

# Public Consultation Supply of Recycled Water in Hong Kong



The Development Bureau (DEVB) and Water Supplies Department (WSD) plan to supply recycled water in full scale.

The proposal on the supply, charge and use of recycled water in Hong Kong is being formulated, including legislative amendments under Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102) (WWO), Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A) (WWR) and any other relevant legislations.

## Supply of Recycled Water by WSD for Non-potable Uses

- Recycled water, being a type of lower-grade water source, is less susceptible to the impacts from climate change. Exploring recycled water as a new water source would strengthen water supply but also reduce the fresh water consumption in Temporary Mains Water for Flushing and other non-potable uses.
- The recycled water to be supplied by WSD is intended for toilet flushing (flushing) and other non-potable uses (e.g. landscape irrigation, street cleansing, water features, car washing, etc.), comprising:
  - (i) reclaimed water (converted from treated sewage effluent),
  - (ii) treated grey water<sup>1</sup> and
  - (iii) harvested rainwater.

- In connection with the grey water recycling, buildings in the designated areas (primarily new development areas) would be required to install a dedicated system (i.e. the waste pipe system) for collection and transmission of grey water to the grey water collection system for treatment and supply of treated grey water by the Water Authority (WA).

<sup>1</sup> Grey water is the used water discharged from baths, lavatory basins, wash basins, sinks or similar fittings in premises.



## Prevention of Misuse of Recycled Water Supplied by WSD

- The recycled water to be supplied by WSD will meet the water quality standards prescribed for the permitted non-potable uses. However, the quality standards of recycled water are not up to that of the drinking water in Hong Kong.
- The recycled water should neither be for potable uses nor used for all non-potable purposes.
- Legal amendments on WWO and WWR are proposed to regulate and control the use of recycled water, including:
  - ✓ Express prohibition on uses other than the permitted uses, i.e. flushing and other uses as may be permitted by the WA from time to time; and
  - ✓ Power empowered to the WA with flexibility to permit non-potable uses of recycled water other than flushing.
- To control the risks of cross-connections between the fresh water supply system and recycled water supply system and misuse of recycled water, we plan to adopt a multiple-barrier approach by adopting colour-labelling of recycled water making recycled water discernible to fresh water, and give an immediate visual warning to customers in case of the fresh water supply system being contaminated by recycled water; and implementing other preventive measures in addition to the legal amendments.

## Charge for Use of Recycled Water Supplied by WSD

- The Government's policy on fees and charges is based on the fundamental principle of "User Pays".
- As the recycled water is another lower-grade water supplied for flushing, the free-of-charge arrangement for flushing use may be applied.

## Supply of Recycled Water by Parties Other than WSD

- At present, the on-site water recycling systems by parties other than WSD could be regulated through existing legislations other than the WWO and WWR.
- With a view to striking an appropriate balance of water conservation and health risks arising from the supplies of recycled water by parties other than WSD, a combination of multiple normative elements might be effected including but not limited to public education, training and guidance to stakeholders on water recycling, etc. together with the existing legislation on regulatory control of on-site water recycling systems.

## Transitional Arrangement and Retrospective Effect

- WSD plans to supply recycled water for flushing in Hong Kong starting from 2022. It is proposed that the amendments to the WWO, WWR and other relevant legislations on the supply of recycled water in Hong Kong, if relevant and enacted, would not take retrospective effect.

## Consultation Document

The Consultation document is available at the following places/homepage:

- Home Affairs Enquiry Centres
- WSD Customer Enquiry Centres
- WSD website

## Public Forums

Three public forums will be held during the public consultation exercise. Please visit WSD website for details.

## Consultation Period

19 October 2018 to 17 December 2018

## Please send your written views to

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Website : <https://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/pconsultation/recycle.html>

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