

NATIONAL WATER REUSE ACTION PLAN

COMPLETED ACTION



Action 1.1 Develop a Federal Policy Statement to Support and Encourage Consideration of Water Reuse in a Watershed-Scale Planning Context

Background

National water programs are implemented throughout many different federal agencies and departments. Many stakeholders have expressed that the lack of a unified and coherent federal policy supporting water reuse remains a barrier to fully leveraging federal resources (technical and financial) in support of water reuse.

A federal water reuse policy statement can encourage innovative water management approaches through the reuse of municipal wastewater, stormwater agricultural return flows, stormwater, and some industrial wastewaters for different potable and non-potable purposes. Water reuse on a watershed/basin level may reduce demand for conventional potable water sources and provide other ecological and financial benefits.

Accomplishments

The National Water Reuse Action Plan (version 1) presents a federal policy statement in support of water reuse:

“Water is critical to our nation’s health, strength, security, and resilience, but the solutions available to manage water and its availability are often complex. When incorporated into an integrated water management plan, water reuse can be a valuable tool to enhance the availability and effective use of water resources. The federal government recognizes, acknowledges, and respects the primacy of states in the management of water resources within their borders.

The federal government supports the consideration of water reuse to increase water security, sustainability, and resilience, especially when considered through integrated and collaborative water resource planning approaches, typically at the watershed or basin-scale.”

The policy statement is intended to encourage the consideration of water reuse and integrated watershed-scale planning approaches; communicate the value and benefits of water reuse; and leverage existing programmatic, funding, and technical resources.

Action Team

Action Leader

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
 - Sharon Nappier (nappier.sharon@epa.gov)
 - For additional information, the water reuse program can be contacted at waterreuse@epa.gov



Stakeholder engagement in the development of the WRAP

Action Impact

This policy statement signals federal support for water reuse and encourages water resources managers to consider water reuse as a tool during planning efforts at local, basin, and/or regional scales. It also communicates the importance of integrated water resources management planning approaches.

This policy statement also helps to strengthen collaboration across federal agencies by affirming unified support for the consideration of water reuse. More than 15 federal agencies are actively involved in supporting WRAP actions. WRAP actions with federal partners serving as part of the action teams include:

Technical Focus:

- **Action 2.9: Align Tools to Promote Best Management of Unused/Expired Pharmaceuticals** (EPA, U.S. Food and Drug Administration)
- **Action 3.4: Develop Research and Tools to Support Onsite Non-Potable Water Reuse Systems (ONWS)** (EPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE))
- **Action 3.5: Assess Specifications of Wastewater in Food Animal Protein Processing Facilities** (EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA))
- **Action 4.3: Support Water Reuse Through DOE's Water Security Grand Challenge** (U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), EPA, U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), USDA, U.S. Department of Defense)
- **Action 7.4: Increase Understanding of Current Aquifer Storage and Recovery Practices** (EPA, USDA)

Financial Focus:

- **Action 6.1: Compile Federal Funding Sources and Develop Interagency Decision Tool** (EPA, USDA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), DOE, USACE, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation)
- **Action 6.4: Compile and Promote Existing USDA Resources for Rural Communities** (USDA, EPA)

Institutional Focus:

- **Action 2.7: Utilize Existing Working Groups to Coordinate Federal Engagement** (WRAP Federal Partner Working Group; EPA, U.S. Department of State (DOS), General Services Administration, DOE)
- **Action 8.5: Engagement with Disadvantaged and Rural Communities on Water Reuse** (EPA, USDA)
- **Action 11.1: Facilitate U.S.-Israel Collaboration on Water Reuse** (EPA, DOS)
- **Action 11.2: Raise Global Water Reuse Awareness and Preparedness** (DOS, DOI, U.S. Agency for International Development, USDA, U.S. Department of Commerce, EPA, USGS, Reclamation, DOE)

Action Implementation Process

Stakeholder input received through extensive outreach and public comments during the Action Plan development process expressed that a unified federal policy statement would allow for communities, policymakers, water resource planners and practitioners to better leverage federal resources in support of water reuse. In response to public input and through regular coordination with federal partners, EPA's Water Reuse Team developed the federal policy statement on reuse that was then issued in February 2020.

Future Activity

The policy statement supporting consideration of water reuse provides a foundation for continued collaboration across federal agencies. Furthermore, it reinforces federal agency commitments to support the WRAP effort and implement the applicable WRAP actions. As described in Action 2.7, the WRAP Federal Partners work group will continue to convene to continue and strengthen collaboration while reviewing progress on water reuse actions.