



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LA County Distributes 20,000 Gallons of Water in Willowbrook and Compton

At the direction of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Los Angeles County distributed approximately 20,000 gallons of bottled water to residents of Willowbrook and Compton amid continued concerns about brown water running through their taps.

The County Fire and Public Health Departments, in collaboration with other agencies and community-based organizations, stepped up to help because the independently operated Sativa Water District had limited capacity to respond to customers worried about the quality of their drinking water.

Sativa recently flushed its pipes after an extended period without proper maintenance, and the lingering sediment caused intermittent discoloration and cloudiness in the water supply. While testing found that the water does not pose a health risk and meets the standards of the state Water Resources Board, many of Sativa's 6,800 customers reported continuing discoloration and lack of access to clear drinking water.

Though it is the state that holds the authority to regulate Sativa's water quality, the County took the initiative to distributed bottled water to Willowbrook and Compton residents at several locations on April 27-29. The County also provided additional testing and educational outreach.

"I want to applaud County departments for ensuring that residents have access to bottled water, especially when the water coming out of their taps is discolored or cloudy," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. "The County is also urging state regulators to monitor Sativa and ensure that its customers' drinking water is clean, clear and safe."

Only a few days before, the Board of Supervisors approved his urgency motion to activate a strike team to investigate Sativa's water quality and take immediate steps to prevent any serious risks to public health.

The motion also called on County agencies to determine whether appropriate management and governance of the water district is in place to address Sativa's existing infrastructure issues and ensure that customers have ongoing access to clean and safe water. This could include working with the Local Agency Formation Commission and the State Water Resources Control Board to explore options to dissolve Sativa and identify a more sustainable water purveyor for the area.

"No one should have to drink discolored water," said County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer. "We will work with the State Water Resources Control Board to ensure the water remains safe to drink, and to ensure that local water companies offer bottled water to residents experiencing discolored water."

To report continued water discoloration, Sativa customers can call:

State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water
(818) 551-2004
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/program

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
(888) 700-9995
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh>

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