

Rowland Water District Frequently Asked Questions for Recycled Water Use

Rowland Water District (District) is expanding the availability of recycled water service within its service area. The following frequently asked questions are intended to provide District customers with a clear understanding of recycled water and its safe and beneficial uses.

1. What is recycled water?

a. Recycled water (also called *Reclaimed Water*) refers to multi-stage treatment of municipal wastewater that is processed at a water recycling (or reclamation) plant. Recycled water is virtually colorless and odorless, and is permissible for full-body human contact but not suitable for direct human consumption.

2. What is the difference between gray water and recycled water? Are they regulated differently?

- a. Gray water is untreated residential wastewater that does not come from a toilet or garbage disposal (i.e., bathroom sink, bathtub, shower laundry, etc.). Gray water is regulated by the State of California, and a building permit must be obtained before installing a gray water system to collect and send this water to the resident's landscaping, but water quality is not routinely monitored.
 - i. Recycled water, on the other hand, is water that is refined through several treatment processes to a level that is safe for a variety of beneficial uses. A number of regulatory agencies have adopted requirements that must be followed when producing, distributing, and using recycled water. Water quality is strictly monitored and routinely reported to the respective Regional Water Quality Board.

3. Is recycled water safe to use?

a. Yes. However, recycled water must be used within established guidelines, regulations and permit requirements. Recycled water projects are designed and operated with an emphasis to protect public health and safety. Regular monitoring by the District and county public health agencies ensures that the District supplies a highly treated and disinfected product which meets all California Department Public Health Standards.

4. What agencies regulate the use of recycled water within the district?

- a. A number of regulatory agencies have adopted requirements that must be followed when producing, distributing, and using recycled water. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has adopted strict public health and safety requirements and guidelines, which help protect the public from any potential risk associated with use of recycled water. These requirements are described in Titles 17 and 22 of the California Code of Regulations:
 - i. http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/Documents/Lawbook/dwregulations-2011-07-14.pdf.

ii. Permits to oversee the production, conveyance, and use of recycled water are granted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the corresponding Regional Water Quality Control Board(s) (RWQCB). Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County also have guidelines and inspection requirements for the use of recycled water.

5. What uses are suitable for recycled water?

a. Recycled water is primarily used for landscape irrigation. However, recycled water can be used for virtually all non-potable applications within the District. This includes some industrial processes, cooling towers for mechanical systems, soil compaction and dust control for construction projects, commercial nursery and agricultural irrigation systems, and for possible recreational and wetland restoration projects.

6. What are some benefits of recycled water?

a. (1) Costs less than drinking water. (2) Contains nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus which promote plant growth. (3) Reduces stress on drinking water supplies. (4) Drought resistant source of irrigation water.

7. How is recycled water delivered to customers?

a. Recycled water must be conveyed in a separate distribution system. It is completely isolated from all existing potable water or sewer systems.

8. How do recycled water rates compare with potable water rates?

a. It is the policy of the District to price recycled water at a sufficient discount from the price of potable water to make the use of recycled water for irrigation and other suitable uses cost effective for new development, and result in savings sufficient to encourage existing customers of the District to convert existing uses to recycled water where appropriate. Visit www.rowlandwater.com to check the current rates.

9. Is my property eligible to receive recycled water?

a. Recycled water is generally used in large landscaped areas or commercial properties. If you are interested in connecting recycled water and think your property may be eligible, please contact Alex Zaragoza, Cross-Connection Control Specialist at azaragoza@rowlandwater.com or at (562) 383-2350.

10. What training is required to use recycled water? What is a Site Supervisor?

a. All sites where recycled water is used are required to designate a recycled water user Site Supervisor. Site Supervisors are required to have appropriate training to assure proper operation of recycled water facilities, worker protection, and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. To help recycled water users fulfill their training obligations, free classes are currently being offered periodically throughout the year at various locations by the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. Visit (http://www.lacsd.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=7930) for a site supervisor training registration form. A recycled water user Site Supervisor represents the owner, tenant, or property manager. The Site Supervisor is designated to be the main person to interact with the District and respond to inquiries, emergencies and participation in inspections and cross connection testing.

11. How often do I need to attend Recycled Water site supervisor training?

a. Training must be attended every 5 years to ensure that the site supervisor is current on all recycled water regulations. Visit (http://www.lacsd.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=7930) for a site supervisor training registration form.

12. What is 'industrial reuse' and how can recycled water be used by commercial businesses and industries?

a. Industrial water reuse broadly refers to the use of recycled water for uses other than irrigation or groundwater recharge. Use of recycled water by industry has increased substantially in the last two decades due to increases in the cost of drinking water, combined with on-again/off-again water shortages that can limit business activities. Cooling water systems are the largest industrial applications for recycled water, due to the large water demand in their cooling towers and boilers. Other industrial applications include chemical plants, metal finishers, textile and carpet dying, paper manufacturing, cement manufacturers, and other cooling and process applications. Recycled water can also be used for dust control and soil compaction at construction sites, commercial laundries, carwash facilities, as well as toilet flushing.

13. Whom should I contact if I have additional questions or need assistance concerning recycled water?

a. For further assistance, please contact **Alex Zaragoza**, Cross-Connection Control Specialist at azaragoza@rowlandwater.com or at (562) 383-2350.

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