



Infrastructure Keeps Water Flowing

Infrastructure plays a critical role in our lives, whether we realize it or not. From roads, buildings, and freeways to bridges, airports, and public spaces, infrastructure is all around us. These assets and facilities are quite literally the foundation of our communities and are necessary to sustain economic growth.

Water infrastructure often gets overlooked as it's not always visible to the public eye, but it's vital in providing a sustainable supply of water to the homes and businesses in our communities. A talented team of city planners, engineers, operators, and mechanics are needed to construct, operate, and maintain this infrastructure which consists of pump stations, pipelines, aqueducts, dams, water treatment facilities, storage reservoirs, groundwater basins, and more.

As a national non-profit organization, [United for Infrastructure](#) celebrates Infrastructure Week during May 16 – 20, 2022 and works to educate the public about the importance of infrastructure to the nation's economy, workers, and communities to make sure our infrastructure meets the needs of every American – both now and for future generations. This week emphasizes the importance of investing in our water infrastructure locally – whether we are developing new projects or maintaining existing infrastructure.

At the Orange County Water District (OCWD), we continually invest in existing and new infrastructure to increase local water supplies and secure long-term water reliability. This is especially important as California faces recurring drought cycles and challenges to water supply.

OCWD sustainably manages a groundwater basin that provides 77% of the drinking water supply to 2.5 million people in north and central Orange County. A variety of water sources are used to make sure the basin has adequate supply including Santa Ana River flows, stormwater, local rainfall, imported water from northern California and the Colorado River, and recycled water from our [Groundwater Replenishment System \(GWRS\)](#). OCWD maintains a sophisticated aquifer recharge system, that includes 27 recharge basins, to replace the water in the groundwater basin that is pumped from wells belonging to 19 water agencies and cities we serve.

Relying on a diverse water supply portfolio ensures that OCWD always has water to refill the basin—one of the county's most valuable water assets. So, while we are expanding what is already the world's largest water recycling project, the GWRS, we're also increasing stormwater capture, implementing a regional groundwater banking



Complete in 2023, the GWRS Final Expansion will provide 130 million gallons of drinking water a day, enough to serve 1 million people!

program, and exploring ocean water desalination to increase local water supplies. Nothing is off the table; OCWD will perform its due diligence and investigate all options.

We will continue to work together with the city of Fullerton to provide high-quality, reliable water for generations to come. Whether it's routine maintenance or the development of water supply projects, you can count on OCWD and Orange County water agencies to invest in and maintain our critical water infrastructure.

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