

Purified Recycled Water **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



What is purified recycled water?

Purified recycled water is reclaimed water that undergoes a multi-step, rigorous purification process that can be used for drinking, cooking and bathing. It is purified to be better than drinking water standards, making it some of the cleanest water in the world. That's why communities across the globe have adopted this resource as an energy-efficient and cost-effective way of supplementing their drinking water supplies.

What is the difference between purified recycled water and reclaimed water?

Reclaimed water is highly treated wastewater that is used for nondrinking purposes like watering our lawns or irrigating golf courses.

Is purified recycled water safe to drink?

Yes. Purified recycled water uses proven technology to make the water safe and taste great. It complies with or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards.

How is purified recycled water purified and treated?

First, purified recycled water goes through multiple advanced pretreatment processes, aeration and nutrient removal. Next, the water receives additional filtration to remove microorganisms, including viruses, bacteria and other pollutants. Although the water is cleaner than most drinking water across the world at this point, Florida requires purified recycled water go through additional final steps to ensure it is some of the cleanest water on Earth. The last steps include protection through advanced disinfection treatments such as ultraviolet light, ozone and peroxide. These commonly used processes ensure safe drinking water.

How does purified recycled water help our environment?

Reusing water relieves pressure on Florida's water resources and ecosystems. The more water we recycle, the more water remains in our aquifer where our drinking water comes from and in our rivers and springs for the fish, plants and wildlife that rely upon them.

Would purified recycled water replace our current supply of drinking water?

Purified recycled water is meant to supplement the current water supply. This additional supply of drinking water would help meet Florida's increasing demand.

Why should purified recycled water be added to Florida's water supply?

Florida is growing at a record pace. We welcome hundreds of new residents and an average of nearly 400,000 visitors to our state each day. Our aquifers, lakes and springs cannot keep up with our need for water. In fact, we need an additional 755 million gallons of water per day by 2045. Our supply is not endless, and by including purified recycled water, we can ensure there is plenty of water for everyone. This is part of our state's plan to be more sustainable, diversify its water sources and protect the environment.

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How does purified recycled water compare to other alternative water supplies such as seawater desalination?

Purified recycled water is a much more cost-effective option and uses a water resource that otherwise would be wasted. Desal projects tend to be the most expensive alternative water supply to develop due to the considerable amount of energy needed to extract, treat and deliver the drinking water.

Who is responsible for making sure water is safe to drink in Florida?

Highly trained and certified treatment operators are responsible for maintaining safe, functioning water systems in Florida. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) takes its responsibility seriously to ensure that water utilities provide safe, reliable drinking water to Floridians, including those using purified recycled water.

Do other states use purified recycled water to supplement their drinking water supply?

A variety of purified recycled water projects have been implemented from coast to coast in the United States, around the globe and even in space. Various utilities in Florida already are planning for purified recycled water as a future water source because of our dwindling water supply in lakes, springs and aquifers.

What are the next steps for purified recycled water in Florida?

Florida officially adopted statewide rules for purified recycled water in February 2025. Drafted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the new rules ensure purified recycled water is treated through multistep processes to remove contaminants using advanced treatment technologies resulting in clean, safe drinking water that meets or exceeds strict federal and state drinking water safety standards. As a result, the new rules help protect people and the environment while ensuring a safe and sustainable water supply for all Floridians.



This document complies with WCAG 2.2 AA Standards