



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Contact:

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**RONALD C. SMITH PLEADS GUILTY AND ACCEPTS PLEA BARGAIN**

*Resigns from West Basin Board of Directors Effective Immediately*

CARSON, Calif. – On September 8, 2014, West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) was informed by the Los Angeles District Attorney’s office that Ronald C. Smith accepted a plea bargain on the alleged charges of misuse of public funds and giving false affidavits. As part of the plea bargain, Mr. Smith entered a guilty plea to Count 2 of the complaint against him (Conflict of Interest, per Govt. Code 1090) with the remaining counts to be dismissed. This action results in a felony conviction. Mr. Smith formally resigned from his position on the West Basin Board of Directors effective September 8, 2014.

“This unfortunate situation involving Mr. Smith should not detract from the hard work being done by the rest of the West Basin Board and staff,” said Donald L. Dear, President of the West Basin Board of Directors. “West Basin remains and will continue to be an internationally recognized water industry leader focused on water recycling, conservation, water reliability, and water resource management.”

Mr. Smith will have to serve 180 days in jail minus time he has already served. He will also be required to serve five years’ probation.

As part of the plea, Mr. Smith paid restitution to West Basin in the amount of \$10,000. In addition, \$7,765 of outstanding restitution remains. This figure is based on forensic accounting of funds involved in the investigation of Mr. Smith’s case.

“West Basin will use this situation to become an even more effective water district,” said Board Vice President Gloria D. Gray. “We are moving forward with an outside audit of our Board of Director’s Code of Conduct that will provide recommendations that should prevent this from happening in the future and we will work hard to enhance the public trust in our agency and of our finances.”

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*West Basin Municipal Water District is a wholesale water district that serves nearly a million people in 17 cities and unincorporated areas throughout its 185-square mile service area. West Basin is reducing its dependence on imported water through its Water Reliability 2020 program that will double conservation, double recycled water production and add desalted ocean water to its portfolio by the year 2020. Visit [www.westbasin.org](http://www.westbasin.org) to learn more.*