

WaterReuse California **2020 Update**

Leading in the Capitol

**Advancing Reuse
Through Regulations**

**Bringing the Reuse
Community Together**





Message from WateReuse California President

Paul Sciuto

We've come a long way and have been navigating through Covid and a myriad of legislative and regulatory issues throughout this year. Just wanted to thank all of you who have devoted so much of your time during these challenging days to help us address the many recycled water issues we face.

In these pages we recap some of the awesome efforts underway around the state — from the extraordinary legislative efforts to the various chapters that provide great programs and routine contact with fellow recyclers — even in this Zoom age!

Thank you and enjoy this update, hopefully you will see something new that you did not know we were up to. Or, maybe something will spark your attention and creativity to try something new in your region.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Sciuto".

Paul Sciuto
General Manager, Monterey One Water

The mission of WateReuse California is to promote responsible stewardship of California's water resources by maximizing the safe, practical and beneficial use of recycled water and by supporting the efforts of the WateReuse Association.

WaterReuse California Leads Effort to Secure Recycled Water Funding in Legislature

The California Legislature concluded the 2019-2020 Legislative Session in the early morning hours of September 1. The COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered business in the Capitol with Legislators asked to shelve most bills not related to the pandemic, homelessness, economic recovery or wildfire. Legislators also had to grapple with the estimated \$54 billion budget shortfall facing the state due to the COVID-19 crisis.

WRCA worked throughout the Legislative Session, meeting with the Administration, Senate and Assembly leadership and water committee chairs, highlighting the need for recycled water funding (grants and loans). Ultimately, Legislators were unable to craft an economic stimulus package before the end of Session. With the budget difficulties facing the state, many Legislators and the Governor were unwilling to ask voters to approve a bond that would create more debt for the state. Legislators have indicated that a climate resilience/economic recovery bond is still a priority and discussions will continue through the fall and winter. The next opportunity for a bond will be on the March 2022 ballot.

WRCA's legislative advocate and our members will continue to work on including recycled water funding in any bond measure or economic stimulus package that moves forward. WRCA continues to organize meetings throughout the fall with Legislators and local agencies to discuss the importance of recycled water project funding and the specifics of recycled water projects in their districts.



2020 Bond Measures:

Governor's Climate Bond: \$4.7 Billion (\$1 billion for interregional projects and recycled water)
 Status: Withdrawn in May

AB 3256 (Garcia): Proposed \$9.7 Climate Resilience Bond (\$300 million recycled water)
 Status: Held by Author

SB 45 (Allen): \$5.5 Billion Climate Resilience Bond (\$100 million for recycled water)
 Status: Held by Author

Recycled Water Related Measures:

AB 2560 (Quirk): Notification and Response Level Procedures: *WRCA Support*
 Status: Governor's Desk

AB 3030 (Kalra): 30% conservation of all lands, oceans and waters by 2030: *WRCA Oppose*
 Status: Held in Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 996 (Portantino): CECs - Science Advisory Panel: *WRCA Support as Amended*
 Status: Held by Author

SB 1052 (Hertzberg): Stormwater Capture/Reuse: *WRCA Support*
 Status: Held in Senate Governance and Finance Committee



Assemblymember Friedman received the WRCA Gordon Cologne Award for her measure (AB 1180 --2019) that requires the Water Board to update the non-potable recycled water regulations.

Final California Water Resilience Portfolio Includes Key Reuse Actions



A number of key water recycling actions were featured in Governor Gavin Newsom's final version of California's **Water Resilience Portfolio**. The Portfolio includes 142 actions to help build climate-resilient water systems and help cope with extreme droughts, over-

reliance on groundwater, and other challenges. The final portfolio includes the following key water reuse actions:

- Support local and regional agencies to recycle or reuse at least 2.5 million acre-feet a year in the next decade.
- Increase financial capacity to support recycling, reuse, and wastewater projects through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and other state and local funding mechanisms.
- Continue work on raw water augmentation regulations and treated drinking water augmentation regulations to allow purified recycled water to be moved directly into drinking water distribution systems. Following the steps outlined in AB 574 of 2017, continue research underway that is identified in the direct potable reuse criteria feasibility report to the Legislature and convene an expert panel to review the proposed criteria to assure they are adequately protective of public health.

- Implement 2018 legislation (SB 966) that requires creation of risk-based water quality standards for onsite collection and non-potable reuse of water in apartment, commercial, and mixed-use buildings.
- Update 20-year-old "purple pipe" regulations to eliminate outdated and overly prescriptive requirements in order to expand use of nonpotable recycled water while protecting food safety and the environment.

Prior to the release of the portfolio, WRCA met with Cal-EPA, the Water Board, the Resources Agency and the Department of Food and Agriculture to discuss the California WaterReuse Action Plan and recommendations that could be included in the Portfolio.



"Continue work on ... regulations to allow purified recycled water to be moved directly into drinking water distribution systems."

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Advancing Recycled Water Through Regulations

AB 574 – DPR Expert Panel

WRCA is working with the Water Board and the Legislature to find funding to begin work on the “expert panel” required by AB 574 (Quirk 2017). This panel will assist the Water Board in developing statewide regulations needed to develop Raw Water Augmentation and Treated Drinking Water Augmentation statewide regulations (respectively known as Direct Potable Reuse or DPR). AB 574 requires that the regulations be complete by 2023.

