



# Santa Clara Valley Water District

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**File No.:** 18-0438

**Agenda Date:** 7/10/2018

**Item No.:** 3.4.

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## BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

### **SUBJECT:**

Recommendation to Support Water Research Foundation's Request for the Direct Potable Reuse Initiative.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- A. Approve the recommendation to support the Direct Potable Reuse Initiative;
- B. Approve the Pledge Confirmation Form committing \$100,000 to the Water Research Foundation's Direct Potable Reuse Initiative with \$50,000 payable in Fiscal Year 2019, and \$50,000 payable in FY 2020; and
- C. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer or her designee to execute the Pledge Confirmation Form committing \$100,000 to the Water Research Foundation's Direct Potable Reuse Initiative.

### **SUMMARY:**

The Water Research Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the science of water by sponsoring research and collaboration. The District is a subscribing utility and collaborates on various studies related to potable reuse feasibility, public awareness, and process reliability. Water Research Foundation is requesting funding to address regulatory, utility, and community concerns about potable reuse. Sponsoring the Water Research Foundation Advancing Potable Reuse Initiative will support the District's commitment to provide a safe, locally-controlled, drought-resilient water supply.

### **BACKGROUND:**

#### 2012 WRRF Direct Potable Reuse (DPR) Initiative

In 2012, District contributed \$100,000 to the WRRF Direct Potable Reuse Initiative for advancing the acceptance and adoption of DPR in California. The DPR Initiative totals \$6 million through 34 projects. District has supported 8 of those projects with various contributions including staff time for technical review and water quality sampling at District facilities. WRRF and partners actively engaged the State Water Resources Control Board to coordinate scientific and regulatory developments,

including the 2016 *Report to Legislature on the Feasibility of Developing Uniform Water Recycling Criteria for Direct Potable Reuse*.

Consolidation of Water Research Organizations (WE&RF, WERF, WRRF, and WRF)

The Water Environment & Reuse Foundation (WE&RF) was a nonprofit organization officially formed in July 2016 as the result of the merger of Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) and the Water Reuse Research Foundation (WRRF). The merged research foundation, with a combined research portfolio representing over \$200 million, conducted research to treat and recover beneficial materials from wastewater, stormwater, and seawater. In October 2017, WE&RF announced its integration with the Water Research Foundation (WRF), which provides funding and management of water science research.

2018 WRF Advancing Potable Reuse Initiative

This new Advancing Potable Reuse Initiative will develop a program addressing water quality, advanced monitoring, technology, operations, and public acceptance. Specifically, WRF plans to address the knowledge gaps identified by the State Water Resources Control Board DPR Expert Panel 2016 DPR Feasibility Report. The District's 2017 draft *Expedited Purified Water Program Plan* includes potential future DPR connections near Los Gatos. However, the plan identifies regulatory uncertainty as a potential challenge.

The WRF Advancing Potable Reuse Initiative has a direct nexus to the District's mission of providing "Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy;" Ends Policy 2.1.4 - "Protect, maintain, and develop recycled water;" and BAO Interpretation S 2.1.4.2 - "Develop partnerships to develop the potential for Indirect Potable Reuse and Direct Potable Reuse."

This WRF research program will accelerate development of DPR regulations in California. Other utilities, including Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, are planning to participate in this Initiative. Contributing to potable reuse research positions the District as a leader in water reuse and fosters good will with stakeholders. DPR options developed by the research may also assist in the District's exploration of potentially developing DPR in Santa Clara County. It will assist the District in evaluating the operational flexibility and reduced costs for purified water that may be derived from DPR. Since the District is considering potable reuse as a permanent water supply, WRF's DPR research will be valuable in that regard. Therefore, staff recommends support for contributing \$100,000 towards this critical research.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The financial impact from this item is \$100,000 to fund the District's participation in this initiative over the next two fiscal years. There are sufficient funds budgeted for FY 2019 in Project 91101004 to cover the \$50,000 FY 2019 expense, and \$50,000 will be budgeted for the expense in FY 2020.

**CEQA:**

The recommended actions do not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: Pledge Form

Attachment 2: Advancing Potable Reuse Initiative

**UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:**

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