

RMWEA & RMSAWWA: DEDICATED TO WATER RESOURCES

RMWEA

The mission of the Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association (RMWEA) is to:

- Advance and promote effective and efficient wastewater treatment processes and technologies
- Advance the professional development of members
- Educate the public in preserving and enhancing our water
- Be proactive on water issues
- Build a positive professional image for the Association and its members
- Promote a sustainable environment through reuse of water and residuals

RMSAWWA

The Rocky Mountain Section of the American Water Works Association (RMSAWWA) is dedicated to the promotion of public health and welfare in the provision of drinking water of unquestionable quality and sufficient quantity. RMSAWWA strives to be the preeminent resource for education, training, information, and research for all facets of the water industry in the Rocky Mountain region.

Water Reuse Committee

The RMWEA/RMSAWWA Joint Water Reuse Committee supports and promotes the safe use of reclaimed water in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming. The Committee serves as a forum for information sharing, education, and networking among reclaimed water suppliers, users, and the public.



For More Information

- Contact your local water or wastewater utility to find out about reclaimed water in your community
- RMWEA and RMSAWWA are here to help. E-mail questions to the Water Reuse Committee at reuse@rmwea.org
- Check out State regulations and other information on the web:

– **Wyoming:**

<http://soswy.state.wy.us/rules/2804.pdf>

– **Colorado:**

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/regulations/wqccregs/100284wqcc2005final.pdf>

– **New Mexico:**

http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/gwb/New_Pages/docs_regs.htm

– **RMWEA/RMSAWWA**

Reuse Committee:

<http://www.rmwea.org/rmwea/committees/reuse/reuse.htm> or
visit <http://www.rmwea.org> or
<http://www.rmsawwa.net>

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Reclaimed Water

Making the Most of a Precious Resource



Introduction

Water is a precious resource in the Rocky Mountain region. With limited water resources and an expanding population, we need to use our water wisely and efficiently. Communities throughout the west have been “recycling” their water for decades – using nonpotable water or reclaimed water for irrigation and other nonpotable uses, saving potable water for drinking water and other highest-quality needs. Just as drinking water quality is regulated to protect public health, regulations for the quality and application of reclaimed water are in place to make sure that it’s safe.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is nonpotable water?

Nonpotable water is water that is not suitable for drinking. Sources of nonpotable water can include reservoirs, creeks, groundwater, stormwater, and reclaimed water.

What is reclaimed water?

Reclaimed water is wastewater that has undergone additional treatment, making it suitable for reuse applications. Common synonyms for reclaimed water include “reuse water,” “recycled water,” and “reclaimed domestic wastewater.”

How and where is reclaimed water used?

In the Rocky Mountain region, reclaimed water is primarily reused or recycled to irrigate turf grass and other landscaping at locations such as parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and green belts. Other potential uses of reclaimed water include agricultural irrigation, industrial water (such as power plants), wetlands restoration, fire protection, aesthetic fountains and lagoons, and dust control at construction sites. Individual states regulate which uses are authorized; not all potential uses are allowed in every state.

Is reclaimed water safe?

Reclaimed water undergoes treatment and disinfection to ensure the production of a continuous and reliable supply of high-quality water. Individual states’ environmental and/or health departments determine the necessary levels of treatment for different nonpotable



uses. These agencies may also enforce strict usage requirements upon users of reclaimed water. If you come in contact with reclaimed water, take the same precautions as you would around water from ponds or streams, including common sense personal hygiene measures.

Can I tell the difference between potable (drinking water) and nonpotable water? How will I know where reclaimed water is being used?

Depending on the source of reclaimed or nonpotable water, it may be difficult to distinguish between potable and reclaimed or nonpotable water. Notification signs should be displayed wherever reclaimed water is being applied. Purple-colored sprinkler heads and valve boxes are often used to identify reclaimed water. In addition, your local provider of reclaimed water should have a listing of sites that utilize reclaimed water.

Why do we use reclaimed water and what are the benefits of reuse?

Water is a limited resource, especially in the arid west. The use of reclaimed water is an important part of managing and conserving this limited resource. It can help conserve potable water, recharge groundwater, and postpone the development of new water sources and supplies through costly investments such as wells, dams, reservoirs and pipelines. Using reclaimed water can also save money and provide aesthetic value.