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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Santa Cruz Drinking Water “Extremely Clean”

Santa Cruz – How safe is Santa Cruz drinking water? Very safe, according to studies conducted both locally and nationally.

The City of Santa Cruz Water Quality Lab is a California accredited drinking water laboratory that performs thousands of water quality tests each year, testing for both chemical and bacteriological contaminants. The Water Department publishes their annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), that summarizes information regarding raw water sources used (i.e., rivers, lakes, reservoirs, or aquifers), any detected contaminants in the raw water and treated drinking water, along with regulatory compliance and educational information.

Not only did Santa Cruz drinking water quality meet all mandated state and federal standards for these ongoing reports, additionally, the results of a 2012 USDA water quality monitoring study the department voluntarily participated in, showed it was well below public health goal thresholds on a myriad of tests, for a profusion of insecticide, herbicide, fungicide and metabolite compounds.

“These chemical compounds aren’t routinely tested for at these low parts-per-trillion detection levels,” said Hugh Dalton, Water Quality Manager for the city, “because the compounds tested for pose no human health threat unless consumed at concentrated levels.” Regardless, “I was informed last week that out of 4,000 weekly tests conducted over nine months on our treated drinking water, there were only two detectable results measured and they were found at levels 1,000 times *lower* than the public health goal set for that compound. That is really impressive!” said Dalton. “These results are consistent with annual water quality data collected by the city since the late 1970’s, and also support the conclusion reached by the city’s watershed sanitary surveys that our raw water sources are at very low risk for pesticide contamination.”

Terry Councill, who works for the USDA which conducted the voluntary study, says that Santa Cruz residents should know that their drinking water is very clean. In a letter to Dalton, Councill wrote, “we stopped sampling at the end of December 2012, as your water was so clean there was no need for a second year of sampling. I would let your customers know that you went above and beyond the requirements; that you’re pro-active in looking for potential contaminants to test for, that you had very extensive pesticide testing done and that the water came out extremely clean.”

The 2012 Consumer Confidence Report can be found at www.cityofsantacruz.com/ccr2012

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