

Connections



Recycled Water Program Update

Two Draft EIRs Scheduled to be Available This Summer

You may have read in previous editions of *Connections* that in March 2004 the City of Santa Rosa adopted the Incremental Recycled Water Program (IRWP) Master Plan to expand the current Subregional Water Reuse System to meet resource demands and be responsive to regulatory changes. The Master Plan includes five components: Geysers Expansion, Agriculture Irrigation, Urban Reuse, Water Conservation, and Discharge Compliance. Here is an update on the first steps of the Master Plan: studying the reuse and discharge options, both of which include increased seasonal storage as a necessary component.



Urban Reuse

The IRWP Urban Reuse project proposes the expansion of the Subregional Water Reuse System's current use of recycled water to irrigate urban landscaping such as parks, golf courses, commercial areas and street medians. Water reuse is beneficial because it reduces demand on other water resources, such as groundwater, the Russian River, and its tributaries. The ultimate goal of this program is to use up to 1,000 million gallons per year (MGY) of recycled water to irrigate urban areas, thus saving the same amount of drinkable water for human consumption.

Currently, the Utilities Department

staff and their consultants are studying various pipeline alignments for the initial phase of this project. In fall, 2007 the Board of Public Utilities and the City Council will be examining various policy related issues involved in managing the expanded use of recycled water in Santa Rosa.

Discharge Compliance

Prior to 2010, changes to water regulations may necessitate the relocation of highly treated recycled water discharge points from the Laguna de Santa Rosa into the Russian River. The Subregional Water Reuse System is currently allowed to discharge its recycled water into the Laguna between October and May. But the higher flows in the Russian River (relative to the Laguna flows) may make relocating all, or a portion, of the discharge to the Russian River a more feasible method of complying with regulations.

However, keeping the discharge point in the Laguna de Santa Rosa remains an option; this could be made possible by the addition of advanced membrane treatment (also known as reverse osmosis) for water that is to be discharged. Additionally, three sites remain under consideration for discharge relocation: 1) near Steelhead Beach, 2) south of Healdsburg at the Highway 101 crossing, and 3) at the Alexander Valley Bridge. A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Discharge Compliance project is scheduled to be available in August of this year, with a public hearing to follow in early September.

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Reduce Your Water Use Today



Due to low rainfall this past winter and a reduction in the water flows in to Lake Mendocino from the Potter Valley Project, the Sonoma County Water Agency is

projecting that Lake Mendocino may reach historically low levels by September. In response, the Agency requested a 10-15 percent voluntary reduction in water use from water customers and the agricultural community and filed a Petition for Temporary Urgency Change with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) to request lower minimum flows in the Russian River. The State Board issued an Order approving the Temporary Urgency Change Petition and included a requirement for the Agency to make a 15 percent reduction in diversions from the Russian River to the Agency's service area from July 1 – October 28, 2007.

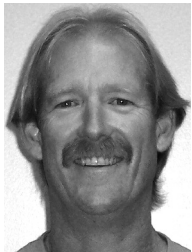
In May, the Santa Rosa City Council asked all water customers to voluntarily reduce their water use now by eliminating water waste and improving water use efficiency. To assist water customers in reducing their water use, the Water Conservation Program has developed a list of the Top Ten ways to immediately reduce your water use:

- Reduce irrigation by 20% through the use of our **Turf-Time** information. Call **Turf-Time** at 707-543-3466 or visit our **Turf-Time** website at www.srcity.org/turftime for weekly lawn watering requirements. **Turf-Time** is updated on a weekly basis,

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Your Utilities Department at Work for You

Ensuring the Accuracy of Your Water Meter



Have you ever wondered how many water meters there are in the City of Santa Rosa? Vance DeWitt, Senior Utilities System Operator with the Meter Shop

Section of the Utilities Department, knows the answer and much more about the City's water meters.

Vance has worked for the City of Santa Rosa Utilities Department for 18 years. Vance joined the Utilities Department as a Maintenance Worker in the Wastewater Section, where he was responsible for cleaning, maintaining and constructing wastewater system pipelines. Along the way, Vance earned his California Water Environment Association (CWEA) Collection System Maintenance certification and a Grade I Water Distribution System Operators License, which helped prepare him for his position with the Meter Shop.

Vance is one of a team of seven

responsible for maintaining, repairing, and testing approximately 51,000 water meters in the City. Vance is also responsible for setting all new meters, testing and adjusting meters to ensure they are reading correctly, installing radio routes which allows the city meter specialists to read the meters via radio, and data-logging meters, which is a tool that reads and records water use through the meter every ten seconds to determine how much water is being used and if there is a water leak on the property.

Vance enjoys working with the public, and feels that the best part of his job is answering customers' questions and solving problems. "Being able to explain to a customer how the water system works, to show them how to read their water meter and to help them determine if they have a water leak is one of the best parts of my job." To learn more about your water meter, contact the Utilities Department at 707-543-4200.

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washer with full loads only.

- Prevent and report water waste.

The Water Conservation Program also offers incentive programs and services that can help you improve your water use efficiency. To help reduce indoor water use, the Water Conservation Program provides free high efficiency showerheads and faucet aerators, and provides rebates for replacing your washing machine with qualifying high efficiency washing machines. The Water Conservation Program also offers rebates for replacing high flow toilets, which are toilets that flush at 3.5 gallons per flush or more, with high efficiency toilets, which are toilets that flush at 1.28 gallons per flush or less.

To improve your water use efficiency outdoors, the Water Conservation Program offers a Green Exchange Rebate Program, which provides rebates for improving the efficiency of your irrigation hardware and for replacing high water use plants with low water use alternatives. You can pick up free shut off hose nozzles and Water Wise Gardening CD's that provide information on low water use plants. The Water Conservation Program also provides free home "Check-Ups", where expert staff will come to your home, review your current water uses, and make recommendations for improving your water use efficiency indoors and outdoors. For more information on current incentives or to request assistance in reducing your water use, please contact the Water Conservation Hotline at 707-543-3985 or visit www.srcity.org/wc.

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Seasonal Storage

To support reuse expansion and discharge compliance, the Subregional Water Reuse System will need capacity to store up to an additional 500 million gallons of recycled water produced in winter months so it can be used for irrigation in the warmer months. From an original list of 34 sites, five potential storage sites are still under consideration to meet the City's needs. Four are City-owned properties located in the Santa Rosa plain; the other property, in Alexander Valley, is privately owned. The Seasonal Storage Draft EIR is also slated to be available in August, with a public hearing in late September.

For more information and updates on these and other responsible recycled water projects being undertaken by the Subregional System and your Utilities Department, visit: www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater

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- and watering requirements are based on actual plant needs and current weather conditions.
- Find and repair leaks now.
 - Inspect and tune-up your irrigation system monthly.
 - Irrigate between midnight and 6:00 AM to reduce water loss from evaporation and wind.
 - Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways, decks or patios.
 - Use a bucket and a hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle when you wash the car, or take your car to a carwash that recycles water.
 - Cover pools and hot-tubs to reduce evaporation.
 - Use front-loading washing machines. Contact the Water Conservation Program at 707-543-3985 for information on rebates offered for the purchase of qualifying front-loading washing machines.
 - Run the dishwasher and clothes

Web Resources

Visit these Web sites to learn more about issues mentioned in this Update.

Discharge Compliance:

www.SRCity.org/DischargeCompliance

Urban Reuse:

www.SRCity.org/UrbanReuse

Recycled Water:

www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater

Water Conservation: www.SRCity.org/WC

Incremental Recycled Water Program (IRWP):

www.SRCity.org/IRWP