

FACT SHEET

WATER RECYCLING PROGRAM

SOUTH COUNTY AG

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District

Using Recycled Water at Vineyards

INTRODUCTION

Regional San is proposing to use recycled water from our wastewater treatment plant to offset groundwater pumping, replenishing aquifers. Recycled water for vineyard irrigation is one of the longest-standing uses of recycled water in California.

AN EXAMPLE: NAPA SANITATION DISTRICT

The Napa Sanitation District has a water recycling project that is effectively managed, affordably distributed and widely successful. In a study conducted by the University of California, constituents present in Napa Sanitation District's recycled water were well below recommended threshold values for vineyards.

SALINITY

Salinity presents a concern for some agricultural crops in California. Depending on location and source waters, blending is used to reduce salinity levels. The Sacramento region has comparatively low salinity source waters, as measured by total dissolved solids (TDS), so blending may not be needed. Generally recycled water from Regional San has salinity (TDS) of 400 to 500 mg/L while local groundwater is often below 350 mg/L. The most sensitive crops begin to show impacts when irrigated with waters that have salinities at 650 mg/L.

NITROGEN, POTASSIUM, PHOSPHOROUS

The levels of nitrogen, potassium and phosphorous present in recycled water are usually not detrimental to the vines and often act as a beneficial fertilizer. In the event these nutrients produce noticeable changes in crop production, growers often adjust their applied fertilizer rates.



"[Using recycled water is] the smartest thing to do. Rather than pump it from the ground, I use it because I feel it is a benefit to agriculture and because it leaves the potable water for the homes and the animals ... For vineyards and crops, the small fee is a manageable cost."
— Jim Haire, vineyard owner in Carneros

"Everyone takes pride in doing sustainable practices knowing it benefits current and future generations."
— Jim Collins, from E&J Gallo Winery

For more information about the Water Recycling Program, please visit www.regionalsan.com/south-county-ag-program or contact Terrie Mitchell at mitchellt@sacsewer.com or (916) 876-6092.

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