RECYCLED WATER IS:

- COST EFFECTIVE
  Reusing water often costs less than new alternative supplies such as building reservoirs or purchasing water from other water rights holders.
- ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND
  Reusing water alleviates pressure on California’s freshwater sources and natural systems.
- RELIABLE
  Because wastewater is renewable, recycled water is a sustainable source that’s available rain or shine.
- LOCALLY CONTROLLED
  California communities that use recycled water can reduce their reliance on unpredictable precipitation and imported water.
- SAFE
  Water is purified to meet stringent state and federal water quality standards.

WATER REUSE IN CALIFORNIA

In 1918, the state of California developed the first water reuse regulations in the United States to help irrigate its booming agricultural sector. Since then, California has remained a global leader in water reuse. Today, California recycles over one million acre-feet of water each year to benefit people and the environment. That’s enough water savings to meet the indoor and outdoor needs of at least two million households! California communities are securing their water future by producing highly purified recycled water for drinking and recharging aquifers, as well as by expanding non-drinking water reuse for agriculture and irrigation, and recycling more water within buildings.

WHY INVEST IN WATER REUSE?

California faces increasing cycles of drought and water scarcity, on top of the existing challenges posed by an uneven distribution of population, water supplies, and water rights. Investment in water reuse can contribute to a modern, sustainable, and stable water future—allowing families to flourish and businesses to grow. California communities and businesses are investing in water reuse to ensure that our residents have safe drinking water supplies, our industries have water to expand and create jobs, our farmers have water to grow food, our environment is protected, and our economic future remains strong and secure.

CALIFORNIA’S WATER SUPPLY OF THE FUTURE

California is leading on a new frontier of water recycling. In December 2023, the state adopted regulations for direct potable reuse, allowing communities to purify water that can be blended directly into their drinking water supplies. Many urban agencies are now considering the development of next-generation water reuse systems under the new regulations.

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 water sources including wastewater and graywater and cleaning it for a designated beneficial freshwater purpose. Common uses for recycled water include drinking, irrigation, industrial processes, groundwater replenishment, and environmental restoration.
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, Ohio, the Pacific Northwest, and Texas. To learn more, visit www.watereuse.org.