

WATER REUSE CALIFORNIA AWARDS

CALIFORNIA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE 2023

RECYCLED WATER AGENCY OF THE YEAR - SMALL

LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT

The Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District is proud to play an important part in conserving the local supply of fresh drinking water in Marin County by producing high-quality, tertiary-treated recycled water for non-potable uses from the district's wastewater treatment facility. In 2021 the district completed a plant upgrade that quadrupled its recycled water production capacity to over 5 million gallons of recycled water per day. In an example of exceptional cooperation between neighboring agencies, the expanded facility is providing this recycled water to the North Marin Water District and the Marin Municipal Water District (Marin Water), which then sell it for use in landscape irrigation, car washes, cooling towers, commercial laundries, toilet flushing, and other non-potable uses.

RECYCLED WATER AGENCY OF THE YEAR – MEDIUM

CITY OF SANTA MONICA

As part of Santa Monica's overarching goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and become climate resilient, the city completed the Sustainable Water Infrastructure Project (SWIP), a first of its kind potable reuse project. SWIP consists of three elements: a 1.5 million gallon storm-water harvesting tank, a 1 million gallon per day advanced water treatment facility, and upgrades to an existing urban runoff recycling facility. The city collaborated with the California State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water and the Regional Water Quality Control Board to implement technology innovations and advance regulatory frameworks to expand reuse opportunities for the project. The SWIP is able to produce up to 1,650 acre-feet per year of purified water, accounting for roughly 10 percent of the city's total water supply portfolio.

WATER REUSE CALIFORNIA AWARDS

RECYCLED WATER AGENCY OF THE YEAR – LARGE

ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT & ORANGE COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Two public agencies, the Orange County Water District (OCWD) and the Orange County Sanitation District (OC San), had the vision and foresight to do what was once unthinkable—purify wastewater into high-quality drinking water. Since 2008, the Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), already the world's largest indirect potable reuse facility, has produced more than 400 billion gallons of water. It now has another impressive notch in its belt: recycling 100% of OC San's reclaimable wastewater flows, which produces up to 130 million gallons of drinking water a day, serving nearly one million people in north and central Orange County.

RECYCLED WATER OUTREACH/EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE YEAR WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT – ALBERT ROBLES CENTER

The Albert Robles Center (ARC) provides an opportunity for visitors of all ages and backgrounds to experience a state-of-the-art water purification facility with a focus on water education and environmental stewardship. The Water Replenishment District's ARC Education and Outreach Program allows district staff to reach many targeted audiences. The goal is to increase people's water literacy while encouraging water conservation through behavior changes. WRD is able to host thousands of people onsite or virtually at ARC each year. Each person who visits ARC will walk away with an inspiring tale about sustainable water resources in our region.

RECYCLED WATER CUSTOMER OF THE YEAR

VALLEY-WIDE RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District has been a valued partner in expanding recycled water use in the community through its proactive investments and partnerships with Eastern Municipal Water District. It has more than doubled its recycled water use sites in the past decade and saves its ratepayers more than \$1 million annually through its commitment to recycled water and resource management.

RECYCLED WATER CUSTOMER OF THE YEAR

SHONE FARM

Shone Farm is an outdoor learning laboratory for the Santa Rosa Junior College's Agriculture and Natural Resources Department, located about an hour north of San Francisco. The farm provides students with hands-on experience that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. Over the years, Shone Farm has grown and expanded their recycled water use to 173 acres of pasture, vineyards, orchards, and gardens. In this unique program, students see agriculture thrive while being irrigated with recycled water. The acceptance, value, and support for recycled water use grows exponentially as students grow through the program, put their experience to practical use, and advance on to careers in the field.

RECYCLED WATER STAFF PERSON OF THE YEAR

MELANIE MOW SCHUMACHER

Special Projects-Communications Manager/Assistant General Manager,
Soquel Creek Water District

Melanie has played a key role in transforming Soquel Creek Water District from "just" a water provider into a recycled water purification, groundwater replenishment, and water delivery leader. Melanie has guided the district through the Pure Water Soquel project through partnering, planning, environmental study, funding, design, and now construction. She is also a founding member of the WateReuse California Communications Collaborative Group and has participated in dozens of water reuse conferences, panels, and webinars to share her expertise and knowledge with other communities considering water reuse.

WATER REUSE CALIFORNIA AWARDS

RECYCLED WATER ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

RUPAM SONI

Community Relations Team Manager, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Rupam Soni is successfully advancing public understanding, acceptance, and trust of potable reuse within California. Over the past 22 years, working for the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts and now for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, she has focused her efforts on building the public's knowledge of wastewater and water resources. With these two regional agencies partnering on Pure Water Southern California, it was natural for her to lead the outreach, advocating for potable reuse on local, regional, and state levels. She brings her professionalism and deep personal belief that potable reuse needs to have a larger role in California's water future. Her skill in explaining the potable reuse treatment process and the value of this water supply wins support time after time.

BAHMAN SHEIKH AWARD FOR VISION IN WATER REUSE

THE HARVEST WATER TEAM

The Harvest Water Team is composed of a diverse and innovative group of scientists, engineers, and policy experts collaboratively implementing one of the largest recycled water programs in California. Harvest Water will deliver up to 50,000 acre-feet per year of recycled water to more than 100 farmers and ranchers managing over 16,000 acres. By delivering recycled water in lieu of groundwater pumping, Harvest Water will increase groundwater storage and raise groundwater levels up to 30 feet, contributing towards a more sustainable groundwater basin. In partnership with environmental, water, and farming stakeholders, the Harvest Water Team has also developed an ecological program aimed at providing benefits such as Sandhill crane habitat, vernal complex conservation, improved flows for Chinook salmon migration, and wetland and riparian forest enhancements.

WATEREUSE CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

JOHN ROBINSON

John Robinson Consulting Inc.

Since 2015 John Robinson has served as the Chair of Sponsorships and Exhibitors for the Annual WRCA Conference. In this time, he has helped raise \$1.7 million for the California state section – each year exceeding all fundraising goals set by the Board. These funds have supported the conference and made it possible for the state section to greatly increase its water recycling advocacy, education and overall presence in the state. John also served as Chapter representative to the California Board of Trustees for many years. WRCA thanks him for his incredible dedication and support of the California state section.

WATEREUSE CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

DAWN TAFFLER

Kennedy Jenks

Since 2009, Dawn Taffler has invested countless hours working to advance and enhance WRCA chapters, the Annual Conferences, and most recently WRCA fiscal tracking. Dawn began as Program Co-Chair for the Northern California Chapter and was then elected Chapter President from 2013-14. Next, she was elected to the WRCA Board of Trustees and served as Annual Conference Chair for five years—volunteering her time to improve the conference content and increase participation. Most recently she was elected WRCA Board Treasurer. WRCA thanks Dawn for her dedication, boundless energy, and creativity that have all greatly benefited the California state section.

