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IEUA Earns Statewide Recognition for Excellence in Public Outreach and Advocacy

INLAND EMPIRE, CA – The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) has received the California Special Districts Association’s (CSDA) *2026 Exceptional Public Outreach & Advocacy – Large District Award* for its “Engage, Educate, Activate: IEUA’s 2025 Public Outreach and Special District Advocacy” efforts, initiatives designed to bring policymakers, water professionals, and community stakeholders together through legislative engagement, public-facing policy education, and regional collaboration.

CSDA’s annual awards program recognizes outstanding achievements among its members, which include more than 1,300 organizations throughout California. The Statewide award, presented during the 2026 CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase in Palm Desert, recognizes IEUA’s approach to making complex water policy accessible and connecting decision-makers with the real-world impacts of those decisions on water infrastructure and essential public services.

“Strong advocacy starts with making sure people understand what’s at stake,” said IEUA Board President Steve Elie. “By bringing communities, policymakers, and regional partners into the conversation, we’re building the understanding and partnerships needed to protect essential services and strengthen the Inland Empire’s water future.”

In April 2025, IEUA partnered with Cucamonga Valley Water District, Chino Basin Water Conservation District, and CSDA to host a full-day legislative staff tour for approximately 30 representatives from State, federal, and county legislative offices. Participants toured water and wastewater treatment facilities, a groundwater recharge basin, and a composting facility. IEUA stops included [Regional Water Recycling Plant No. 4](#) and the [Inland Empire Regional Composting Facility](#). The tour provided a firsthand look at how policy decisions, regulatory requirements, and infrastructure investments affect essential public services.

Later in the year, in October of 2025, IEUA launched The Water Table Policy Pop-Up Forum to discuss State and federal legislative and regulatory issues. Approximately 60 elected officials, legislative staff, water professionals, and community stakeholders attended. The forum translated complex policy developments into local impacts and provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions, exchange perspectives, and strengthen regional collaboration.

IEUA also joined CSDA advocacy efforts related to legislation affecting public access, emergency water supplies, regulatory compliance and local service delivery. The Agency launched “The Policy Drop,” a monthly publication providing staff, customer agencies, and regional partners with plain-language updates on legislation, regulations, budget activity, and IEUA’s policy positions.

“Transparency and education are critical to building the public trust needed to connect people with the essential work happening behind the scenes that provides reliable water, wastewater, and resource recovery services throughout our region,” continued Elie. “We thank CSDA for this recognition and for championing the work of special districts that provide essential services to communities across California.”

For more information about IEUA and its programs and services, visit www.ieua.org.

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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.