

# SCIENCE-ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

By Pat Brennan  
June 17, 2010

## Grand Jury Praises OC for “Going Green”



Youngster stands near massive pipes that move water, part of the Groundwater Replenishment System process that converts what was once sewer water into purified drinking water. Register file photo by Chas Metivier.

The [Orange County Grand Jury](#) lauded five government agencies Thursday for adding a green tint to the way they do business.

First on their list was the [Orange County Water District](#) for its [Groundwater Replenishment System](#). Run in partnership with the [Orange County Sanitation District](#), the system converts what was once sewer water into highly purified drinking water using a series of powerful filters, then pumps it to settling ponds, where it sinks into the county's deep drinking-water aquifer.

[OC Waste & Recycling](#) also won praise for, among other things, capturing methane gas at the [Frank R. Bowerman landfill](#), converting it to liquid natural gas and selling it to the [Orange County Transportation Authority](#) to run natural-gas buses.

OC Waste also reduced waste dumped in landfills by increasing recycling. The tonnage of trash dropped from 4,010,675 in 2008 to 3,623,722 tons in 2009.

The Transportation Authority got a nod for using Measure M funds to protect habitat, such as wildlife corridors, and to control water pollution by, among other things, capturing and treating urban runoff.

The Grand Jury said that 98 percent of the transportation agency's fleet of large buses are powered by lower-polluting natural gas.

[John Wayne Airport](#) was cited for reducing water use — a pint each to wash general aviation aircraft. Efficient landscape irrigation and low-flow or waterless fixtures in restrooms also hold down water consumption.

The airport also has a tough noise abatement program and energy efficiency standards that include use of LED lighting on the airfield, the Grand Jury said.