

## Recycled Water

### Frequently Requested Information

July 2014



#### 1. Why do we need to increase the amount of water that we recycle?

Expanding our water portfolio is essential to Tucson Water's continuous planning for resource reliability. Preparing for the future has always been something Tucson Water has focused on. Acquiring land in Avra Valley for water rights in the 1960s, planning for the Central Arizona Project (CAP) in the 1970s – these are programs that took years to bring to reality. If the utility hadn't planned into the future, our customers wouldn't have water today. The Recycled Water Program is the next step in planning for the future.

#### 2. What other benefits can we expect by developing this water supply?

The development of a new water resource can be a strong **economic development message** – News media in the east and midwest continue to report the 'west is drying up'. Developing this resource is one way to refute a belief that may prevent businesses and corporations from relocating to the southwest.

#### 3. What role is drought and climate change having in making this decision?

There is a long-term drought on the Colorado River that is impacting the CAP – our primary source of renewable water. Expanding the use of recycled water as a drinking water source helps to mitigate this concern.

#### 4. Are there other reasons we should reuse this water?

Yes. We already have a significant dollar investment in the water. Tucson Water has invested approximately \$350 million to assure we receive our Colorado River allocation, and Pima County has invested approximately \$700 million in new effluent treatment technologies.

#### 5. Are we prepared to start discussing and planning this program?

Yes. Today, the purification technology is available to us to ensure safe drinking water, but our program is in the early planning stages. Although we need to move forward with it, we are not at a critical stage like some other communities that are running out of water.

#### 6. Are other places currently using recycled water, or considering adding it as a water supply?

Yes. Other water recycling is happening worldwide as a sustainable practice with locally-controlled, renewable water supplies. This is especially true here in the arid Southwest.

## 7. Are there any water quality benefits that are anticipated by recycling water?

The Recycled Water Program may also provide a long term opportunity to allow us to manage water hardness – rising salinity (salt) in our water supply.

## 8. Will Tucson Water customers be provided an opportunity to review information about recycling water, and to provide input?

Yes. Input from our customers is one of the keys to developing this resource. More information, answers to questions, and opportunities for input and involvement will be forthcoming.

## 9. Why is recycled water being considered as opposed to developing another water supply?

We have already paid to bring this water supply into the basin, and it is a resource that will grow as our community continues to grow. It is our least expensive renewable water supply available to develop.

## 10. Should I be concerned about the quality of recycled water?

Treatment and purification technologies have advanced significantly over the past several years. Tucson Water will probably propose using a multiple barrier approach that will include natural treatment by recharging in the aquifer, and more advanced treatment methods prior to delivery of water to customers. The specifics have not yet been determined.

## 11. Are we recycling water in our community now?

Yes. Tucson Water currently operates a reclaimed water system that provides recycled water for irrigation of parks, schools, golf courses, and some neighborhoods. However, we only utilize about 50% of the recycled water that is available. The remainder is discharged into the Santa Cruz River where we lose control of it.

### For more information about recycled water:

If you want information about the quality of the water you receive from Tucson Water, access to information and experts is easy:

- Visit the Tucson Water website at [www.tucsonaz.gov/water](http://www.tucsonaz.gov/water)
- Call 520-791-4331
- For Monthly Water Quality Reports: go to [tucsonaz.gov/water/monthly\\_wq\\_reports](http://tucsonaz.gov/water/monthly_wq_reports)
- Quarterly Water Quality Reports: appear in *Water Matters* in January, April, July, and October
- Annual Water Quality Report: go to [tucsonaz.gov/water/wqreport](http://tucsonaz.gov/water/wqreport). To request a paper version, contact: (520) 791-2544 or [WQinfo@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:WQinfo@tucsonaz.gov)
- Water Quality Team Contact: (520) 791-5945 or [CustomerSupportUnit@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:CustomerSupportUnit@tucsonaz.gov)