



WATERREUSE

POSITION PAPER ON POLICY

Permitting for Potable Reuse

Recommendation

Eliminate the classification of Advanced Treated Water as “a discharge of pollutants” and regulate Advanced Treated Water under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Background

Historically, wastewater treatment facilities have discharged treated wastewater into the environment. Because a discharge is involved, these facilities are regulated under the Clean Water Act. Specifically, these facilities are required to obtain a permit for a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

However, more and more wastewater treatment facilities are purifying wastewater to more stringent water quality standards and discharging the purified water directly to a source of drinking water, such as a reservoir. Because of this change in operations, the same water is now also subject to regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Regulations under the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act may be duplicative or, at times, even contradictory.

Benefits

- Regulating Advanced Treated Water under the Safe Drinking Water Act will focus compliance on reliable and robust treatment to produce a high quality water, which will increase protection for the public health and environment.
- Adopting a single regulatory framework for Advance Treated Water will provide certainty to utilities, which will increase efficiency and contain costs for ratepayers and taxpayers.
- Providing regulatory certainty to utilities will increase implementation of new water reuse projects, which are desperately needed around the nation, especially in drought-ridden states.