



## Thankful For One of Life's Most Precious Resources – Water

Last month, the water industry celebrated "Imagine a Day Without Water," a national education campaign held on October 21 that encouraged us to reflect upon how water is essential, invaluable, and in need of continued investment. No water to drink, bathe, or manufacture products is a challenging concept to imagine.

It allows us to fully appreciate the water resources, infrastructure, and dedicated professionals who play a role in delivering drinking water to us all. In the spirit of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, I am even more thankful for the many water programs we have in place that ensure clean, safe water flows from your taps.

These programs are not possible without our amazing partners including Orange County residents and businesses and the many public and private entities who collaborate with us to enhance water supply for the region. From making smart water choices to supporting necessary water infrastructure investments to the retailers who distribute water—we all play an important part in making sure we have a reliable, high-quality water supply.



By working together, we have all done a great job in ensuring the region is prepared in both wet and dry years. Even with the latest news coming down from the state that expanded the drought emergency statewide, Orange County water agencies are ready, resilient, and reliable. We recognize that recurring drought is a feature of California's climate, and that Orange County is in a semi-arid region which only receives approximately 13 inches of annual rainfall. That is why agencies like the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) invest in local water supply projects and rely on a portfolio approach that includes multiple water sources.

For example, the Orange County Groundwater Basin (Basin), which OCWD manages, holds water from a variety of sources including Santa Ana River flows, stormwater, imported water, and recycled water. The Basin provides 77% of the water supply for 2.5 million people in north and central Orange County, including the city of Fullerton.

Over the years, OCWD has managed the Basin in a sustainable manner and has more than doubled its annual output. In fact, since the previous drought from 2012 to 2016, OCWD has worked hard to substantially refill our groundwater basin. At this time, the Basin can provide water for two consecutive years at current pumping levels even if drought conditions persist.

To further support local water resource development, OCWD continues to invest in maximizing water recycling, increasing stormwater capture, and implementing water quality projects that protect and increase supply. Our communities have stepped up, too. Our residents and businesses have been working hard to implement water-use efficiency programs and have supported investments in local water reliability, like water recycling and conservation programs that sustain the region.

Orange County water providers have a variety of resources, rebates, and water-use efficiency tips to help residents and businesses maintain this commitment to water-use efficiency. Please visit the [City of Fullerton's website](#) for specific information about rebates and other water-saving programs available to you. We also encourage you to learn more about Orange County's water supply, virtual tours, and education programs offered by OCWD by visiting [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com).

Wishing you all a joyful holiday season ahead. Remember, when you're gathering with family and friends, be sure to enjoy your meal with a fresh glass of Orange County tap water.

*In collaboration with Orange County Water District staff, this article was provided by Orange County Water District Director Bruce Whitaker, who represents Division 10, which covers the City of Fullerton. Contact Director Whitaker at [BWWhitaker@live.com](mailto:BWWhitaker@live.com).*