

State of California
Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
December 16, 2015

- ITEM: 12
- SUBJECT: Information Item: Challenges to Achieving a Sustainable Water Supply in the San Diego Region (*John Odermatt and Julie Chan*)
- PURPOSE: Provide information to San Diego Water Board members and the public on actions required to enable the San Diego Region's water purveyors to maximize reuse opportunities and achieve a sustainable water supply in the Region.
- RECOMMENDATION(S): There is no recommendation as this is an information item and the Board will take no action.
- KEY ISSUES:
1. Importing water to meet the needs of the San Diego Region is becoming less reliable and less sustainable due to many factors.
 2. Recycled water agencies are far behind in meeting the goals of the State Water Board's Recycled Water Policy.
 3. Significant challenges related to technology, cost, and acceptance must be managed to significantly increase reuse of recycled water and storm water in the San Diego Region.
- PRACTICAL VISION:
- Proactive Public Outreach and Communication – The Practical Vision Community Outreach Strategy goal is to provide the public with information through a variety of platforms including discussions and meetings. This agenda item brings together water supply and wastewater agencies, staff, and Board members to exchange information and insights on meeting the State's recycled water use goals in the San Diego Region.
- Sustainable Local Water Supply – The Practical Vision calls for the San Diego Water Board to establish relationships with water supply agencies, and to partner with them on plans to increase local water supplies. This agenda item contributes

to the relationship-building process and will provide the Board members with insights into the progress and challenges to meeting the recycled water use goals.

DISCUSSION:

The effects of climate change, population growth, drought, failing ecosystems in the Colorado River and Sacramento-San Joaquin River deltas, and the vulnerability of delta levees makes importing water for the needs of the San Diego Region less reliable and less sustainable. To reduce dependence on imported water, the San Diego Region's wastewater agencies continue to expand recycled water production and develop new reuse strategies. Despite this progress, there is still a long way to go to meet the goals established by the State Water Board in the *Recycled Water Policy*. These goals are:

- Increase the use of recycled water over 2002 levels by at least one million acre-feet per year (afy)¹ by 2020 and by at least two million afy by 2030.
- Increase the use of storm water over the 2007 baseline level by at least 500,000 afy by 2020 and by at least one million afy by 2030.
- Increase the amount of water conserved in urban and industrial uses over the 2007 baseline level by at least 20 percent by 2020.
- Substitute as much recycled water for potable water as possible by 2030.

For this agenda item, representatives of the City of San Diego, Padre Dam Municipal Water District, Southern Orange County Water Agency, and the San Diego Water Authority have been invited to engage the San Diego Water Board in a panel discussion focused on the following questions:

1. What percentage of the San Diego Region's wastewater could be recycled using existing technology, and is this technology expected to improve in the near future?
2. What hurdles must be overcome to significantly increase recycled water production and reuse in the San Diego Region and how should they be addressed?

¹ For reference, the average family of four uses approximately 0.45 afy

3. What hurdles must be overcome to significantly increase storm water capture and reuse in the San Diego Region and how should they be addressed?
4. How much, if any, imported water could be saved (acre-feet and corresponding dollars) if all recycled water produced in the San Diego Region was reused, and how realistic is this goal?
5. What does a water source portfolio-based approach for providing a reliable and sustainable water supply look like now and in the future?

State Senator Robert M. Hertzberg has also been invited to today's meeting to share his views on increasing recycled water production and reuse in the State.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: None

PUBLIC NOTICE: This item was noticed to the public in the Meeting Notice and Agenda for the San Diego Water Board's December 16, 2015 meeting.