

# The San Diego Union-Tribune.

## District won't make owners of new homes install recycled-water pipes

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SANTEE – Owners of new homes served by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District won't be required to have pipes for recycled water installed, the district board has decided.

At a cost of \$3,000 per house, the recycled-water pipes would add too much to the price of a new home, board members said Tuesday.

In August, staff members at the water district suggested exploring whether it was feasible to require the addition of a second plumbing system in new homes that would use recycled water for lawn irrigation.

The idea was prompted by the proposed Fanita Ranch development in Santee, in which 1,380 homes are planned for construction. Padre Dam serves 125,000 residents in Santee, El Cajon, Lakeside, Flinn Springs, Harbison Canyon, Blossom Valley, Alpine, Dehesa and Crest.

No houses in San Diego County are required to have dual plumbing, but it has been required elsewhere in the state, most notably at a 3,500-acre development in El Dorado County, east of Sacramento.

The Padre Dam district staff had looked at requiring recycled-water plumbing for houses on lots larger than half an acre, which would have affected 830 lots at Fanita Ranch. Using recycled water for irrigation would have saved homeowners an average of \$37.50 a year. Savings could have reached \$252 a year if the recycled water was delivered at no cost, according to a staff analysis.

Officials at Barratt American, developer of Fanita Ranch, were concerned that a recycled-water system would have required a homeowners association

to run it, giving control of landscaping and irrigation to the association instead of the homeowners. Barratt officials were concerned that setting up a homeowners association would hurt the marketability of their homes, the staff report said.

In addition to the \$3,000 increase in home prices, inspection and certification of a backflow device required for the recycled-water system would have cost about \$45 per year for each home, the analysis found.