



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**Water Department**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August, 5, 2004

**CONTACT:** Lesley Robin  
Community Outreach  
Specialist  
(619) 533-6606

**CITY EVALUATES OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE RECYCLED WATER USE  
AND LAUNCHES WATER REUSE STUDY WEBSITE**

**San Diego, CA --** Taking steps to ensure that an adequate and reliable water supply is available to meet the needs of its residents, the City of San Diego is embarking on a Water Reuse Study. It is an impartial, balanced, comprehensive and science-based study of all recycled water opportunities. An important aspect of the Study is the involvement of the residents and business owners in San Diego.

To ensure the public has a way to provide input into the Study, the Water Department has launched a Water Reuse Study website, [www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreusestudy](http://www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreusestudy). The new section contains an opinion survey form, information about the Study and ways to contact the Study team with questions. Groups interested in a presentation can notify the Speaker's Bureau through the website.

"Recycled water will play an important part in meeting our future water supply needs," said Marsi Steirer, Water Department Deputy Director and Director of the Study. "To help decrease our dependence on imported water, we need to increase our use of locally supplied water. Recycled water is produced in San Diego and is a drought-proof supply available year-round. Increasing our use of recycled water helps provide local solutions to our long-term water needs."

**-more-**

## **WATER REUSE STUDY SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT**

**August 5, 2004**

**page 2**

The Study, which was approved by the San Diego City Council earlier this year, has three main goals:

- Develop opportunities for recycled water that are safe, economically viable, environmentally sustainable, protect human health, and reflect public values through a fair and unbiased evaluation of recycled water uses.
- Partner with residents, businesses, agencies and government to help policy makers make informed decisions on how to best use recycled water.
- Provide tools to expand the public's awareness, knowledge and involvement of those who will be served and present information in a way that is understandable and accessible to all San Diegans.

San Diego imports 80 to 90 percent of its water from northern California and the Colorado River. Even with continued successful conservation programs, by 2030, population projections indicate the City will need 25 percent more water than it does today. Droughts and regional growth are creating strains on available water supplies.

The opportunities for increasing the use of recycled water include in the Study are: expanding the existing distribution system for irrigation and industrial use, creating additional customer uses, adding storage reservoirs, options for excess recycled water produced during low demands for irrigation, discharge into flowing streams, creating or enhancing wetlands, recharging groundwater storage basins, and reservoir augmentation.

An Independent Advisory Panel has been formed by the National Water Research Institute (NWRI). Panelists selected to advise the Water Reuse Study team are

**-more-**

## **WATER REUSE STUDY SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT**

**August 5, 2004**

**page 2**

renowned experts in water and wastewater technology and represent the fields of science, medicine, economics, public health and education, among others. Several members of the panel are based San Diego. Additionally, a local citizens' representative was selected to be on the Independent Advisory Panel.

The Independent Advisory Panel met in mid-July and is currently evaluating technical documents for the Study. The panel will review the research material and data on recycled water opportunities and provide technical recommendations to the Study team.

The City has been delivering recycled water for irrigation and industrial use to customers from the North City Water Reclamation Plant since 1997. An annual average of five million gallons per day (MGD), which peaks to nine MGD in summer due to irrigation demands, is distributed from the facility. There are 66 miles of recycled water distribution pipelines and 317 meters (City of San Diego customers) receiving recycled water from the North City Water Reclamation Plant. The City of Poway is a wholesale customer receiving recycled water produced at the North City facility.

The South Bay Water Reclamation Plant, located in the Otay Mesa area, is currently undergoing certification for the distribution of recycled water from a state regulatory agency. Agreements are in place to deliver six MGD of recycled water to customers from the South Bay facility once construction of a distribution system is completed.

At the conclusion of the Study, in approximately one year, a report will be presented to the City Council. All recycled water opportunities will be presented and no specific alternative will be selected or recommended at the study completion.

#####