

# The San Diego Union-Tribune.

## Letters to the editor

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December 7, 2005

Michael Stetz did a credible job, albeit too brief, of presenting both sides of the controversy in "Water plan secretly pushed, suit says" (Local, Nov. 23). This was a clear opportunity to educate San Diegans about the dangers of doing nothing. It is as clear as the lack of action by New Orleans' civic leadership in preparing for the breaks in the levees.

San Diego imports 90 percent of its water. We are all told to keep some drinking water handy in case of an earthquake. What if the infrastructure is so badly damaged the supply is cut off for months, or years? It is possible that San Diego could return to the dusty, dry desert village it once was.

If you have ever visited the North Lake Tahoe area and have consumed drinking water there, you are drinking "toilet to tap" water. Over 100 wells recharge the aquifer every day with five million gallons of water from the sewage system in Truckee and the surrounding community. As a mechanical engineer, I started up that plant in 1977. Since that time, major advances in technology make the process even safer. It is pure idiocy to think that San Diego will never run out of water. It isn't a matter of "if"; it is just a matter of "when."

The 1999 City Council did a number of dumb things that have filled the media channels for months now. One of those was to stop work on the reclamation of sewage water. It is only those who fail to do their homework who are opposed to recharging our local water supplies with treated wastewater. We are just one 7.0 seismic event away from a disaster that will make New Orleans look like a minor local mishap.

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