



## SAM Turns Up Flow On Recycled Water Golf Courses Commit To Reclamation Project

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Investing in recycled water is the best means of ensuring a long-term, sustainable flow of potable water to Coastsiders during both wet and dry years, says Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside Manager Jack Foley. And a successful test project makes recycled water seem more likely than ever on the coast.

“We see clearly that recycled water will be an integral part of the Coastside’s water (use) in a few years,” Foley said. “We see it as a critical part of Coastsiders’ futures.”

At a meeting Monday, directors decided to officially end a successful six-week pilot project to test out recycled water at Half Moon Bay Golf Links.

Tony Pullin of the Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside shows samples of recycled water before (above) and after filtration. The system is being tested for use on the Coastside.

Satisfied with the results of a recycled wastewater irrigation experiment at Half Moon Bay Golf Links that took place in October and November, Kenmark Group CEO Bruce Russell says he is “100 percent committed” to the idea of permanently incorporating gray water to course operations.

“(The grass) didn’t turn purple or anything. There was no odor, no odd coloration, no problem whatsoever with the water,” Russell said.

Kenmark, which owns the golf courses, partnered with Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside and Coast-

side County Water District in the pilot project to test reclaimed water on the 15th and 11th holes at the Ocean Course. Aside from heightened levels of sodium in the water — a minor obstacle they say — Foley and Russell agree the trial was a complete success.

“(The system) is well designed and pretty turn-key and easy for SAM to operate and produce (recycled) water consistently at all times,” Foley said.



The golf courses soak up between 20 and 30 million gallons of CCWD’s potable water supply each year — in addition to drawing on Pilarcitos Creek and groundwater aquifers — ranking it consistently as one of the top water users on the Coastside. Garnering an endorsement from Kenmark opens the door for local water and sewer providers to pursue a permanent reclamation fixture at the SAM plant in Half Moon Bay.

SAM could be cranking out recycled water by 2013, Foley said.

It's unclear how much the project will cost — reports from last year put the project anywhere between \$4.7 million and \$12.7 million.

A report on potential plant designs should be complete early next year, Foley said. The size, technology and cost of a plant is contingent on the interest from key local users. Costs vary among users depending on treatment, transmission and storage needs. But, generally speaking, the more stakeholders invest, the bigger the plant can be, and the cheaper the overall costs of recycled water will be, Foley says.

“It'll be easier the more people sign on,” said Granada Sanitary District Ric Lohman, who co-authored the pilot project proposal.

GSD and Montara Water and Sanitary District are splitting the cost of the project with the city of Half Moon Bay. However, the cost to route recycled water to the Midcoast is expensive, meaning such an endeavor “might not pencil out,” Foley said.

“But we'll be looking at it,” he said.

In the coming months, SAM directors will solicit other top water users standing to benefit from a recycled supply. Coastside nurseries are the most appropriate users, directors say. The local flora culture industry soaks up between 80 and 100 million gallons from CCWD each year, according to district General Manager Dave Dickson.

During the pilot phase, SAM delivered a 150-gallon shipment of the gray water to Nurserymen's Exchange to test on a selection of plants. The flower producer expresses an interest in using reclaimed water, but results from the recent tests were incon-

clusive, said spokesman Don Mendel. Some in the industry worry that nutrients in gray water could damage plants.

“We like the idea. It certainly makes sense over the long run ... but we don't have a lot to go on,” Mendel said.

Regardless of investments from others, Kenmark is set on recycled water.

“It's not a matter of us saving money, but more a matter of us frankly doing the right thing,” Russell said.

Earlier this year, SAM submitted a request for \$30 million of federal stimulus money to fund recycled water. Congress is deferring a decision until February, when the federal government begins planning for the next fiscal year, Foley said. SAM directors are also looking into grants.

Average Coastside homeowners won't notice a change in their monthly water bills in the event a recycled water plant comes online. Rates are mainly a function of wholesale costs of potable Hetch Hetchy water, which are certain to keep climbing, Dickson said.

Recycled water would, however, allow the district to reduce its draw on the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, and would create a “drought-proof” supply to local stakeholders, Dickson said. That's useful when San Francisco Public Utilities Commission institutes cutbacks across the board.

“If (top users) can be ultimately served with recycled water, that frees up water that can be reallocated in a drought situation to residences,” Dickson explained. “So the point is that recycled water does have a benefit to everybody in a drought.”