



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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CONTACT:

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

**PARTICIPANTS AT AMERICAN ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP
DISCUSS CITY'S WATER REUSE STUDY 2005**

San Diego, CA — The City of San Diego Water Department held an American Assembly-style workshop on Oct. 6, 7 and 29, 2004, to gather public input on the Department's Water Reuse Study 2005. Sixty participants represented various community and planning groups, and professional, industrial and environmental organizations from throughout the city. The ideas and opinions expressed, and the American Assembly Statement developed at the workshop's conclusion, will guide the Study team over the next few months in analyzing various considerations for each water reuse opportunity.

Participants reviewed various aspects of the Study in small groups, offering their perspectives and discussing a variety of ways the City could increase the use of recycled water. Participants also discussed the evaluation criteria to be used for each water reuse option. Attendees were selected by the Mayor, City Council, and organizations with an interest in how water supplies affect the environment, business and community at large.

Prior to the workshop, participants received a detailed Water Reuse Study "White Paper," that reviewed the City's past and current water recycling programs and provided information on possible options to increase the City's use of recycled water.

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At the end of the workshop's first day, the workshop support team compiled the input of the participants and created a draft "American Assembly Statement" that captured the various majority and minority viewpoints received throughout the workshop. On the second and third days, participants discussed, voted and approved the "American Assembly statement" in a Plenary session.

The "White Paper" and "American Assembly statement" can be found on the Water Reuse Study's website at www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreustudy/PublicInvolvement.

A summary of key points from the statement are:

1. The Assembly strongly believes that recycled water can and should play a significantly greater role in the City, providing added water reliability and environmental benefits.
2. The Assembly stated that for all uses of recycled water, critical conditions must be met, and that safety and the protection of public health were most important. Second in importance was the cost-effectiveness of the water supply, both imported and recycled.
3. The Assembly offered strong support for indirect potable reuse but some Assembly participants were concerned about the public health effects of this use of recycled water.
4. The Assembly said that it was critically important that the Water Department aggressively pursue community outreach and public education activities to foster an understanding of water recycling alternatives and issues.

A second American Assembly workshop will be held in late spring 2005. Participants will review the research that has been conducted on the various reuse options in the Study.

Councilmember Jim Madaffer is the chair of the Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NR&C) of the City Council, which oversees water issues for the City. Madaffer stated, "The American Assembly process was an innovative and effective way to bring a variety of public opinions into the Study process. The various viewpoints of the participants were voiced at the workshop and then included in the group's official Statement." The NR&C Committee initially reviewed and recommended the need for the Water Reuse Study and it was subsequently authorized by the City Council on January 13, 2004.

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