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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEMA APPROVES O.C. WATER, WASTEWATER HAZARD-MITIGATION PLAN, GRANTS AGENCIES ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FUNDING

Fountain Valley (*March 7, 2007*) – Following more than a year's work by 20 Orange County water and wastewater agencies, a regional plan identifying the risks posed by natural and man-made hazards and ways to minimize potential damage was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, thereby granting the local agencies eligibility for millions of dollars in pre- and post-disaster federal mitigation funding.

The authorization now allows each of the water and wastewater service providers to submit applications for up to \$3 million per mitigation project. Multiple projects can be submitted.

Developing the FEMA-approved Orange County Regional Water and Wastewater Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was coordinated by the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), the regional water resource management agency. (*A list plan participants is on page 3.*)

The plan examines events of greatest probability in the region, including earthquakes, liquefaction, tsunamis, landslides, fires and floods, and identifies their impacts on water and wastewater service.

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PRE-DISASTER FUNDING

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The document, which also specifies actions each service provider can take to minimize damage, includes maps showing the countywide effects of hazards based on intensity. Human-caused events, such as terrorist attacks, are also addressed.

MWDOC and the participating agencies were commended by FEMA for their “multi-jurisdictional planning process, community participation efforts and the clear direction that this Plan gives for long-term planning to reduce the impacts of future disasters.”

The plan, which underwent a three-month review by FEMA, also ensures a more coordinated emergency response across agency boundaries. The overriding goal, according to MWDOC, is to minimize disruption of water and wastewater service to Orange County residents when a major disaster occurs.

“The importance of emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation cannot be underestimated, especially in Orange County where we are vulnerable to any number of natural disasters. Preparing this plan and becoming eligible for additional federal funding will enable service providers to expedite necessary operational and structural improvements to the benefit of the residents they serve,” said Susan Hinman, MWDOC president.

Orange County’s plan will now be entered into the National Emergency Management Information System, a national registry of emergency planning and mitigation documents.

MWDOC secured a \$165,000 grant from FEMA to help underwrite the cost of developing the Plan. The balance was shared among plan participants. The plan, which was approved by each of the city councils and

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PRE-DISASTER FUNDING

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boards of directors governing the service providers, is posted on the MWDOC website, www.mwdoc.com.

Kelly Hubbard, program manager for the Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County, which is headquartered at the Municipal Water District of Orange County, coordinated the planning effort.

Hazard Mitigation Working Group Participants Include:

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| City of Buena Park | Orange County Sanitation District |
| El Toro Water District | Orange County Water District |
| City of Garden Grove | Santa Margarita Water District |
| City of La Habra | Serrano Water District |
| City of Laguna Beach | South Coast Water District |
| Mesa Consolidated Water District | South Orange County |
| Moulton Niguel Water District | Wastewater Authority |
| Municipal Water District | South Coast Water District |
| of Orange County | City of Tustin |
| City of Newport Beach | City of Westminster |
| City of Orange | Yorba Linda Water District |

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The Municipal Water District of Orange County is a water resource management and planning agency, ensuring system and supply reliability to more than 2.2 million Orange County residents through 29 cities and water agencies

