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IEUA Urges Immediate Action from the City of Ontario to Protect Local Residents & Neighboring Communities

Region's Water and Wastewater Agency Issues Letter Highlighting Public Health Concerns

Inland Empire, CA – Last week, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) Board of Directors President Marco Tule issued a formal letter to City of Ontario (City) Mayor Paul Leon, outlining a series of actions taken by the City that jeopardize public health, water quality, and critical infrastructure throughout the region.

The letter highlights multiple instances of intentional and negligent acts on the part of the City of Ontario—ranging from allowing cancer-causing contaminants into the regional wastewater system, restricting access needed for mandatory environmental monitoring, and illegally discharging sewage in violation of mutual agreements.

"IEUA has a responsibility to protect public health and regional water quality, and the City of Ontario's continued refusal to comply with basic safeguards threatens not only the residents of Ontario, but the broader community," said IEUA Board President Marco Tule. "Ratepayers in Ontario and the surrounding area are being forced to bear the cost of the City's irresponsible actions while at the same time, potentially jeopardizing their health. We are calling for immediate accountability to prevent further harm."

Among the most critical issues raised in IEUA's correspondence:

- **Blocking PFAS Testing:** Ontario has denied IEUA access to test at key sites in the City for the carcinogenic "forever chemicals" known as PFAS, undermining efforts to ensure recycled water meets state drinking water standards.
- **Failure to Hold Polluters Accountable:** A City-permitted industrial user was found to have discharged hazardous materials into the regional system maintained by

IEUA for an extended period of time with City knowledge and, ultimately, treatment costs fell on regional ratepayers instead of the party responsible.

- **Obstruction of Environmental Oversight:** The City continues to resist transitioning permitting authority for industrial dischargers to IEUA, in conflict with State and federal regulatory requirements.
- **Illegally Discharging into Wastewater System:** Ontario is discharging unauthorized flows into the Eastern Trunk Sewer, and has been since October 2024, risking public health emergencies and infrastructure failures.
- **Project Delays Costing Millions:** The City has delayed issuing necessary permits for critical sewer infrastructure that would ensure reliability for Ontario businesses, leading to millions in additional costs to Ontario and regional ratepayers.

Despite multiple efforts to resolve these matters collaboratively, President Tule noted that City leadership have remained uncooperative.

“In order to ensure wastewater does not come in contact with Ontario residents and to protect the reliability of our region’s water supply, we are calling on the City of Ontario to immediately develop an emergency plan to address these issues,” stated Tule. “Further non-compliance would likely lead to state and federal engagement to safeguard water safety in Ontario and neighboring communities.”

The letter authored by IEUA Board President Marco Tule is linked [here](#).

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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) is an innovative, forward-thinking Agency serving 242-square miles in western San Bernardino County. The Agency is committed to supporting the needs of its service area and safeguarding public health through its significant investments in developing a diversified water supply portfolio, developing reliable municipal/industrial wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services in a regionally planned and cost-effective manner. IEUA's mission ensures long-term success for the region and its customer agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water District, Ontario, San Antonio Water Company, Upland, and West Valley Water District.