSTRUCTION GRANT

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has awarded \$30 million in grant funding to the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWR System), the joint water reclamation project developed by AGWA member agency Orange County Water District (OCWD) and Orange County Sanitation District. Proposition 13, also known as the Water Bond 2000, made the Groundwater Storage Construction Grant possible.

The GWR System grant represents the single largest DWR award from \$91 million in Groundwater Storage Program funds available statewide. The grant program used a competitive process to decide how to allocate the funds among 12 finalists from the 43 applications submitted for funding. The latest award brings the total grant funding for the GWR System to \$92.5 million.

DWR recognized the GWR System for its potential to lessen overall impact on the Bay-Delta system in Northern California by reducing imported water demands an estimated 75,000 acre-feet per year and for its ability to compensate for future cutbacks in California's supply of the Colorado River by having a new, local source of water available.

"The Groundwater Replenishment System project embodies the innovative technologies and inter-agency cooperation that will be required to assure a reliable water supply for Orange County businesses and families. I'm proud to join my Orange County colleagues, both state and federal, in strongly supporting this project and its critical role in our future. I applaud Governor Davis and Department of Water Resources Director Thomas Hannigan for showing their strong support for Orange County water reliability through this grant," stated California State Assemblyman Lou Correa.

Once completed, the GWR System will take highly treated sewer water that is currently released into the ocean, and purify it through microfiltration,

reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light with hydrogen peroxide advanced oxidation treatment, producing water similar in quality to bottled water. The purified water will become part of a seawater barrier and be pumped through a 13-mile pipeline to spreading basins in Anaheim, where it will percolate into deep aquifers and blend with Orange County's other sources of groundwater, following the same natural filtering path rainwater takes through the ground.

"The Groundwater Replenishment System is an innovative project that will improve local water quality, make our water supply more reliable, and provide us with local control over part of our water future," said Irv Pickler, chairman of the Groundwater Replenishment System Joint Cooperative Committee. "The grant further supports Orange County's efforts to ensure enough water for the future."

The \$30 million grant specifically provides funds for construction of the Advanced Water Treatment facilities and pumping stations and the 13-mile pipeline from the treatment facilities to existing spreading basins.

"By continuing to support the GWR System with state funds, California is telling the people of Orange County to move forward on this very important project," said Norm Eckenrode, Orange County Sanitation District board member and co-chair of the Joint Cooperative Committee for the Groundwater Replenishment System.

Future work on the GWR System includes demolition of the existing Water Factory 21 water purification facility in Fountain Valley; construction of the new water purification facility; constructing new injection wells, a pump station and a 13-mile pipeline from Fountain Valley to Orange County Water District's groundwater basin recharge facilities. The project is scheduled to produce purified water by 2006.

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EMWD TO GENERATE POWER AND CLEANER AIR WITH MICROTURBINES

AGWA member agency Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) has been granted five, 60-kilowatt microturbines by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) in a program intended to improve air quality while also saving water ratepayers money.

The microturbines, which are each about the size of a refrigerator, are clean, efficient fuel sources that EMWD plans to use as an alternative to buying electricity from the existing power grid. These units run on natural gas and are worth about \$64,000 each.

“Microturbines are the next generation of generators. They’re cleaner, they’re simpler, they’re cost-effective, and they’re quiet,” said Dan Howell, director of purchasing and contracts at EMWD.

Because EMWD is charged different rates based on its time of electricity use, the microturbines will also be used to generate power when electricity from the grid is most expensive. The microturbines are expected to be used during on-peak and mid-peak hours (between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m.) during summer months and less during the rest of the year. When to use the microturbines will be based on ongoing cost comparisons of natural gas and electricity.

“This gives us better fuel flexibility,” said Howell, who stressed the importance of reducing dependence on power companies for energy.

EMWD was selected to receive five of seven microturbines available from AQMD for sites in Riverside County.

All five microturbines will be used at EMWD’s district headquarters in Perris. The microturbines will also be used to heat water as well as to generate power. Hot-air exhaust from the microturbine system will be used to heat water for air conditioning chiller systems in the EMWD buildings, which should reduce natural gas usage, Howell said.

The units will also reduce the electrical load on a 1200-kilowatt (kW) generator and a 125-kW generator during power outages. The microturbines will run much cleaner than the emergency diesel generators.

The five microturbines are expected to save EMWD around \$56,000 per year in electricity costs. EMWD staff will install the microturbines and have them operational by next summer.

EMWD is the freshwater, wastewater service and recycled water provider to a 555-square mile area from Moreno Valley southward along the I-215 corridor to Temecula and eastward to Hemet and San Jacinto.

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DESALINATION RESEARCH INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP RECEIVES \$4 MILLION GRANT

A \$4 million water research grant has been awarded to the Desalination Research Innovation Partnership by the Department of Water Resources through funds from Proposition 13. Several AGWA member agencies, including the Orange County Water District and West Basin Municipal Water District, are part of the consortium.

