



Inland Empire Utilities Agency

A MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

**Public Comment
Recycled Water Policy
Deadline: 7/3/12 by 12 noon**

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July 3, 2012

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814



Via Email: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

Subject: Comment Letter – Amendment to the Recycled Water Policy

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) would like to thank the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Amendment to the Recycled Water Policy. IEUA supports the further refinement of the draft policy and the clarification of monitoring requirements for constituents of emerging concern, which were not previously defined.

IEUA has been operating a permitted groundwater recharge program with recycled water in the Chino Basin since 2005. Through our experience we have been able to review the draft regulations from the perspective of having actually performed the monitoring & reporting requirements as well as complied with the permit limitations required under our existing permit (Order No. R8-2007-0039).

A majority of IEUA's comments align with those submitted jointly by the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), and WaterReuse California (collectively, the Associations) under a separate cover letter. The intent of this letter is not to reiterate the Associations' comments, but to instead focus on draft policy language that would adversely impact IEUA's groundwater recharge program. The attached comment summary is specific to regulatory language that will require further clarification based on hands-on knowledge and experience of surface spreading operations. Although we understand that monitoring and reporting requirements fall within the jurisdiction of the SWRCB, we would like to see language that will continue to allow the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to evaluate the monitoring frequency and monitoring location requirements for recycled water groundwater recharge programs on a case-by-case basis.

Please do not hesitate to call me at (909) 993-1730 or Chris Berch at (909) 993-1762 if you have any questions or require additional background information regarding the attached comment summary.

Respectfully submitted,

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Water Smart – Thinking in Terms of Tomorrow

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**Draft Amendment to the Recycled Water Policy
Comment Summary -
Inland Empire Utilities Agency**

1. Attachment A, Page 5, Section 2. Monitoring Locations

Comment: The Inland Empire Utilities Agency's (IEUA's) recycled water groundwater recharge program has achieved great success by working closely with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and industry experts. We request the ability to continue this type of dialog in the future and be allowed the flexibility to defer to the CDPH in refining monitoring requirements that are not specifically addressed in the draft policy. It is important that the SWRCB recognizes this and includes policy language that would give the CDPH the authority to determine the most effective way to monitor the recharge basins.

IEUA's recharge program consists of twelve basins in total. Of the twelve basins, nine have already completed their start-up periods and are currently receiving recycled water. Attachment A of the policy amendment does not specify how to conduct monitoring for agencies with multiple basins. Conducting the Initial Assessment Monitoring and Baseline Monitoring Phases for constituents of emerging concern (CECs) at each of the basins would become cost-prohibitive, with an estimated cost of \$325,000 for the first four years of monitoring at twelve basins. The data collected from monitoring twelve basins would not be any better than if one representative basin was selected for subsurface monitoring locations. IEUA recommends that the CDPH continue to be allowed to determine the approach needed to provide an equivalent level of public health protection on a case-by-case basis.

2. Attachment A, Pages 10, 11, and 13, Tables 3, 4, and 5 (Footnote 1).

"Monitoring point – Uppermost groundwater or unsaturated zone beneath application area¹.

1 – Groundwater within a two-week travel time distance through the aquifer downgradient of the surface application area."

Comment: The "two week" travel time is too specific and restrictive. The travel time to the compliance lysimeter varies significantly by basin. The travel time should be based on findings determined during the start-up period, as required in IEUA's current permit.

3. Attachment A, Page 16, Table 6, Monitoring Trigger Level

Comment: If a CEC in recycled water is "non-detect" and/or does not exceed the Monitoring Trigger Level (MTL) specified in Table 6, analysis of samples from subsurface (unsaturated zone and groundwater) monitoring locations should not be required. For example, N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) in IEUA's recycled water is usually <2 ng/L and the MTL is 0.01 µg/L (10 ng/L). Monitoring of CECs in the recycled water is currently an annual requirement in IEUA's groundwater recharge permit. For CECs that are "non-detect" and/or below MTL, the monitoring frequency of the recycled water should remain as annually, unless the CEC is detected and/or exceeds the MTL, which would then prompt testing in the subsurface monitoring locations. Although this language might be implied in Attachment A, it is not clearly defined.