



brackish non-potable water system, or to develop their own brackish water sources, for irrigation. The BWS also requires developers to use non-potable water in their water master plans in the project planning phase. It also requires the use of non-potable water, if it is available, prior to approving new water service connections.

Although R-1 water is available only in Ewa, proposed DOH rules will enable on-site reuse of water for Oahu

water users, based on updates to the Uniform Plumbing Code. The rules allow the use of R-1 water to flush toilets in commercial buildings, as well as allow reuse of rainwater, air conditioning condensation, and graywater on-site in other communities.

To further reduce potable water use, all consumers can also implement other water-saving methods such as installing water-efficient plumbing fixtures and weather-based irrigation controllers with moisture sensors and conducting regular leak detection and repair.

Diverse alternative water supply programs such as recycled water, along with environmentally holistic watershed management plans and water conservation efforts, will ensure our island's water resource sustainability and stewardship now and in Oahu's climate change future.

For more information on our recycled water programs, please see [hbws.me/recycled](https://hbws.me/recycled).



**Board of Water Supply**

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# RECYCLED WATER QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



**Board of Water Supply**

## Why is using recycled water important?

Current groundwater supplies on Oahu are limited. By offering recycled water for large landscaped areas, the Board of Water Supply (BWS) can maximize an underutilized water resource and ensure sustainable drinking water for Oahu's residents in the future.

## What is recycled water?

Recycled water is wastewater that has been treated and disinfected to a level suitable for industrial processing, irrigation, and other non-drinking uses. There are two grades of recycled water produced by the BWS: one is used for industry (RO) and the other for irrigation (R-1). By recycling and reusing water for these purposes, the Board of Water Supply is helping to protect and save precious water supplies for people.

## Is recycled water safe?

Yes, R-1 recycled water for irrigation is filtered and disinfected with UV light and meets the State Department of Health (DOH) reuse guidelines for unrestricted spray irrigation for landscaping and agriculture. It is monitored by the DOH to meet treatment and water quality standards and ensure best management practices for its safe use. RO water similarly meets DOH reuse guidelines and is also monitored by the DOH to meet treatment and water quality



standards. Recycled water is extensively used throughout the United States—including for residential irrigation, food crops, within commercial buildings, over groundwater aquifers, and in recreational lakes—with no negative health impacts.

## How much does recycled water cost?

The BWS sets R-1 recycled water rates much lower than the residential and non-residential potable water rates to

encourage its use. Landscapers and agricultural customers will realize a savings in their operational costs when using recycled water because it contains nutrients that reduces the need for fertilizer.

## Is recycled water the only alternative supply the BWS is developing?

No. The BWS is exploring all available alternative water supplies to protect and manage Oahu's water resources. Recycled water is just one of these alternatives.

The BWS is also working to develop a diverse pool of water resources, such as recycled water, graywater (rinse water from showers and laundry), brackish groundwater, stormwater/rain catchments, and seawater desalination to supplement potable groundwater supply. All of this, together with advanced water conservation efficiencies and promoting resource stewardship, will enable the BWS to support economic growth and protect the environment and cultural uses of water.

## What are the ways BWS is expanding R-1 recycled water and other non-potable water uses in Ewa and the rest of Oahu?

All new development in Ewa is required to connect to the R-1 recycled water system or to the Barbers Point