Frequently Asked Questions: Recycled Water

Does Ukiah have access to recycled water?
Yes. The City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) currently produces recycled water that meets “Title 22” standards. If operated at full capacity, the WWTP could provide an average annual flow of 3.5 million gallons/day given sufficient wastewater flows were available.

What types of things can recycled water be used for?
Recycled water can be used for irrigation (agriculture and landscaping) and a variety of industrial uses such as dust control. In some parts of California it is even being used to augment potable water supplies. The project being developed by the City will only be for irrigation, frost protection of vineyards and orchards as well as industrial uses.

This project will also provide numerous integrated benefits and meet various State and regional objectives:
- helps meet State water conservation objectives
- improves environmental habitat by providing alternative source for frost protection
- reduces diversions from the Russian River
- reduces cost associated with wastewater discharge management
- promotes a vibrant agricultural region
- demonstrates regional cooperation

Why aren’t we using it?
Currently, there is no infrastructure in place to distribute the recycled water from the WWTP to areas where it can be applied. Currently, the City’s only existing recycled water user is the WWTP, which utilizes the water for on-site landscape irrigation, process water, and spray down. However, over 30 potential recycled water customers have been identified; those customers include farmers, industrial facilities, the Ukiah Unified School District, the Cemetery District, and the City’s parks and recreation facilities.

Is there a plan to start using it?
Yes. In 2012, the City contracted with Carollo Engineers to develop a Recycled Water Feasibility Study, which identified potential uses for recycled water, stakeholders, and a four-phased approach recommended to meet our goal. In this phased approach, agricultural needs would be served first—in phases one through three—and landscape uses would be served in phases three and four.
**How much will it cost and when will it be built?**

The total project cost (Phases 1-4), including contingency, is estimated at $45 million. The four phases were originally intended to be constructed over a 15-20 year period. However, the City applied for financial assistance from the State of California in 2015 and received up to $34 million dollars in grants and low interest loans.

Construction for Phases 1-3 began in April of 2018 and will be complete in early 2019. Construction includes a new 66 million gallons reservoir, 38,000 feet of distribution pipe, a 3,500 gpm pumping station, and an expanded chlorine contact basin.

Phases 1-3 will serve about 650 acres of agriculture (vineyards, orchards, and alfalfa) 20 acres of pasture, and 15 acres of turf (3 parks and a school).

While Phases 1-3 are under construction, the City will be completing the design for Phase 4 and looking for funding opportunities for construction.
Frequently Asked Questions: Recycled Water (continued)

Reservoir

Orrs Creek Staging

Orrs Creek JB