



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Clemens Heldmaier
Montara Water and Sanitary
District
(650) 728-3545

**Montara Water and Sanitary District (MWSD) Statement on
Preventative Water Service Shut-Off at Farallone View Elementary School Due to
Systemwide Public Health Concerns Caused by Modernization Project**

Montara, CA — On October 25, Montara Water & Sanitary District (MWSD) was made aware of significant plumbing and sewer connection concerns occurring at Farallone View Elementary School as part of the Modernization Project currently under construction. As a member of this community, we welcome the modernization of our local school, however, we have observed grave onsite plumbing conditions which violate our water and sanitary system ordinances.

Without immediate action, both the children and staff of Farallone View, and our entire community are at risk of exposure to untreated drinking water due to cross connected pipes at the school site. To address this public health hazard, following multiple attempts to proactively resolve this concern with Cabrillo Unified School District, MWSD made the difficult decision to shut-off water service to the Farallone View campus on Thursday, November 2.

Cross connections can occur when drinking water pipes are connected to non-drinking water pipes or sources. These cross connections can allow untreated, non-potable water to enter our drinking water system. MWSD's water system is the sole source of drinking water for consumption and domestic use (cooking, dishwashing, handwashing, etc.) for 6,000 customers in Montara, Moss Beach and Pillar Ridge. We cannot allow a cross connection condition to exist as it can permit untreated or contaminated water into our community's water system, while also exposing the children and staff at Farallone View to this untreated water.

MWSD has been in direct communication with school leadership onsite at Farallone View and with Cabrillo Unified School District in an attempt to address our concerns. Despite our best efforts to identify solutions and offer assistance, no action has been taken to resolve the poor plumbing conditions. Given the possibility of contamination entering the water system from this site, MWSD, after notification to the State Division of Drinking Water (our regulator), proactively shut-off water

service to the school site. Water will remain off until site conditions are addressed and achieve compliance with MWSD ordinances.

The plans and specifications for the \$23.4 million Farallone View Modernization Project have never been reviewed by MWSD. MWSD has publicly approved and available ordinances to enforce State law and protect our critical public systems, along with plan review and permit application processes available to ensure new development, construction and renovation projects do not endanger the public systems that serve our community. All properties undergoing construction are required to submit their project for review to MWSD prior to construction. These are standard plumbing requirements common to all drinking water systems.

MWSD is standing by to support Farallone View Elementary School and the Cabrillo Unified School District (CUSD) in addressing these public health concerns. Immediate action is required to install backflow prevention devices to protect our community water system, along with provision of bottled drinking water and handwashing stations for school users while plumbing concerns are addressed. With these measures in hand, MWSD can re-establish water service to Farallone View Elementary, and students can return to the facility. We look forward to working with CUSD to resolve these issues quickly.

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Montara Water and Sanitary District (MWSD) works every day to deliver water, garbage, and sewer services for the residents of Montara and Moss Beach. Over 6,000 residents rely on our services for their homes and businesses.