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March 15, 2012

Google and Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority Unveil Reuse Water Facility

Recycled water used to cool Google's data center equipment

(ATLANTA and DOUGLAS COUNTY, Ga.) - Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority (WSA) officials and Google executives on Thursday announced Google's first reuse water system for one of their U.S. data centers. Google's Douglas County data center is also the state's first data center to conserve water using a reuse water system. The system, financed by Google and owned by WSA, is helping to keep the Chattahoochee River clean and conserving the reservoir's water supply.

"Working with Google on this reuse water system has been a great experience for the WSA. Our water supply gets hit hard during the drought season and in the summer months," said Peter Frost, executive director of WSA. "The Google-funded sidestream facility is a welcomed reprieve on our reservoir's water system and saves water capacity for our residents and businesses."

In 2008, Google financed the building of the WSA's Sweetwater Creek Sidestream Plant, which is a reuse treatment facility that intercepts up to 30 percent of the water from the local water and sewer authority's treatment plant.

"At Google we're always looking for smart ways to reduce our impact on the environment," said Joe Kava, Google's senior director of data center construction and operations. "We've been working for years on maximizing the efficiency of our servers and our data center designs so that we can minimize the entire energy footprint consumed by our data centers."

Data centers are facilities that house computers that run Google search and other services. Google builds its data centers with advanced efficiency methods in place, which results in data centers that use half the energy of typical facilities. Google has been a carbon neutral company since 2007, a goal achieved by increasing the energy efficiency of operations and by pursuing the use and creation of clean and renewable sources of electricity and water.

"The teams at the Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority and Google have developed and implemented an innovative approach for conserving water and protecting our environment," said Congressman David Scott, who participated in event activities. "The reuse water system is an example for other companies and water authorities to emulate and is a bold step in the right direction."

WSA's treatment plant pumps water from its facility to the sidestream plant, which is located about five miles west of the data center. The reuse (also known as grey- or recycled) water flows into the cooling towers, which are devices that cool water via direct evaporation. The cooling towers draw heat away from the computers.

"The sidestream system provides additional cleaning of the water through sterilization, filtration and chlorination, and that water is sent to us at the data center for use in our cooling towers," said Jim Brown, the data center facilities manager at Google's Douglas County data center. "Then, the effluent treatment plant that is located on the data center campus takes water that is not evaporated into the cooling towers. That water is cleaned and returned to the Chattahoochee River clean, clear and safe."

All of Google's U.S. owned and operated data centers received ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 certifications this year. This means that Google is the first major Internet services company to gain external certification for those high standards in environmental management and workplace safety at all of their U.S. data centers.

Officials and invited guests toured both the WSA's Sweetwater Creek Sidestream Plant and Google's effluent treatment plant.

For more information, please visit <http://www.google.com/about/datacenters>. A video of the reuse water system is available at <http://youtu.be/IJnlgM1yEU0>.

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Media Contacts:

Barbara Williams, WSA
770-920-3850 (work)

Lilyn Hester, on behalf of Google
919-882-1979 (work)
919-923-0745 (cell)