CALIFORNIA URBAN WATER AGENCIES

CUWA Policy Principles

Water Reuse

Updated November 21, 2019

CUWA is committed to studying and promoting reliable, high-quality water supplies for the state's current and future urban water needs, including water reuse. The following policy principles summarize CUWA's views on water reuse and align with themes from the *California WateReuse Action Plan* (July 2019).

General

1. **Water reuse must, first and foremost, continue to protect public health.** As more direct forms of reuse are implemented, additional safeguards may be needed to preserve water quality and protect public health.
2. **Potable and non-potable water reuse is an important component of water supply portfolios.** Water reuse offsets traditional supply sources that are impacted by climate change, improves reliability to meet future demands, and helps to meet statewide water use efficiency goals.
3. **Public engagement is critical to achieve understanding and support for water reuse.** CUWA agencies are committed to meeting customer needs, communicating with the public, and delivering water of an appropriate quality for the intended uses.

Research to Advance Water Recycling and Potable Reuse

4. **Collaborative research is necessary to solidify the scientific basis for water reuse.** Resolution of outstanding research questions is crucial to advance reuse, including means to improve sustainability of potable reuse while protecting public health. CUWA agencies are committed to working cooperatively with industry organizations (such as WateReuse California and the Water Research Foundation) on relevant research agendas to address outstanding technical questions. CUWA encourages greater sharing of information on technology and advances in water reuse and residuals management.

Recycled Water Regulations and Permitting

5. **Streamlined and efficient regulations are needed to provide consistency, while allowing flexibility to meet local needs.** CUWA agencies encourage greater alignment among state agencies and their regional counterparts to clarify regulatory requirements and to navigate the regulatory process. CUWA also supports local discretion related to water reuse to enable agencies to efficiently manage local water resources.

Integrated Regional Planning

6. **Partnerships are critical to advance water reuse projects.** CUWA endorses a One Water approach and encourages agencies to collaborate more intentionally, viewing the urban water cycle as one integrated system to manage a precious resource - water. Partnerships among water and wastewater agencies, and across regions, are important to synchronize reliability and resiliency objectives, community values, and funding sources across shared communities.

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7. **Water reuse is a site-specific decision depending on local and regional factors.** Correspondingly, local water suppliers must retain the authority to manage the makeup of water supply portfolios, including the use and extent of water reuse, to achieve supply reliability goals. Considerations include the availability of an environmental buffer (e.g., groundwater storage), cost-effectiveness of different reuse strategies, water quality requirements, and approaches to achieve water use efficiency targets. Additionally, water reuse must be viewed in a regional context, considering the needs of downstream users, including the environment.
8. **Protecting source water safeguards water quality for all beneficial uses.** Source water protection, such as source control programs for contaminants or salinity, helps to protect public health and the environment, reduce treatment costs, and allow for a broader range of recycled water end uses. Similarly, water reuse must consider water quality objectives for receiving water bodies and downstream users.

Grant and Loan Opportunities

9. **Public funding is needed to support public benefits and help meet state goals.** CUWA values public funding as means to produce public benefits associated with water reuse, such as decreased discharges to the environment and preservation of water supplies for potable use. Public funding is also crucial to facilitate innovation and implementation of new technologies.