



# Recycled Water Expansion

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. Why is the District investing in the Recycled Water Expansion Project?**

The Recycled Water Expansion Project is a comprehensive, multi-phase undertaking that will increase the amount of recycled water produced for irrigation. By producing more recycled water, the District will save precious imported drinking water (potable) for household consumption and sanitary uses.

Like most water districts in south Orange County, ETWD relies on imported water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta and the Colorado River to meet 95% of its customer demand.

To meet the current need to irrigate golf courses, parks and greenbelts, ETWD uses both recycled water produced by the current Water Recycling Plant and imported drinking water (potable). By expanding the capacity of the Water Recycling Plant, ETWD will increase recycled water usage, significantly reduce dependence on imported potable water for irrigation, and therefore, enhance overall supply.

### **Q. What is recycled water and how is it used?**

Water recycling, also known as reclamation or reuse, is a reliable, economically feasible and environmentally sensitive means to maximize California's water resources and reduce the demand on freshwater systems.

Recycled water is highly treated and purified wastewater that meets all the stringent standards set by state and federal regulatory agencies for non-drinking purposes.

Recycled water is safely and regularly used to irrigate public facilities, including school grounds, athletic fields, golf courses, parks and common areas of residential neighborhoods.

### **Q. Where is the District getting the money to pay for the project?**

The total cost of the project is projected to be approximately \$37 million. The District will utilize a variety of innovative funding sources to pay for the project, including a state grant, low interest state revolving loan fund, Metropolitan Water District rebate program and restricted District reserves.



### **Q. Will residential water rates increase because of the project?**

No, this project will not impact residential water rates. Recycled water customers will pay for the recycled water that they use.

### **Q. What does the project entail?**

The Recycled Water Expansion Project is one of the largest infrastructure improvements in the history of the District and includes two components. First, the District will expand its existing Water Recycling Plant to allow for the treatment and delivery of approximately 1,400 acre feet per year of recycled water. That's the equivalent of covering the entire footprint of Laguna Woods Village with five inches of water or filling Angel Stadium nineteen times.

Simultaneously, the District will construct approximately 100,000 feet or 19 miles of recycled water pipeline beneath the roadways in Laguna Woods and the northwest portion of Laguna Hills.

**Q. How will the District keep residents informed about construction schedules?**



The District has developed a comprehensive community outreach program to keep the community informed throughout the project. A variety of communications vehicles will be utilized to share valuable dates, schedules and information, including:

- Water Views newsletter
- ETWD website
- Open houses and project displays
- Dedicated project phone line
- Speaker's bureau
- Local newspapers
- Social media - Facebook and Twitter
- Laguna Woods Village TV 6 presentations
- Signage with construction alerts
- Door hangers with construction schedules

**Q. Does the project provide environmental benefits?**

The expanded Water Recycling Plant will produce a higher quality of treated water for irrigation, significantly reduce the amount of treated wastewater discharged into the ocean and will help to reduce the greenhouse gases that result from pumping water into the region.



The project will also support the environment by reserving drinking water resources for use inside homes and businesses, and provide environmentally responsible recycled water for outdoor use.

**How safe is recycled water?**

All recycled water produced by ETWD for irrigation meets, or exceeds, the stringent water quality requirements for California as established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Public Health.

ETWD will conduct extensive monitoring to ensure the reliability of the disinfection and tertiary treatment processes. This highly treated recycled water is virtually free from all pathogens, including viruses. Several long-term microbiological studies involving thousands of samples have confirmed that pathogens are reduced to non-detectable or insignificant levels in tertiary-treated recycled water.

**Questions?**

Please call the Dedicated Project Helpline at 949.837.0880 or send an email to [district@etwd.com](mailto:district@etwd.com) and we'll respond promptly to your inquiry.

