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Santa Margarita Water District

August 18, 2026

Honorable Sheila F. Hanson
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Orange
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water

Dear Judge Hanson:

In accordance with Penal Code 933, please find the Santa Margarita Water District response to the subject report as approved by the Santa Margarita Water District Board of Directors.

If you have any questions, please contact Alyson Piguee, Director of Government & Public Affairs, at 949-605-8533.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Grantham".

Robert S. Grantham
General Manager

cc: 2025-26 Orange County Grand Jury Foreperson
Santa Margarita Water District Board of Directors

Response to Findings and Recommendations

2025-26 Grand Jury Report: PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water

Summary Response Statement

On June 9, 2026, the Orange County Grand Jury released the report titled “PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water”. This report includes findings and recommendations directed to the Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD/District). Below are the responses.

FINDINGS AND RESPONSES:

- 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.

Agree with the finding as it relates to Orange County more broadly. SMWD meets or exceeds all state and federal drinking water regulations. Consistent with federal and state reporting requirements, results of PFAS monitoring in water distributed by SMWD are reported in annual Consumer Confidence Reports. Additionally, PFAS monitoring and reporting is conducted in accordance with General Order DW 2022-0001-DDW, amended January 2026.

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

Agree with the finding as it applies to water distributed by the Santa Margarita Water District.

- 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.

Disagree partially with the finding. Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD) is not a retail agency of OCWD and therefore cannot comment on the findings specific to OCWD retailers. SMWD maintains a robust education and outreach program focused on water quality and provides information on PFAS in its annual consumer confidence water quality reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES:

- 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 been implemented for the Santa Margarita Water District. Relevant information is available in consumer confidence reports and on the District's website.

- 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 been implemented for the Santa Margarita Water District. SMWD has a robust education and outreach program that includes a focus on water quality and provides information on PFAS in its annual Consumer Confidence Reports. SMWD has and will continue to educate the public on constituents of emerging concern.