

# SWEETWATER AUTHORITY, CV ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND OTAY WATER DISTRICT INAUGURATE CALIFORNIA'S FIRST HYDRO STATION

*Educating more than 4,000 students annually about water-related careers*

Chula Vista, CA - The Sweetwater Authority (Authority), the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD), and the Otay Water District (Otay) are pleased to announce the opening of the first Hydro Station in California on Thursday, Aug. 15, 2019, at the Richard A. Reynolds Groundwater Desalination Facility (3066 North Second Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910).

The Hydro Station is an interactive educational space that houses learning exhibits and hands-on activities dedicated to introducing local students to the ecological cycle of water, water conservation, water quality, and careers in the water industry. The Hydro Station is a joint educational project of Sweetwater, CVESD, and Otay to provide hands-on, experiential learning to more than 4,000 CVESD fifth-grade students annually.

"The Hydro Station introduces our students to the world of work in the water industry and inspires them at an early age to consider careers in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics," said Superintendent of CVESD Dr. Francisco Escobedo. "With this station, we expose students to careers that can change the trajectory of entire families, opening the door to high-wage careers that our students might not have thought were possible. The students also explore ways to make the world a better place through clean water, and water conservation."

The local water industry is experiencing significant numbers of "Baby Boomer" generation



Kids from Chula Vista gathered for briefing about the hydro station (courtesy of Bob Hoffman photography)

retirements. An estimated 2,800 people work in the regional water and wastewater sectors at the San Diego County Water Authority and its 24 member agencies, including the Authority and Otay.

"It's an opportunity for a new generation to join us in our mission to deliver safe and reliable water to hundreds and thousands of people in communities that rely on us as water professionals," said Sweetwater General Manager Tish Berge.

"I have served many years in the water industry, which has allowed me to experience the evolving industry climate firsthand. The high level of retirements, new technologies, and increased demand for safe drinking water all contribute to the availability of

good, stable careers and employment," said Otay General Manager Mark Watton. "We want to make sure that a rewarding career in the water and wastewater industry is within reach for as many local students as possible who are vocational or college bound, and the Hydro Station helps us do that."

Sweetwater Authority is a publicly owned water agency that serves 190,000 people in the communities of National City, Bonita, and Chula Vista. Its mission is to provide current and future customers with a safe and reliable water supply through the use of the best available technology, sound management practices, public participation, and a balanced approach