

Senate Bill 31

Recycled Water

Senator Jerry McNerney (SD 5)

THIS BILL

Climate change is subjecting California to more extreme droughts caused by prolonged hot temperatures and dry weather. Over the next 10 years, CA risks losing [10% of its water supplies](#). To meet the state's growing water demands, CA has embraced the practice of recycling water, rather than treating water like a single-use product. [Recycled water](#) increases our state's water efficiency, helps drought-proof communities, and builds CA's resilience to climate change.

SB 31 helps CA close the gap in its water needs by making it easier to use recycled water in outdoor irrigation at homes, businesses, parks, and golf courses.

ISSUE

Recognizing the importance of recycled water to meet our statewide water needs, Governor Newsom's Water Supply Strategy sets ambitious targets for the use of recycled water, aiming to reuse at least [800,000 acre-feet per year by 2030 and 1.8 million acre-feet by 2040](#). While California is well on its way to meet its recycled water usage goal by 2030, more needs to be done to ensure the state meets the 2040 goal.

Recycled water from sources that contain domestic waste may be used for a variety of non-potable (non-drinking water) purposes in CA, including irrigation, industrial or commercial cooling, and more. The allowable recycled water applications, required treatment, and use area requirements are defined in [Title 22](#) of the California Code of Regulations.

The Title 22 regulations for non-potable uses of recycled water haven't been updated in twenty years. The outdated regulations unnecessarily discourage the use of recycled water in certain spaces like landscape irrigation by homeowners associations, decorative bodies of water, public parks, and food handling facilities. In order to

maximize the advancements in water treatment technology, Title 22 should be updated to expand opportunities to safely use recycled water.

SOLUTION

SB 31 does the following:

- Requires homeowners' associations, when recycled water is available, to use recycled water to irrigate outdoor common areas.
- Ensures that homeowners' associations won't have to install expensive and cumbersome new plumbing systems to use recycled water.
- Enables parks to expand their use of recycled water.
- Ensures that using recycled water in decorative bodies of water, such as a lake at a golf course, isn't deterred by overly burdensome regulations.
- Allows food handling and processing facilities to use recycled water for toilet or urinal flushing or outdoor irrigation as long as the recycled water doesn't enter a room where food handling or processing occurs.

SUPPORT

WaterReuse California (Sponsor)

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