



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2022

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SAWPA'S BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVES PFAS RESOLUTION

RIVERSIDE, CA – The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority's (SAWPA) Board of Commissioners approved a Resolution aimed at addressing the cost and removal of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from local ground water and wastewater.

The approved Resolution upholds Orange County Water District's (OCWD) legislative platform, which requests support from legislators to address this critical issue, including the estimated cost of more than \$1 billion over 30 years in Orange County.

"OCWD and our dedicated staff work tirelessly to address PFAS in the Orange County Groundwater Basin," said OCWD President Steve Sheldon. "Recognizing the importance of being proactive and getting treatment facilities constructed swiftly, OCWD and its retail water providers are ensuring that Orange County's water supply remains among the highest quality in the nation."

PFAS are a group of thousands of manmade, heat-resistant chemicals that are prevalent in the environment and are commonly used in consumer products to repel water, grease, and oil. Due to their prolonged use, PFAS are being detected in water sources throughout the United States, including the Orange County Groundwater Basin, which supplies 77% of the water supply to 2.5 million people in north and central Orange County. Despite playing no role in the use of PFAS, water providers must find ways to remove it from their local water supplies.

OCWD and 10 Orange County public water agencies filed a lawsuit against the manufacturers of PFAS, seeking to protect ratepayers and ensure that the associated costs, including but not limited to treatment and replacement water, are borne by the companies that developed and manufactured PFAS.

Passage of this PFAS Resolution demonstrates the SAWPA Board of Commissioners' unified position that water and wastewater utilities that comply with applicable and appropriate federal management and treatment standards must not be responsible for current and future costs associated with a PFAS cleanup, as well as their support for OCWD's responsive legislative platform.

The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA), a joint power authority located in Riverside, California, focuses on a broad range of water resource issues including water supply reliability, water quality improvement, recycled water, wastewater treatment, groundwater management, brine disposal, and integrated regional planning. SAWPA's mission is to develop and maintain regional plans, programs, and projects that will protect the Santa Ana River basin water resources to maximize beneficial uses within the watershed in an economically and environmentally responsible manner. To learn more, please visit www.SAWPA.org and follow SAWPA_OWOW on Twitter and Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority on LinkedIn.

RESOLUTION 2022-6

**A RESOLUTION OF THE SANTA ANA WATERSHED PROJECT AUTHORITY
SUPPORTING FEDERAL PFAS LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS RATEPAYERS
AND WATER/WASTEWATER AGENCIES**

WHEREAS, PFAS are a group of chemicals developed by chemical manufacturers that would otherwise not exist naturally and despite playing no role in releasing PFAS into the environment, water and wastewater agencies must find ways to remove them from local water supplies; and,

WHEREAS, Ratepayers are at risk from pending PFAS legislation and associated PFAS costs and water agencies and stakeholders must take action to inform members of Congress of these devastating impacts; and,

WHEREAS, All PFAS-related legislation must exempt water and wastewater agencies from any liability for PFAS cleanup costs; and,

WHEREAS, A water utility that complies with applicable and appropriate federal management and treatment standards must not be responsible for current and future costs associated with a PFAS cleanup; and,

WHEREAS, Given the potential for federal legislation to expose water agencies that simply receive and treat water supplies with across-the-board liability for PFAS-related cleanups when they have no responsibility for the presence of PFAS, an explicit exemption from Superfund clean-up liability must be made for water and wastewater agencies; and,

WHEREAS, Under existing law (Safe Drinking Water Act), the USEPA ensures that public health benefits of new drinking water standards are reasonably balanced with the compliance costs that water system ratepayers will ultimately incur and eliminating this analysis would burden ratepayers of all income levels with astronomical costs to comply with drinking water standards; and,

WHEREAS, When setting drinking water standards for PFOA and PFOS, we advocate for the USEPA to use this longstanding methodology.; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, let it be resolved that the Board of Directors of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) hereby supports these federal PFAS policy principles to protect water/wastewater agencies and their ratepayers and,

FURTHERMORE, we call upon the Orange County Congressional Delegations and California Senatorial Delegation to cast votes implementing these public policy positions.

ADOPTED this 19th Day of April, 2022.

SANTA ANA WATERSHED PROJECT AUTHORITY

By:



Marco Tule, Chair

Attest:



Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board

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