Water Use Efficiency Implementation

2021 will be a major year for the implementation of the multi-faceted water use efficiency (WUE) statutes that passed into law in 2018. WRCA seeks to ensure that recycled water use is fully protected as part of local drought contingency plans and that the potable reuse credit is appropriately calculated. It is also critical that the upcoming indoor water use study adequately accounts for the benefits of recycled water and that during regular water years, recycled water is allowed to be used within the parameters of the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. WRCA also supports the adoption of a variance for high TDS recycled, consistent with the legislation. WRCA participates on the following DWR workgroups: Water Use Studies; Water Supply and

Demand Assessment; Landscape Area Measurement and Standards, Methodologies and Performance Measures.

Updating Non-Potable Recycled Water Regulations

AB 1180 (Friedman 2019) was sponsored by WRCA and requires the Water Board to update non-potable recycled water regulations (Title 22) by 2023. With support from WRCA, the Water Board received some funding in the 2020/21 budget to begin this work. AB 1180 also required that the Water Board include the use of a recycled water change-device in the backflow “Handbook” (formerly Title 17) it is preparing and should be available for review in late 2021.

Onsite Reuse Regulation Development

By December 1, 2022, SB 966 (Wiener 2018) requires the Water Board to adopt regulations for risk-based water quality standards for the onsite treatment and reuse for non-potable end uses in multifamily residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings. The Water Board has begun assembling the Technical Advisory Panel for the development of the regulations and will begin stakeholder outreach sometime before spring 2021.

Maximizing Funding and Efficiencies for CA CWSRF Program

The California Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Program, which is capitalized by federal funds with a required state match, functions as the primary environmental infrastructure bank for the state. The program provides low interest loans, grants and principal forgiveness for water quality improvement and recycled water projects statewide. At this time, the program is significantly oversubscribed. Currently, the backlog of projects totals \$7 billion — more than \$3 billion is for California recycled water projects. Funding for the CWSRF Program can immediately create new jobs, stimulate the economy and ensure a more sustainable water infrastructure for the state.

In 2020/21 WaterReuse California is seeking to

increase program efficiencies and sustainable funding levels for the program through a number of activities:

- 1) Supporting appropriation and increased amounts of federal capitalization funds through the advocacy efforts of the WaterReuse Association;
- 2) Exploring the opportunity to provide required state match funding as part of a California General Obligation bond or other funding mechanisms;
- 3) Advocating for additional CWSRF leveraging through the sale of revenue bonds similar to the approach taken by other states; and
- 4) Working with the Water Board to provide an independent CWSRF program review to identify opportunities to improve program efficiencies.

Standing Together in Unprecedented Times

In response to the global pandemic, WRCA quickly shifted its March annual conference in San Francisco to a virtual event in June — the first virtual conference in the association's history. But the virtual conference was much more than just a replacement event. Through our volunteer team, generous sponsors and conference presenters, we demonstrated how our community could stand TOGETHER in these unprecedented times to recognize the good work we do and share ideas for the future.



WRCA welcomed nearly 600 people to its virtual conference. The conference included more than 50 technical presentations with audience Q&A and handouts, live and interactive panel discussions, an interactive sponsor and exhibitor hall, and a virtual cocktail party reception.

Group Provides Tools and Resources for Communications

The WaterReuse California Communications Collaborative Group meets quarterly and provides a forum to discuss and collaborate on recycled water and potable water reuse communications. Meetings regularly include discussions of potable reuse in the media, specific topics related to potable reuse issues, and case studies of agency potable reuse projects and their accompanying public outreach efforts.

How we talk about water reuse — including consistent use of terms and their definitions — is a critical element to help community members understand how reuse, especially potable reuse, can be part of the community's overall strategy to improve water supply reliability and resiliency. To help public education and outreach professionals navigate these conversations, the first project the Group undertook was to update the 2016

WaterReuse Context and Terminology document. The Group is currently providing input on changes to the Water Board-approved water recycling signage regulations that will also reduce confusion about potable reuse in California.

For more information, please visit the WRCA webpage at watereuse.org/sections/watereuse-california/communications-collaborative-group/



WRCA Chapters: Reuse at the Local Level

California's seven regional chapters serve an integral role in WaterReuse California. Quarterly chapter meetings (virtual for now) give members the opportunity to network, learn about local projects, receive updates on the latest regulatory and legislative activities and reuse funding opportunities. Often these meetings include speakers from the current Administration or local regulators. Each chapter has a representative on the WaterReuse California Board of Trustees and assists with the WaterReuse California annual conference when it is located in their region. To learn more about local chapter meetings, please reach out to the chapter contacts listed below.

Central Coast Chapter —

**Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo,
Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties**

Rob Morrow, rmorrow@wsc-inc.com

Gina Dorrington, gdorrington@cityofventura.ca.gov

Central Valley/Sierra Foothills Chapter

Melanie Holmer

Brown and Caldwell

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Officers of the Central Valley Chapter

Inland Empire Chapter

John Robinson

John Robinson Consulting

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Los Angeles Chapter

Evelyn Cortez-Davis

Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power

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Officers of the LA Chapter

Northern California Chapter

Rhodora Biagtan

West Yost Associates

rbiagtan@westyost.com



PureWater Soquel's trailer (from Central Coast Chapter) featured at a Northern California Chapter meeting.

Orange County Chapter

Joone Lopez

Moulton Niguel Water District

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San Diego Chapter

Lesley Dobalian

San Diego County Water Authority

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San Diego Chapter Tour of South Bay Water Reclamation Plant

watereuse.org/sections/watereuse-california

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