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August 26, 2026

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

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

RE: Mesa Water District Response to the Findings and Recommendations of the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report, *PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*

Dear Judge Hanson,

Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) received the Orange County Grand Jury Report, *PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*, regarding per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Orange County's drinking water supplies. Mesa Water District has provided responses to the report Findings (F2, F4, F6 and F8) along with Recommendations (R2, R4 and R5).

Mesa Water is a local independent special district, founded on January 1, 1960 and governed by a publicly elected five-member Board of Directors. Mesa Water provides 100% local groundwater to businesses and approximately 110,000 residents within an 18-square-mile service area that includes most of the City of Costa Mesa, parts of Newport Beach, and unincorporated Orange County, including John Wayne Airport.

While Mesa Water has had no reportable detections of PFAS in its water sources, the District recognizes the importance of proactively addressing PFAS and protecting the quality of Orange County's groundwater supplies. Mesa Water believes Orange County Water District (OCWD) has demonstrated strong leadership in addressing PFAS through its regional monitoring, research, treatment, and mitigation efforts. Mesa Water supports OCWD's continued leadership and works collaboratively with OCWD and the State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) to monitor PFAS and ensure that the District's water supplies continue to meet applicable drinking water standards.

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Mesa Water believes that addressing PFAS requires continued collaboration among groundwater producers, water management agencies, regulators, and other regional partners. Mesa Water appreciates OCWD's role in coordinating regional efforts and providing expertise and resources to help Orange County water agencies understand, manage, and mitigate PFAS.

Mesa Water's responses to findings F2, F4, F6 and F8 and recommendations R2, R4 and R5 as required by the Orange County Grand Jury Report, are below.

Grand Jury Findings

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.

Mesa Water concurs that community water systems are required to report PFAS monitoring results in their annual Consumer Confidence Reports if the constituent concentration is above the set Reportable Detection Level set forth by the California Division of Drinking Water and federal government agencies.

F4: OCWD has taken a proactive leadership role in addressing PFAS in the Orange County Groundwater Basin, though PFAS treatment implementation varies across local cities and water districts.

Mesa Water concurs.

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

Mesa Water's drinking water is safe for consumption without additional home filtration. Mesa Water conducts more than 30,000 water quality tests annually to ensure compliance with state and federal drinking water standards. Mesa Water remains committed to providing high-quality drinking water for its 110,000 residents.

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- 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.

Mesa Water concurs that OCWD leads PFAS education and outreach development. Mesa Water engages OCWD on topics related to PFAS to provide additional educational opportunities to both Mesa Water staff and Mesa Water customers.

Grand Jury Recommendations

- R2: By July 1, 2029, OCWD and its member agencies should monitor PFAS in groundwater and surface water sources and promptly implement PFAS treatment when response levels are exceeded. [F2, F4]

Mesa Water coordinates with OCWD to collect water samples for PFAS monitoring as required by the State and U.S. EPA. Mesa Water also works closely with the California Division of Drinking Water to address any of its water sources if PFAS detections exceed applicable drinking water standards.

- 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]

Mesa Water concurs that clear and consistent communication is essential to maintaining public confidence in drinking water.

- 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]

Mesa Water concurs with this recommendation. In coordination with OCWD, Mesa Water will continue enhancing outreach efforts to reassure customers that their water is safe to drink straight from the tap.

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Mesa Water appreciates the Orange County Grand Jury's interest in protecting Orange County's drinking water supplies and addressing the ongoing challenges presented by PFAS. Mesa Water is committed to continuing its proactive approach to water quality and to working collaboratively with OCWD, DDW, and other regional partners to protect local groundwater supplies and ensure the delivery of safe and reliable drinking water to the communities we serve.

Mesa Water hopes the information and responses provided are informative and meet the needs of the Orange County Grand Jury report. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mesa Water's General Manager, Paul E. Shoenberger, P.E., at PaulS@MesaWater.org or 949-287-9127.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Marice H. DePasquale'.

Marice H. DePasquale
Mesa Water District Board President
MariceD@MesaWater.org

c: Orange County Grand Jury
Mesa Water District Board of Directors
Mesa Water District General Manager

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