The consortium also includes Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, San Diego County Water Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Alameda County Water District, Sonoma County Water Agency and the University of California.

The Desalination Research and Innovation Partnership seeks to improve technology for removing salt from Southern California’s water supply. It is estimated that the excessive concentration of salt in the water supply of Southern California costs taxpayers and water consumers in excess of \$100 million annually. It also hampers efforts to recycle water.

The Partnership will help enhance membrane

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processes to ensure their efficient and cost-effective operation. Both microfiltration and reverse osmosis will be examined to study the fouling that results from purifying wastewater.

For its portion of the partnership, Orange County Water District was awarded a two-year, \$415,000 grant to conduct research related to the advanced purification of municipal wastewater. OCWD's Water Resources and Technology department will apply the funding toward projects designed to support current and future water reuse programs.

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WRD DIRECTOR ROBERT GOLDSWORTHY ELECTED AS SPECIAL DISTRICT ALTERNATE COMMISSIONER TO LAFCO

Robert W. Goldsworthy, director of AGWA member agency the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD), has been elected alternate commissioner to the Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

Goldsworthy will serve a four-year term as alternate commissioner representing the independent special districts throughout the County. LAFCO is responsible for coordinating changes in local governmental boundaries, including annexations, incorporations of cities, formations of special districts, consolidations, as well as reviewing ways to reorganize, simplify and streamline government structure.

"I am extremely honored to be elected as an alternate LAFCO commissioner representing the independent special districts," said Goldsworthy, who has been on the WRD Board since 1988 and currently serves as treasurer. "I look forward to bringing my unique perspective to the complex regional urban planning issues addressed by the LAFCO Board."

Goldsworthy will be one of six alternate commissioners and the only alternate representing inde-

pendent special districts. The LAFCO Commission has nine members, including two who represent special districts. Goldsworthy was elected by members of the 57 independent special districts, which includes water agencies. The special districts are mandated by law to contribute to the annual LAFCO operating budget. In 2001-02, special districts funded 23 percent of the LAFCO budget.

Goldsworthy brings to the new position more than 40 years of experience in a major manufacturing industry and 13 years as an elected official. During his tenure on the WRD Board, he has served as president and vice president and was a director of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. He graduated with a degree in chemical engineering from Stanford University and received a graduate degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Goldsworthy represents Division Two, which includes the cities of El Segundo, Gardena, Hermosa Beach, Torrance, Palos Verdes, San Pedro and Redondo Beach.

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CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD

In celebration Water Awareness Month, AGWA member agency Orange County Water District (OCWD), OCWD's Groundwater Guardian Team and The Disneyland Resort hosted the sixth annual Children's Water Education Festival May 7 and 8 at Hidden Valley Park in Irvine. The event attracted more than 6,000 third- and fourth-graders and more than 800 teachers and parents from throughout Orange County—the largest number of attendees in the event's history. The festival taught students about Orange County's environment, wildlife and water, in a fun, interactive, hands-on setting.

"The facts and concepts that the children learn at this festival will be with them longer than anything they read in a book," said Delaine Eastin,

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California State Superintendent for Public Instruction and keynote speaker at the festival's VIP Luncheon. "When children learn in a hands-on way, it is much more powerful."

For information on the 2003 festival, or to find out how to become a volunteer or sponsor, contact Sharon Lien at (714) 378-3362.

WATER DROPS...

- The Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRA) will be hosting its 11th Annual Conference and Meeting, "Sustaining Groundwater Resources: The Critical Vision." The conference, which will be held Sept. 18 and 19 at the Sutton Hotel in Newport Beach, will address the serious challenges involved in addressing the expanding pressures on water resources and averting an impending water crisis. GRA will also host a half-day field trip, touring OCWD's Groundwater Replenishment System facilities, on Sept. 17. To find out more information, or to register for the conference, log on to GRA's website at www.grac.org.
- On July 25, the California Air Resources Board carried out an executive order issued earlier this year by Gov. Gray Davis, giving gasoline refiners until Dec. 31, 2003, to eliminate MTBE from fuel produced in California. The expected decision was met with protest from several statewide water organizations, including the Association of California Water Agencies and the Groundwater Resources Association of California, which both stated that they strongly disagree with the decision.
- Members of the Colorado River Board of California held a special workshop at the Los Angeles offices of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California on July 24, saying that Southern California could suffer big water supply cuts next year. Gerald Zimmerman, executive director of the Colorado River Board, said water flow on the Colorado River has decreased for the last five years and total water

storage has plummeted by nearly 8 million acre-feet in the past year alone. Zimmerman said Southern California would have suffered a 700,000 acre-foot cut in water this year--about 30 percent of the region's total water use--if it hadn't been for the Interim Surplus Guidelines. The guideline agreement, however, will be suspended in January 2003, leaving a potential 30 percent water cut if California water agencies cannot finalize the Quantification Settlement Agreement by Dec. 31, 2002.

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