



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Metropolitan, Sanitation Districts Strengthen Partnership to Advance Pure Water Southern California

Revised agreement enhances collaboration on major regional water recycling program

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Building on their established history of collaboration, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts announced an expansion of their partnership to advance [Pure Water Southern California](#), a proposed regional water recycling project positioned to become one of the largest of its kind in the world.

Following the approval of a revised agreement by the Sanitation Districts' Board of Directors on Wednesday (Oct. 23), and Metropolitan's board [last month](#), the Sanitation Districts will take on a broader role in the program. This strategic update clarifies each agency's responsibilities, enabling them to leverage their unique expertise to optimize the project's success.

"We are grateful to have a partner that shares our vision and is expanding their role in this critically important project," said Metropolitan board Chair Adán Ortega, Jr.

Metropolitan and the Sanitation Districts first entered into an agreement in November 2015 to develop a regional recycled water program, leading to the construction of the demonstration facility, now known as the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center in Carson. The Napolitano Center's purpose is to test innovative purification technologies to facilitate regulatory approval while generating valuable information to support the optimal design and operation of a full-scale advanced water purification facility.

By combining their strengths –wastewater treatment by the Sanitation Districts and reliable drinking water delivery by Metropolitan – the agencies have created a strong framework for the development of the project.

Currently in the environmental review and planning phase, Pure Water Southern California would purify and reuse cleaned wastewater currently discharged to the ocean. At full capacity, this program is expected to produce 150 million gallons of purified water daily – enough to meet the needs of 1.5 million people. The agencies aim to complete the environmental review process by January 2026. The agencies’ boards of directors would then consider final approval of the project, and water could be delivered from it as early as 2033.

Under the revised agreement, the Sanitation Districts will oversee the initial stage of the advanced purification process, utilizing membrane bioreactors to break down organic matter before filtering out particles and impurities. The Sanitation Districts will also play a key role in operations and testing at the demonstration facility.

“With over 60 years of experience in producing recycled wastewater, the Sanitation Districts are experts in biological treatment. It’s only fitting that we manage the membrane bioreactor component of the project,” said Robert Ferrante, the Sanitation District’s chief engineer and general manager. “We are proud to take on this role and expand our contributions to this critical program.”

Metropolitan will be responsible for the advanced purification processes that follow the membrane bioreactor stage, including reverse osmosis and the ultraviolet light/advanced oxidation treatment process. Metropolitan will also oversee the distribution of the purified water to the region.

“As climate change increasingly stresses Southern California’s imported water supplies, Metropolitan recognizes the need to invest in new, local, climate-resilient water sources,” Metropolitan Interim General Manager Deven Upadhyay said. “Pure Water Southern California offers an excellent opportunity to serve the water needs of our communities for generations to come.”

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative that, along with its 26 cities and retail suppliers, provide water for 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.

The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts are a regional agency consisting of 24 independent special districts serving over 5.6 million people in 78 cities and unincorporated territory within Los Angeles County. The Sanitation Districts protect public health and the environment through innovative and cost-effective wastewater and solid waste management and, in doing so, convert waste into resources such as recycled water, energy and recycled materials.