



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 13, 2026

Contact:

Ashley Womack
Manager of External Affairs
909.925.7205
awomack@ieua.org

Inland Empire Utilities Agency's Mutual Aid Program Receives CASA Award of Excellence
Agency Recognized with 2026 Organizational Excellence – Large Agency Award

Inland Empire, CA – The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) received the 2026 Organizational Excellence – Large Agency Award from the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) for its Local Mutual Aid Program. The award was presented during CASA's Annual Conference on August 6 and accepted on behalf of IEUA by Board Vice President and CASA representative Jasmin A. Hall.

CASA's Award of Excellence program recognizes achievements within California's clean water community that advance environmental sustainability and the protection of public health. The Organizational Excellence category recognizes excellence in agency management, including leadership and management practices, organizational sustainability, resource utilization, productivity, and programs that demonstrate measurable results and potential application across the industry.

"IEUA is honored to receive this recognition from CASA for a program that demonstrates the strength of regional collaboration," said IEUA Board President Steve Elie. "The Local Mutual Aid Program brings agencies together around a shared responsibility to protect our communities and the environment while ensuring that resources and expertise are available when they are needed most."

Established in 2004, IEUA's Local Mutual Aid Program has grown from informal field-level cooperation into a regional network of nine agencies that share personnel, equipment, resources, and expertise during wastewater emergencies. Through the program, participating agencies support one another during sanitary sewer spills, pump station failures, and other collection system emergencies, helping improve response capabilities across the region.

Joint training and spill simulation exercises are a key component of the program, providing participating agencies with opportunities to practice emergency response procedures and improve regional coordination. More than 100 participants took part in the program's 2024 spill simulation, followed by 80 participants in 2025.

Most recently, IEUA partnered with the City of Fontana on May 13, 2026, to host a Mutual Aid Spill Drill with partner agencies. The exercise provided hands-on training in spill response procedures, documentation, volume calculations, and reporting requirements while allowing participants to collaborate, share knowledge, and build upon existing mutual aid partnerships.

Beyond emergency response, IEUA has developed a workbook and accompanying training framework based on the Local Mutual Aid Program to help other organizations establish similar partnerships. The resources provide guidance for developing agreements, identifying partners and priorities, planning simulation exercises, and creating actionable steps for implementing a local mutual aid network.

"The success of this program is rooted in the relationships that have been built and strengthened over more than two decades," continued Elie. "We appreciate our partner agencies and staff whose collaboration, knowledge sharing, and commitment to preparedness help build a more resilient region."

###

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.