



# Media Release

**Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board**

## **Los Angeles Water Board Takes Action to Increase Efficiency of the State's Oldest Water Recycling Project**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Los Angeles** - The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Thursday took action to increase storage of recycled water for future use in a local groundwater basin, potentially saving more than 4.8 million gallons of imported water a year -- enough to serve 71 households for a year.

The Regional Water Board adopted an amendment, approved by the Department of Public Health, allowing the Water Replenishment District's Montebello Forebay Groundwater Recharge Project to increase the percentage of recycled water used on the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds from 35 percent of the water mix (imported, stormwater, and recycled water) to 45 percent.

The spreading grounds recharge groundwater in the Central Groundwater Basin, which provides 40 percent of the total water supply in Los Angeles. The change will make up for the lack of stormwater runoff during the drought and save money that would be used to purchase imported water to make up for the loss of runoff.

"This is the kind of smart and prudent action that will help us get through this challenging drought and the inevitable droughts to come," said State Water Resources Control Board Chair Felicia Marcus, who serves on the [Governor's Drought Task Force](#). "The Regional Water Board's amendment allows the community to save highly treated water that would otherwise flow to the ocean without compromising the water quality in the aquifer."

The Montebello Forebay Groundwater Recharge Project has been successfully recycling water since 1962, making it the oldest such project in California. It was formed after rapid population growth in Los Angeles County in the 1950s led to a groundwater overdraft, dropping water table and seawater intrusion in the aquifer.

"The Regional Board is committed to ensuring that every drop of our precious water resource is efficiently used," said Charles Stringer, Chair of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. "Water resources are stressed throughout the state due to the drought. The amendment is an

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important and common sense action for ensuring the availability of local water supplies for the future.”

The project uses extensively treated recycled water from the Los Angeles County sanitation districts, along with stormwater runoff and imported water from the Colorado River and the State Water Project, to recharge the aquifer. Significant to this project, a portion of the river flow that would eventually be discharged to the ocean is now captured and stored in the ground for future drinking water use.

A number of health studies have shown that the recycled water used for groundwater recharge does not pose a health hazard, and long-range plans for the project were to increase the use of recycled water.

Find out more about the [Montebello Forebay Groundwater Recharge Project](#).

Visit [Drought.ca.gov](#) to learn more about how California is dealing with the effects of the drought, and for more water conservation ideas, visit [SaveOurH2O.org](#).

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