



# Fact Sheet

## **General Order for Recycled Water Use**

### ***Effort to Streamline Use of Non-Potable Recycled Water in Drought***

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted a General Order on June 3, 2014 to streamline permitting for recycled water. The General Order takes effect immediately following Board adoption.

This General Order was developed in response to the Governor's Jan. 17, proclamation of a Drought State of Emergency. On April 25, the Governor issued a [second drought proclamation](#), with an emphasis on statewide conservation and adoption of actions like this Recycled Water Use permit. The State Water Board is exploring every opportunity to increase local water supplies. Recycled water is often an underutilized resource, and this draft General Order will allow increased use of recycled water in communities grappling with drought conditions. This draft Order is consistent with a [Recycled Water Policy](#) adopted by the State Water Board in 2009.

Water recycling is reusing treated wastewater for beneficial uses. Water is a valuable resource. The California Department of Public Health established statewide water recycling criteria in California Code of Regulations title 22, division 4, chapter 3, (title 22) to protect public health. The recycled water uses allowed by this draft General Order are title 22 compliant.

Coverage under this General Order is limited to treated municipal wastewater for non-potable uses. It does not apply to the use of recycled water for groundwater recharge, or the disposal of treated wastewater by means of percolation ponds

The General Order establishes standard conditions for the use of recycled water, relieving producers, distributors and users of recycled water from the sometimes lengthy permit approval process and providing them with certainty around the requirements that they will be expected to meet.

Enrollees may include public and private entities. To obtain coverage under the Order, applicants will be required to submit a Notice of Intent and an application fee to the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board.



The General Order allows the use of tertiary disinfected, secondary disinfected, and in some cases secondary undisinfected recycled municipal wastewater for title 22 approved non-potable uses such as agricultural irrigation, landscape irrigation, dust control, and cooling tower make-up water. Recycled water use for irrigation is limited to agronomic application rates; therefore, the amount of recycled water that could potentially reach groundwater will be limited. The feasibility of recycled water use depends on local circumstances, which affect the balance of costs and benefits.

All uses of recycled water allowed by the General Order must be consistent with Salt and Nutrient Management Plans approved by the Regional Water Boards. Non-compliance with the General Order will constitute a violation of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and/or Basin Plan and may be subject to enforcement action.

The [California Water Action Plan](#) estimates 1.5 to 2.25 million acre feet of new water could be realized by 2030 through recycling of municipal wastewater that supports few, if any, downstream beneficial uses when it is discharged to the ocean or brackish water bodies. This General Order will help the state to meet its water recycling goals.

For more information, visit the [State Water Board's Division of Water Quality](#).

*(This fact sheet was last updated June 3, 2014.)*