



July 12, 2021

Michael Nearman, Deputy Executive Director  
California Building Standards Commission  
2525 Natomas Park Drive, Suite 130  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Subject: Comment Letter - Notice of Proposed Action, California Department of Water Resources, 2022 California Plumbing Code

Dear Mr. Nearman:

WaterReuse California and the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) draft Express Terms for the 2022 California Plumbing Code. Our comments pertain to the draft Express Terms' treatment of recycled water in dual-plumbed buildings.

WaterReuse California's members, including IRWD, have extensive experience with recycled water. For example, IRWD has been recycling water since 1967 and today recycles more than 25,000 acre-feet per year, which represents more than 25% of IRWD's total water sales. IRWD delivers recycled water to approximately 6,300 metered sites, including more than 130 dual-plumbed commercial buildings where recycled water is used for toilet and urinal flushing. In fact, in 1991 IRWD worked with one of its customers to dual plumb the first building in California for the interior use of recycled water.

We appreciate DWR's effort in incorporating what was Appendix J of the Uniform Plumbing Code into the California Plumbing Code (CPC), as directed by AB 371 (Goldberg, 2006). Unfortunately, there have been changes made to the CPC that pertain to dual-plumbed buildings. These changes discourage the expanded use of recycled water, increase the operational costs to water recycling agencies and their customers, and will not help the California achieve its stated goal of recycling 2.5 million acre-feet per year by 2030.

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We offer the following comments and requested changes to DWR's Express Terms:

### **Comment on Section 1501.2 (System Design)**

We support the proposed change to Section 1501.2 which calls for the design of an alternate water system to be done by either a registered design professional or a licensed individual with competency in the field.

### **Requested Change to Section 1501.6 (Operation and Maintenance Manual)**

DWR amended the Model Code to require that an operation and maintenance manual prepared by the system designer or installer be kept in the building where a recycled water supply system is located. We suggest that the requirement for a manual for recycled water supply systems be removed. This is an additional burden on the recycled water customer who will be required to ensure the document is up to date and that it is kept "the building throughout the life cycle of the structure." It simply increases the paperwork burden on customers without adding to the safe operation and maintenance of the system— topics covered in training and other existing requirements.

### **Requested Changes to Section 1505.1 (General)**

We have the following recommendations regarding the two changes to Section 1505.1 put forth by DWR:

- *Including irrigation systems connected to a dual plumb building*

DWR added language to the California Amendment which includes an irrigation system connected to a dual-plumbed building being defined as part of the dual plumbed building. We asked that this language which expands the definition of dual plumbed be deleted.

The original intent of adopting Appendix J into the California Plumbing Code was to "provide design standards to safely plumb buildings with both potable and recycled water" (AB 371, Goldberg, 2006). Buildings that have interior uses of both potable and recycled water are defined as "dual plumbed" per Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations. DWR is expanding the definition of "dual plumbed systems" beyond what is found in Title 22.

By including the expanded definition in Section 1505.1 DWR is expanding the CPC beyond their authority to regulate design standards for buildings dual plumbed with both potable and recycled water.

- Restating compliance with the California Code of Regulations

DWR added to the California Amendment the following language:

“All recycled water use, including recycled water landscape irrigation systems that do not connect to plumbing that is within or a part of a building, must comply with applicable provisions of the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Title 22, and Title 23.”

We recommend that this language be removed. DWR was directed by AB 371 (Goldberg, 2006) to address the use of recycled water in dual-plumbed buildings. The language inserted by DWR is not related to dual-plumbed buildings and, therefore, should not be included.

#### **Requested Change to Section 1505.1.1 (Allowed Uses)**

We ask that this entire section be deleted. The approved uses for recycled water are found in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations. There is no practical purpose for restating them in the CPC.

Furthermore, DWR, per AB 371, was directed to address “design standards to safely plumb buildings with both potable and recycled water.” DWR was not directed to address “aboveground and subsurface irrigation.” Including language about irrigation in the section that was meant to address dual-plumbed buildings has led to confusion regarding the application of other sections of Chapter 15. For these reasons, it should be removed from the CPC.

#### **Requested Change to Section 1505.4 (Connections to Potable or Recycled Water Supply Systems)**

We suggest Exception 4 be revised to read as follows:

“Potable water is permitted to be used as an auxiliary water supply consistent with Title 17 or its successor document.”

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on DWR’s proposed changes to the California Plumbing Code. We look forward to working with DWR and the California Building Standards Commission throughout the process. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jennifer West, Managing Director of WaterReuse California, at (916) 496-1470 or Paul Cook, General Manager of Irvine Ranch Water District, at (949) 453-5590.

Sincerely,



Jennifer West, Managing Director  
WaterReuse California



Paul A. Cook, General Manager  
Irvine Ranch Water District

