

REUSE – What is it?

Domestic Drinking Water is produced around the world from water that is taken from either an underground aquifer, surface water such as a lake, stream or river or it can be de-salted from sea water. The production of finished water (commonly called *potable* – because it can be put in a *pot* on a *table* to drink), in most cases, goes through a treatment process such as lime softening or reverse osmoses, filtering, and then it is disinfected prior to being pumped out into what is called the *water distribution system* which delivers it to the consumers home or business.

After the consumer uses the water, most of it goes down the drain and ends up at what is called a Wastewater Treatment Plant (also called a *Reclamation Facility*). There are many different types of biological and chemical treatment processes but the general idea or concept is to reduce the solids as much as possible and in the end, leave the water as crystal clear or as close to what it started out to be. This can be an extremely complex undertaking using sophisticated advanced treatment with extra holding tanks and filters.

Reuse Water is treated at the *Reclamation Facility* to a very high standard in which the water is converted back to almost the high quality that is was when it was taken from its original source. In many locations around the world these reuse (or reclaimed) waters are used as *gray* water for irrigation purposes. This, in turn, is very helpful for the environment because we are using it to regenerate or recycle it back to where it came from to recharge the original water source that will eventually be used again for drinking water many years into the future.

With the many drought conditions that we are seeing around the world, this type of recycling has been found to be the most important single thing civilization can do to solve this devastating problem. There are many countries and states that are literally running out of potable water sources because of wasted use of water for irrigation purposes.

Reuse, Reclaimed or *Gray Water* is becoming and will become mandatory, through government regulation, in the near future. Large portions of the country that have been going through the worst times of drought in centuries, are now passing laws to begin to bring this very important life giving process into the *mainstream* of everyday thought.

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