



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **STOCKTON MUNICIPAL UTILITIES DEPARTMENT RECEIVES ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD**

(Stockton, CA) - The City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department (MUD) has received the Organizational Excellence Award from the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) for its Focus on Safety Program. The award will be presented to representatives and department leadership at CASA's 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, August 19 – 21, in San Diego.

“I am extremely proud of our employee Safety Committee who worked on the in-depth development of this program to improve employee awareness, knowledge and participation in workplace health and safety programs,” said MUD Director Dr. Mel Lytle. “They recognized a need, gathered and organized historical data from past incidents, and developed new programs and training to address the issues that we actually experience. It was a collaborative effort between management, supervisors, union representatives, and employees that led to this success. In addition to reducing injuries, the program has improved employee overall safety awareness, decreased missed workdays and stress on employees, and saved the City money.”

MUD's Focus on Safety Program was initiated in 2013 with a goal of increasing

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employee knowledge, awareness and participation in workplace health and safety, including hazard identification and awareness. The program provides all MUD employees with training on a variety of safety programs and sustainable practices, including chemical acquisition, storage, handling and disposal procedures. Better inventory and storage has resulted in lowering costs. Since implementing the program, injuries have been reduced from 29 in 2012, to one injury in the first six months of 2015, an overall reduction of 96 percent, benefiting both employees and the City. The program has served as a model for other departments, agencies and cities.

CASA is a statewide association – with over 100 member agencies – that focuses on the wastewater utility issues in California. The annual awards recognize agencies and professionals in the following categories: Organizational Excellence, Outstanding Capital Project, public Outreach/Education, and Technological Innovation and Achievement.

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