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FINAL AGREEMENT EXECUTED FOR NEW TREATMENT PLANT

The City of Pasadena and the California Institute of Technology, as the contractor that manages NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), finalized an agreement this week to provide NASA funding of a major new water treatment plant in Pasadena.

"This agreement is a win-win situation for everyone," said Steve Slaten, NASA's Remedial Project Manager at JPL. "It is exciting because it allows NASA to be able to clean up the Monk Hill sub-basin far sooner than if we tried to remove all the chemicals using a treatment plant on site at JPL."

Once operational, the city will be able to re-open its wells and provide customers with clean drinking water. NASA will pay for all of the costs related to the plant's design, construction and operation as well as provide technical support.

"Combined with our existing on-site treatment plant and with the NASA-funded system at Lincoln Avenue Water Company in Altadena, this new major step moves toward a comprehensive cleanup and helps prevent further spread of these chemicals," Slaten said.

Volatile organic compounds and perchlorate that originated from waste disposal practices on the JPL site many decades ago have been found in the groundwater beneath JPL. In 1990, Pasadena installed a NASA-funded air stripper to remove volatile organic compounds from water in the Arroyo Well, Well 52, the Ventura Well, and the Windsor Well. This new agreement continues treatment for those chemicals and adds treatment for perchlorate.

When detected levels of perchlorate in the wells rose above California's action level for perchlorate, the city closed the wells, and they have remained closed since. A proposed treatment system will undergo extensive public comment and regulatory review. It is anticipated the system will be a liquid-phase granular activated carbon system to remove volatile organic compounds from the water and an ion exchange system to remove perchlorate.

For information about NASA's groundwater cleanup efforts on the Web, visit:

<http://jplwater.nasa.gov>

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