



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

WATER DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE

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**RAIN, RECYCLING AND IMPORTING –
THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO'S THREE WATER SOURCES**

San Diego – The City of San Diego relies on just three sources of water. One of those sources, rainfall that fills the local reservoirs, has been all too obvious these past weeks. The other two sources are recycled water and water imported from hundreds of miles away.

In an average year, the City gets about 10 percent of its water from runoff – rain and snowmelt that flow into its nine reservoirs. The percentage varies according to the yearly precipitation.

Imported water from northern California and the Colorado River comprises 80 to 90 percent of the City's supply. The imported water is delivered to the reservoirs for long-term storage along with the runoff. The City balances these percentages, with cost certainly being a major factor.

The City's nine reservoirs are connected through a massive pipeline system to its three drinking water treatment plants. Most of these reservoirs are very low, due to several years of below-average rainfall. Total reservoir capacity is about 415,000 acre feet and four reservoirs are still less than half full. An acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons and can supply two average-size households with a home and yard for about a year.

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Another local source of water for the City is recycled water (reclaimed water) produced at the City's two water reclamation facilities. This accounts for about 2 percent of the City's total supply. The two facilities convert a steady supply of wastewater into high-quality recycled water that is suitable for a variety of uses. Currently there are more than 320 meters connected to the recycled water delivery system, with the majority using it for landscape irrigation.

"We are undergoing a Study to analyze various options to increase the use of recycled water in the City," said Marsi Steirer, Water Department Deputy Director for Water Policy and Strategic Planning and the Director of the Study. "By increasing our production of recycled water, we can help diversify our water supplies and offset the need for increased imported supplies and the reliance on local rainfall."

The City has projected that by 2030, it will need 25 percent more water than is used now.

At the request of the City Council, the Water Department embarked on the Water Reuse Study 2005 and will provide an unbiased and science-based report to the Council at the Study's conclusion. The options will be presented equally to the Council later this year. For more information on the Study, please visit www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreustudy

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