



PROFILES IN REUSE: Florida



The amount of water on Earth does not change—all water has been recycled naturally since the beginning of time.

While nearly 70% of the planet is covered by water, only 2.5% is freshwater, and only 1% is accessible to humans. Water reuse, also known as water recycling, is the process of intentionally capturing wastewater, graywater, stormwater, or saltwater and cleaning it for a designated beneficial freshwater purpose. Common uses for recycled water include drinking, irrigation, industrial processes, groundwater replenishment, and environmental restoration.



WATER REUSE IN FLORIDA

Florida's first reuse system began operating in 1966. Today, Florida has more than 380 systems supplying more than 900 million gallons a day of beneficial reuse. Reclaimed water is used to irrigate over 6,000 acres of edible crops, over 500 golf courses, and for more than 1,000 schools and 500,000 residences. It is also used for industrial purposes such as cooling towers and power plants. Florida has an average reuse rate of 34% compared to the national average of 7%.

WHY INVEST IN WATER REUSE?

Floridians use nearly 6.4 billion gallons of water per day. With an estimated 1,000 people moving to the state daily, residents are projected to use an additional 1 billion gallons per day by 2040. Florida also welcomes an average of 350,000 visitors each day. Expanding the use of recycled water is one way to help ensure there is plenty of water to meet growing demand. Reusing water also relieves pressure on Florida's already stressed aquifers, water resources, and ecosystems, keeping water in rivers and springs for the plants and wildlife that rely upon them.

THE FUTURE OF REUSE IN FLORIDA

The Framework on Potable Reuse in Florida, developed by the state's Potable Reuse Commission in 2019, is being used as a model to update the state's regulations to modernize permitting requirements and allow for reuse as a potable water source. In preparation for these changes, the One Water Florida Campaign launched in 2021 to unify outreach efforts and increase acceptance of potable reuse as a safe future water supply in Florida. The campaign was a collaboration of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the state's five water management districts, WaterReuse Florida, utilities, and other stakeholders. Many communities are planning for potable reuse and Florida already has more than a dozen indirect and direct potable reuse pilots and demonstration facilities across the state.

RECYCLED WATER IS:



COST EFFECTIVE

Reusing water can be more cost effective than other alternative supplies.



ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND

Reusing water alleviates pressure on Florida's freshwater sources and natural systems.



SAFE

Water is treated to meet Florida's stringent state and federal water quality standards.



RELIABLE

Because wastewater is renewable, water reuse is the only sustainable source of freshwater.



SUSTAINABLE

Florida's communities that use recycled water utilize regional resources to increase the sustainability of the water supply.

WATER REUSE IN FLORIDA



MODELING the Future

Florida is home to **over a dozen indirect and direct potable reuse pilots and demonstration facilities** across the state.



Irrigating More Than **2,700 ACRES** of Citrus

Water Conserv II is the largest project of its kind in the world, eliminating surface water discharges by combining agricultural irrigation and rapid infiltration basins. Reclaimed water from the City of Orlando and Orange County has kept **citrus crops growing for over 30 years**.



BRINGING BACK Groundwater

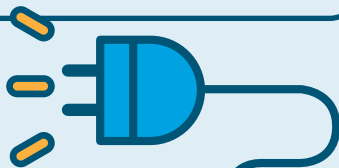
Pasco County's 167-acre constructed wetland system fills up with **5 million gallons of recycled water each day**. The 15 wetland cells recharge groundwater levels affected by historical overuse and ensure a sustainable water supply for the Tampa Bay region.



A SHIELD Against the Sea

Hillsborough County's innovative SHARP projects inject more than **20 million gallons per day of highly treated reclaimed water** into the aquifer along the coast to create a saltwater intrusion barrier that protects and recovers the region's freshwater aquifer resources.

POWERING Our Community



Tampa Electric's Polk Power Station uses **7 million gallons per day of reclaimed water** from Polk County and the cities of Lakeland and Mulberry to cool its two massive combined-cycle units. The project also reduces surface water discharges and nitrogen levels in the Alafia River and Tampa Bay.



ONE WATER Many Solutions

Plant City's McIntosh Preserve project uses highly treated recycled water for a variety of uses, including environmental enhancement, groundwater replenishment, potable water supply, downstream water quality improvement, and flood control, providing the community a safe, reliable, and local water supply.



1,000 MILES of Pipe

Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg, along with many of the county's municipalities, have long been reuse leaders in the state with an extensive system of reclaimed water pipes.



FILLING Your Bowl

Pompano Beach is home to the only water reuse system in Florida approved to irrigate salad crops that will not be peeled, skinned, cooked, or thermally processed. The project puts fresh greens on the table and protects precious water resources.



About the WaterReuse Association

The WaterReuse Association is the nation's only trade association solely dedicated to advancing laws, policy, funding, and public acceptance of recycled water. WaterReuse represents a coalition of utilities that recycle water, businesses that support the development of recycled water projects, and consumers of recycled water. In addition to supporting members throughout the country, WaterReuse has active local sections in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, the Mid-Atlantic, Nevada, New Mexico, South Carolina, the Pacific Northwest, and Texas. To learn more, visit www.watereuse.org.