



NEWS

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SECURE WATER SUPPLY ON HORIZON FOR BAY AREA COMMUNITIES

After 16 years of cooperative effort, seven Bay Area recycled water projects are closer to reality

(Antioch, California – April 11, 2008) – The Senate passage of bipartisan Senate Bill 2739 – the “Bay Area Regional Water Recycling Act” - on Thursday (April 10) has reinforced 17 local cities and water and wastewater agencies’ optimism to develop recycled water projects in the Bay Area. While previously approved bond measures at the State level have assisted in the development of recycled water projects, the passage of the Senate bill gets the projects one step closer to securing a federal partnership.

Since 1992, those 17 agencies have studied ways to use recycled wastewater for beneficial uses and have invested nearly \$300 million of local funds into water recycling projects. With seven new projects ready to go, federal dollars are essential. Congressman George Miller, together with Representatives Anna Eshoo, Mike Honda, Zoe Lofgren, Jerry McNerney, Pete Stark, Ellen Tauscher and the late Tom Lantos as co-sponsors, got things started with a House bill (HR 1526) that passed in July 2007 to authorize federal funding. California Senator Diane Feinstein, with Senator Barbara Boxer as co-sponsor, introduced a companion bill (S 1475) in the Senate. Following a Senate hearing, language from the two bills was included in the bipartisan Senate Bill 2739 which was passed this week.

The new projects are: City of Palo Alto/Mountain View/Moffett Area Water Reuse Project, Pittsburg, Antioch, Redwood City, North Coast County, South Santa Clara Recycled Water Projects and South Bay Advanced Recycled Water Treatment Facility. These projects have been shown to be economically feasible and provide significant environmental benefits to the San Francisco Bay Delta as well as help relieve statewide water resource shortfalls. According to the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) report on recycled water in the Bay Area, recycled water projects in the Bay Area provide a drought resistant local water supply under local control. Using recycled water for industries such as power plants, and for landscape irrigation, frees up high-quality potable water for other uses. Most importantly, the water supply that recycled water provides doesn't depend on weather or climate.

In eastern Contra Costa County, the Delta Diablo Sanitation District provides 7,500,000 gallons of recycled water every day to two power plants and for landscape irrigation. According to General Manager Gary Darling, passage of SB 2739 "brings us another step closer to funding for our recycled water delivery to Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburg and Lone Tree Golf Course in Antioch."

Cooperation among the 17 local agencies was based on the premise that 'it is only wastewater if you waste it.' The Bay Area agencies have taken a unique regional approach. Rather than individual agencies going to Congress asking for individual project requests, the group has formed a coalition through BACWA to seek assistance on a regional level. Congressman Miller has said "it only takes a small federal investment in the Bay Area Water Recycling Program to yield massive dividends to (the) region over time."

The next step in the process is passage of SB 2739, the "Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008," by the House of Representatives. There is a tight timeline since these recycled water projects are ready to start or already under construction, and federal funding for fiscal year 2008/2009 needs to be appropriated.

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