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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOW LAKE LEVELS NOW IMPACTING WATER COLOR

Oak View, CA – Recently some people in Ventura and Ojai that rely on water from Lake Casitas may have noticed taste and odor issues related to an algae bloom, but now they may also notice a change in the color of their tap water. There is still no reason to be alarmed; the water is safe to drink and continues to surpass primary drinking water health standards. The change in water color is due to an increase in Manganese in the water. This normal seasonal occurrence amplified by low lake levels and warm temperatures associated with the current drought. All water delivered from Lake Casitas is filtered and disinfected to meet state and federal drinking water standards.

Lake Casitas is down sixty three feet from full as result of the current historic drought. Low lake levels allow the water to become warmer than normal. Lake levels are at levels not seen since the 1960s. The current lake conditions contribute to a greater drop in oxygen levels than is typically associated with seasonal changes. The low oxygen levels cause Manganese to be released from sediments from the bottom of the lake. Furthermore, a decrease in oxygen levels in the lake increases the amount of hydrogen sulfide, which causes taste and odor issues, also not a health hazard. Low lake levels and warmer temperatures make it more difficult for treatment plant operators to avoid taste, color, and odor issues since there are fewer water levels available to take water out of the lake.

A new aeration system is in the process of being installed in the lake, and will be operational before next summer to help mitigate these problems should the drought continue.

If customers or community members have questions or concerns about Casitas' water quality please call Susan McMahon at (805) 649-2251 x 120.
