



## WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

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**CONTACT:** Ron Wildermuth, Manager of Public Information  
(310) 892-5545 cell, [ronw@westbasin.org](mailto:ronw@westbasin.org)

### **West Basin Demonstration Ocean-Water Desalination Facility Leak Confined, Restoration Begun**

REDONDO BEACH, Calif. — At approximately 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2012, an accidental common household bleach solution (sodium hypochlorite) leak was discovered at West Basin Municipal Water District's (West Basin) Temporary Ocean-Water Desalination Demonstration Facility located at the SEA Lab aquarium in Redondo Beach, Calif.

The cause of the leak is currently under investigation. Pumps were immediately shut down when the leak was detected. This stopped the leak and confined it to the onshore constructed holding area at the demonstration facility. The only possible point of access to the ocean has been identified, is continually being tested and no bleach has been found.

West Basin immediately diverted its system to provide safe water for SEA Lab aquarium tanks. Ocean-water desalination operations have been temporarily suspended until the investigation is complete.

Unfortunately, there was a loss of marine life in tanks at the SEA Lab Aquarium and neighboring organization, the White Sea Bass Restoration Program. "We are saddened by the loss of marine life especially since West Basin built this facility to gather science to protect the ocean. We are taking all necessary steps to address and correct impacts to the SEA Lab and White Sea Bass Restoration Program," stated Rich Nagel, General Manager of West Basin.

Actions are currently underway to remove the bleach solution from the constructed holding area and pipes. West Basin has notified the appropriate regulatory agencies and remains in compliance with all permits.

The West Basin demonstration facility is currently researching environmentally responsible ocean-water desalination through the study of marine life protection, energy efficiency and optimizing operational efficiencies. The facility became operational in December, 2010.

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*West Basin Municipal Water District is committed to water reliability, water quality, sound financial and resource management, customer service, and environmental stewardship. West Basin is a recognized, international leader in the production of recycled water and has won several awards for its leadership, water recycling and water resource management. West Basin provides more than 30 million gallons of recycled water throughout the South Bay each day, replacing enough precious drinking water to supply 60,000 households annually. To learn more, visit [www.westbasin.org](http://www.westbasin.org).*