



Senators Feinstein and Boxer Secure \$13 Million for Perchlorate Remediation in the Inland Empire

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Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) today announced that they have secured \$13 million for perchlorate clean up and remediation in the Inland Empire, as part of the FY2006 Defense Department spending bill.

“This harmful chemical has permeated the nation’s water supply and contaminated water sources in 35 states,” Senator Feinstein said. **“This funding is just a drop in the bucket. Much more is needed to address the widespread contamination. Nevertheless, it will help the Inland Empire begin to clean up tainted groundwater and drinking water sources. I will continue to work with Senator Boxer to hold the Defense Department accountable for the contamination it caused and to fund cleanup efforts.”**

“Perchlorate contamination poses a health risk to California’s most vulnerable populations, especially infants,” Senator Boxer said. **“Hundreds of water supplies in California are currently contaminated with perchlorate. I look forward to working with Senator Feinstein until the problem is remediated.”**

Equally divided between the cities of Rialto and Colton, and the West Valley Water District and Fontana Water Company, the funds will be used to demonstrate enhancements to existing, best-available technologies as well as new and cost-effective technologies to remediate the perchlorate-contaminated public drinking water supplies in the Rialto, Fontana, and Colton areas.

The cities and water utilities were forced to close 22 wells after they discovered perchlorate that exceeds state and federal health goals and Action Levels for public drinking water supplies in the groundwater in the Rialto and Chino groundwater basins. The water suppliers must locate replacement water, which is both expensive and challenging in light of water shortages. The problem also threatens additional wells and could inhibit future development in the area due to an uncertain future supply of water.

Perchlorate is a chemical used in rocket fuel and munitions. It is a highly soluble salt that can readily permeate through soils. Perchlorate was widely used by the Defense Department and its contractors in the 1950s and 1960s. Pregnant women and children may be especially at risk of adverse health affects from perchlorate exposure.

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