



# El Toro Water District

*"A District of Distinction"*

Serving the Public – Respecting the Environment

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Dennis P. Cafferty

July 23, 2026

The Honorable Sheila F. Hanson  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California  
700 Civic Center Drive west  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Responses to the Orange County Grand Jury Report "*PFAS and Public Awareness – A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*"

Dear Presiding Judge Hanson,

On June 9 2026, the Orange County Grand Jury released a report titled "*PFAS and Public Awareness – A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*" (Report). This Report requested that El Toro Water District (District) respond to certain findings and recommendations contained in the Report. The District appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the Orange County Grand Jury Report. The District recognizes and similarly appreciates the efforts made by the Grand Jury to evaluate the important issues of water quality in Orange County.

The El Toro Water District provides water, wastewater and recycled water service to over 50,000 residents in portions of the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo and all of the City of Laguna Woods.

The District is not a member agency of the Orange County Water District and, due to the geology of its service area, does not have access to any groundwater resources. All the drinking water delivered by the District to its customers is surface water imported from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) and treated at either the Diemer Filtration Plant operated by MWD or at the Baker Treatment Plant, operated by the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD).

Per the Orange County Grand Jury's request, and in accordance with Penal Code 933.05, below are the District's responses to each of the Findings and Recommendations outlined in the Report for which the District was requested to respond.

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## FINDINGS

**Finding F2:** *PFAS is widespread, and contamination has been detected in Orange County groundwater sources. Community water systems are required to report PFAS monitoring results in their annual Consumer Confidence Reports.*

**The District agrees with this Finding.**

As noted in the report there has been significant detection of PFAS in the Orange County groundwater basin and Orange County Water District and its member agencies have gone to great lengths to mitigate the PFAS issue. The District agrees that Community Water Systems are required to report detected PFAS monitoring results that were monitored under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR).

**Finding F6:** *Orange County drinking water meets or exceeds state and federal standards and is safe for consumption without additional home filtration.*

**The District agrees with this Finding.**

The El Toro Water District goes to great lengths to ensure the safety of the drinking water delivered to its customers. All the drinking water delivered by the District is imported surface water treated at the MWD Diemer Filtration Plant or the IRWD Baker Water Treatment Plant. The District conducts an extensive water quality sampling and maintenance program to further ensure the drinking water exceeds state and federal standards and is safe for consumption without additional home filtration as it moves through the District water distribution system to the individual customer taps.

**Finding F8:** *There are limited online PFAS education and outreach programs among Orange County water retailers. Most retailers rely on OCWD for PFAS education and outreach. PFAS advisories were included in approximately 55% of the Orange County water retailers' annual water quality reports in 2025.*

**The District agrees with this Finding.**

While there may be limited online PFAS education and outreach programs among Orange County water retailers, the need and required scope of such programs varies depending on the severity of the exposure. The El Toro Water District relies only on treated surface water which has been historically safe from PFAS exposure. The District continues to comply with the UCMR reporting requirements in its

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Consumer Confidence Report for detections of unregulated contaminants. Despite the lack of PFAS in the drinking water the District provides to its customers, the District is already in the process of adding a PFAS page to its website to provide education and outreach to its customers and is providing an article in its Summer 2026 newsletter.

**Recommendation R4:** *By July 1, 2029, all Orange County water retailers should consistently include a PFAS advisory, treatment facilities status, and compliance information in consumer confidence reports and on agency websites, using clear and understandable language for the public. [F2, F8]*

**The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future**

The District is currently in the process of an update and redesign of the District website. A PFAS page has already been added to the new website which will be launched shortly. The District's PFAS monitoring, in compliance with the Unregulated Contaminants Monitoring Rule, has largely demonstrated no detectable PFAS in the drinking water delivered to District customers. The District has therefore not previously included specific language in the Consumer Confidence Report regarding PFAS. The District will consider adding a PFAS advisory, emphasizing the lack of PFAS in the drinking water, in future Consumer Confidence Reports.

**Recommendation R5:** *By September 30, 2026, OCWD and all Orange County water retailers should enhance coordinated public education efforts to reassure their customers about drinking water safety. [F6, F8]*

**The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future**

The El Toro Water District does not have PFAS in the imported treated surface water delivered as drinking water to its customers. However, the District will continue to evaluate opportunities to coordinate public education efforts to reassure their customers about drinking water safety.

The District, once again, appreciates the efforts of the Grand Jury and the opportunity to provide responses to the Findings and Recommendations of the Report.

Sincerely,

EL TORO WATER DISTRICT

  
Kathryn Freshley  
President