

RECLAIMED WATER USE

In 1991 the Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) developed an advanced treatment system that provides up to 1.5 million gallons per day of reclaimed water suitable for parkland, schoolyard, and landscape irrigation, including residential lawns and landscaping, under guidelines of state and county health departments.

The added facilities consists of three additional treatment steps -- coagulation, a second filtration process, and extended disinfection -- to the tertiary-treated water produced by the plant. These processes provide all the treatment needed to meet California's highest irrigation standards for reclaimed water.

The plant provides the water free of charge to permitted operators of tank trucks, including landscapers and construction contractors. The water is available at the RWQCP and also in Mountain View, at a standpipe on Terminal road near the eastern end of San Antonio Road. There is a fee associated with the permit. For information about Reclaimed Water Permits, call Sandra Domingo ((415) 329-2598).

Approximately 2 percent of the RWQCP's annual average flow is currently "recycled" and used for irrigation. The largest users of the reclaimed water receive water through dedicated pipelines to Mountain

View's Shoreline Park and Golf Course, the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course, and Greer Park in Palo Alto. The two golf courses each use as much as 500,000 gallons/day of reclaimed water during summer months. The reclaimed water contains more salt than the area's potable water. Therefore, the golf courses use a blend of approximately 50 percent reclaimed water and 50 percent potable water because of special grasses used on their greens and their location above the poorly drained bay mud. Many other landscaping projects use 100 percent reclaimed water.

In April 1995, Palo Alto completed a Final Environmental Impact Report on potential future reclaimed water distribution systems. The expanded distribution systems described in the report will be given further consideration in the future if more water is needed to augment current water supplies or if discharge standards limit the current practice of discharging the treated water to San Francisco Bay.