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OCSD Becomes First Nationally Accredited Municipal Laboratory in California

Fountain Valley, CA (October 26, 2017) – Whether you’re selecting a school, a medical professional or a testing laboratory, one of the key factors to consider is always: “Are they accredited?” When dealing with the protection of public health and the environment, accreditation is critical. The Orange County Sanitation District’s (OCSD) Laboratory has always been accredited by the State, but now we are the first municipal laboratory in California to be Nationally accredited.

Laboratory tests are critical for the efficient control of the wastewater treatment plants as well as for the ocean monitoring program required as part of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit. OCSD conducts over 100,000 lab analyses per year. A laboratory is one of the most valuable assets a wastewater operator can have. Good operators turn to the laboratory for much of the information they need to troubleshoot problems in the treatment process.

In 2014, the State of California began the process of revising its laboratory accreditation standards. In 2018, new standards will go to the State Water Resources Control Board and will be based on the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Council (TNI) standards. TNI is already the standard in 13 other states with four additional states currently in the process of adopting these standards. With the California accreditation standards in transition, OCSD’s laboratory began transitioning to the TNI standards as our model for laboratory operations. Today, OCSD is the first public agency to receive TNI accreditation out of the 631 accredited laboratories in the State of California.

“Protecting the public health and the environment is at the core of OCSD’s existence. The nationally accredited program provides reassurance that we are in line with the most current standards. To be accredited at the national level, and to be the first public agency in California, is a testament to our commitment to the public. Our team of scientists, technicians and data analysts do an incredible job in helping keep the environment safe,” said Greg Sebourn PLS, OCSD Board Chairman.

“We are thrilled to achieve this accreditation. To be accredited, quality control and quality assurance programs must be in place for all aspects of the laboratory operations. All facilities and equipment are tightly scrutinized to assure adequacy for intended applications,” said Jim Colston, Director of Environmental Services. “During this process our team passed two proficiency studies that TNI conducted on the first try! Both times we passed with a 100 percent.”

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For more information about the Orange County Sanitation District, please visit www.ocsd.com.

About OCSD

OCSD is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County. OCSD is a special district that is governed by a 25 member Board of Directors comprised of 20 cities, four special districts, and one representative from the Orange County Board of Supervisors. OCSD has two operating facilities that treat wastewater from residential, commercial and industrial sources.

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