



Agenda Report

Fullerton City Council

MEETING DATE: JULY 21, 2026

TO: CITY COUNCIL / SUCCESSOR AGENCY

SUBMITTED BY: STEPHEN BISE, P.E., DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

PREPARED BY: DAVID GRANTHAM, P.E., CITY ENGINEER
TODD P. LE, P.E., PRINCIPAL CIVIL ENGINEER - WATER

SUBJECT: CITY OF FULLERTON RESPONSE TO 2025-2026
ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT A CLOSER
LOOK AT ORANGE COUNTY DRINKING WATER

SUMMARY

City response to the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury report titled *PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*.

PROPOSED MOTION

1. Receive and file the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report *PFAS and Public Awareness: A Closer Look at Orange County Drinking Water*.
2. Authorize City Manager, or designee, to execute and submit the required City response to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court and collaborate with Orange County Water District in implementing the accepted report findings and recommendations.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Receive and file Grand Jury report and authorize the City Manager, or designee, to submit the required response but decline to direct staff to implement report findings and recommendations with a specific explanation in the Grand Jury response why the City would not implement findings and recommendations or requires further analysis per California Penal Code 933.05(b).
- Other options brought by City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Proposed Motion.

CITY MANAGER REMARKS

None.

PRIORITY POLICY STATEMENT

This item matches the following Priority Policy Statement:

- Infrastructure and City Assets.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact generated by receiving and filing the Grand Jury report or submitting the required response.

No direct fiscal impact for accepting and agreeing to the findings and recommendations. The findings and recommendations are consistent with the City of Fullerton current and future plans for managing PFAS contamination and public outreach effort. The annual operating budget within the Water Enterprise Fund (Fund 44) supports costs associated with these efforts.

DISCUSSION

Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) are a large group of man-made “forever chemicals” used in water / stain-resistant coatings, firefighting foams and industrial processes since the 1940s, known for extreme persistence, environmental mobility and bioaccumulation due to strong carbon-fluorine bonds. PFAS have contaminated soil, water and air globally.

Recent PFAS regulatory actions have created significant operational, financial and communication challenges for drinking water agencies across California. Orange County agencies face an intensifying timeline due to regional reliance on groundwater supplies, PFAS in local aquifers and compliance with evolving state and federal standards. Agencies must rapidly adapt their treatment strategies, capital planning and public outreach efforts as regulatory and monitoring requirements expand.

The Orange County Grand Jury report (Attachment 1) identifies and describes PFAS levels detected by Orange County drinking water agencies. It evaluates how these agencies responded to recent PFAS regulatory requirements and examines PFAS treatment facility planning and installation progress along with public education program implementation related to PFAS in drinking water. The report findings and recommendations strengthen PFAS reporting in annual Water Quality Reports (Consumer Confidence Reports) and expand Orange County drinking water agency public outreach. The Jury made the following findings and recommendations related to the City of Fullerton:

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

- F4: Orange County Water District (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.
- F6: Orange County drinking water meets or exceeds state and federal standards and is safe for consumption without additional home filtration.
- 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.

Recommendations

- R2: By July 1, 2029, Orange County Water District (OCWD) and its member agencies should monitor PFAS in groundwater and surface water sources and promptly implement PFAS treatment when response levels are exceeded.
 - *Status: Currently compliant. Will continue monitoring and implementing treatment when needed.*
- R4: By July 1, 2029, all Orange County water retailers should consistently include PFAS advisory, treatment facilities status, and compliance information in consumer confidence reports and on agency websites, using clear and understandable language for the public.
 - *Status: Currently compliant. Will continue providing updates as part of the City's Annual Water Quality Report available on the City'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.
 - *Status: Will work with OCWD to provide coordinated and enhanced educational materials.*

The City of Fullerton agrees with the findings and will continue working with OCWD to meet the Grand Jury Report specified recommendations and deadlines. Staff provided the draft City response letter to the Honorable Sheila Hanson, the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, as Attachment 2.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Orange County Grand Jury Report
- Attachment 2 – Response Letter

cc: City Manager Eddie Manfro