

SAN DIEGO NEWSROOM

By Debbie Hatch

August 20, 2010

San Diego to test alternative water source

PACIFIC BEACH — At the Pacific Beach Town Council (PBTC) meeting on Aug. 18,. Amy Dorman, a senior engineer in the Long-Range Planning and Water Resources Division of the Public Utilities Department for the city of San Diego, presented a wastewater purification process the city is studying for possible future use.

The new system would enable the city to purify wastewater, making it potable, safe drinking water again.

The purification involves three steps: micro-filtration, reverse osmosis and the use of ultraviolet light.

A purification facility is in the process of being built and should be up and running by spring 2011, Dorman said. The treatment technology will be tested at the facility. Similar programs are already in place in Virginia and Orange County. “To date, there haven’t been any extensive problems found,” Dorman said.

This is just the testing phase of the process and none of the water tested will be introduced into the city’s water supply, she emphasized.

The city will test the process for one year, during which time an independent advisory panel of experts will provide oversight to determine if the treatment system meets water quality, safety and regulatory requirements.

“San Diegans have really embraced conservation,” Dorman said.

She noted that droughts are becoming more frequent and lasting longer, adding that 85 to 90 percent of San Diego’s water supply is imported.

