



Monterey Peninsula Groundwater Replenishment Project

Providing A Safe And Sustainable Water Supply

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Monterey Peninsula Groundwater Replenishment Project?

The Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA), like many other agencies in California, is studying ways to fully reuse its wastewater. Under the planned scenario, recycled water will be further purified using advanced treatment processes. This water would then be discharged over the aquifer where it percolates or filters through the soil naturally into the aquifer, just like rainwater. This process “recharges” or helps replenish the aquifer while safeguarding the water quality from seawater intrusion.

Why is MRWPCA planning this project?

In California (as well as other parts of the country and the world) water supplies are being stretched to the limit. The Monterey region is dealing with an adjudicated water basin and limited water supplies, stricter environmental constraints, and periodic droughts that will curtail unlimited use of our water supplies. Conserving and reusing this water resource instead of disposing of it in the ocean is efficient and provides a long term, sustainable water supply for our communities.

How does this project benefit the Monterey Peninsula?

A groundwater replenishment system would create a reliable, locally produced, ultra-pure water supply. In addition, this strictly regulated water supply would allow us to limit wastewater discharge into the delicate Monterey marine sanctuary. It also helps improve management of the groundwater basin because it produces water during the peak periods of summer months when water to replenish the aquifer may be limited.

What other communities use groundwater recharge?

Groundwater replenishment is used in many places around the world. As an example, Orange County California has operated a groundwater replenishment project since 1971. In this case, highly treated recycled water is used to prevent seawater intrusion into its aquifer by recharging it and it is used to replenish drinking water. Other communities include Los Angeles, Inland Empire, Las Vegas, Nevada and Scottsdale, Arizona.

What happens to the water after it is purified?

After the water has been purified it would then be discharged over the aquifer where it percolates or filters through the soil naturally, just like rainwater. This process “recharges” or helps replenish the aquifer while safeguarding the water quality from salt water intrusion.

Is the technology safe?

The California Department of Health Services is charged with the responsibility for establishing uniform statewide reclamation criteria to ensure that the use of recycled water will not be detrimental to public health.

The groundwater replenishment project proposed by MRWPCA would take recycled water and put it through an additional three-step process of microfiltration, reverse osmosis, ultraviolet disinfection and hydrogen peroxide treatment. This process will make the water near distilled quality and exceeds all drinking water standards.

What is the effect of this water on water quality in the Seaside Aquifer?

The quality of water produced by a groundwater replenishment system creates ultra-pure water. By adding this water into the groundwater it will, over time increase the quality of the water.

Who supports the Monterey Peninsula Groundwater Replenishment Project?

The Groundwater Replenishment Project has been studied and is supported by the Monterey Regional Water Supply Reliability Collaboration, Division of Ratepayer Advocates. This group consists of representatives from environmental, business, civic and ratepayer associations who have gathered to discuss and recommend the most cost effective, environmentally-beneficial and productive water supply options for the Monterey region.

Can we have a presentation given to our community group?

Please call (831) 645-4605 to arrange for a presentation.

Can we take a tour of the wastewater treatment plant and recycled water facilities?

Please call (831) 645-4605 to arrange a tour.

For more information contact:



Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency

5 Harris Court, Building D, Monterey, CA 93940 (831) 645-4605 General Manager: Keith Israel www.mrwpc.org