

Pat Flannery

From: Jerry Sanders [JerrySanders@sanidiego.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2007 12:26 PM
To: pat@blogofsandiego.com
Subject: Mayor Vetoes Council's "Toilet to Tap" Plan

CITY OF SAN DIEGO MAYOR'S OFFICE

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A message from:
Mayor Jerry Sanders



Today I vetoed the City Council's action directing the City's Water Department to implement a pilot program for Indirect Potable Reuse or "toilet to tap" as it is more commonly known.

Putting aside the public's historic objection to toilet to tap, one of the primary factors for my veto was economics. The Water Enterprise Fund simply does not have the money to pay for a pilot project or the public outreach campaign the Council is requesting.

I have made it clear that, should the Councilmembers decide to the over-ride my veto, I will submit to them a Prop 218 notice that would require them to raise water rates for the third time in less than twelve months. This is not something that I could support.

Toilet to tap is not a silver bullet for our water supply needs. It is a costly process that does not hold promise for substantial amounts of usable water. It is nearly three times the cost of current potable water supplies available to the City. Imported water costs approximately \$500 per acre foot. Re-cycled water, by comparison – will cost the City approximately \$1,600 per acre foot.

It is even more expensive than desalinated water and faces what is sure to be a very serious challenge from the public that might be forced to consume what it produces.

Indirect potable re-use is just one option that was taken from a much broader long-term water supply program outlined in the City's Water Reuse Study and included in the Water Reuse Masterplan. Other options in those documents include conservation, reclamation, groundwater storage, desalination, and water transfers. I want to stress that the use of reclaimed water is important to our community and the environment. It makes total sense -- for non-potable purposes -- to maximize the use of reclaimed water.

When this item returns to the Council, I urge them to heed my veto and to accept the City's Water Reuse Study as it was submitted and to update the Water Reuse Masterplan so that our purple pipe delivery system for reclaimed water can be expanded.

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