

Gray Water Redemption Credit to Make Living in California Less Spendy

Submitted by California Housing Finance Agency
Marketing Division

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Summary: In-home water recycling meter attached to existing water lines could monitor the amount of gray water returned to the utilities and encourage homes to re-capture landscaping runoff as well as rain water through a redemption credit. This could be installed in new and existing homes being brought to compliance with Assembly Bill 2572, requiring all water suppliers to install water meters on all customer connections by January 1, 2025.

Funding for infrastructure would be sought through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grants, bonds, and the Rural Utility Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provides funds for rural drinking water and waste water systems.

Funding for credit would be created by surcharge on fresh water. Water returned through in-home recycling meter would refund this credit (similar to CRV can and bottle recycling incentive).

The viability of the idea.

- With the current environmental conditions (drought & climate change impacts) and state political leadership's interest in environmental conservation/preservation, the timing is highly advantageous to garner the necessary support and buy-in by the public and policy makers.
- See attached [Recycled Water Policy](#) published by California State Water Resources Control Board regarding the importance of water recycling to the future of California.

The extent to which the idea lowers the cost of living at the individual or family scale.

- System-wide the more "Gray Water" that is trapped and re-treated, the less metered water will be required, reducing demand and maintaining stable price per cubic foot.
- Direct credit to households recycling water through water redemption credit

The degree to which it involves new ideas or combinations of ideas.

- The Redemption Credit could be combined with a Gray Water Recycling system to be installed in many homes. (See our additional contest entry “Gray Water Recycling” for details)

The scale of impact in California.

- The state of California requires all water suppliers to install water meters by January 1, 2025. Current rates are roughly between \$.97 and \$1.14 per hundred cubic feet. In Sacramento, these rates have nearly doubled in the last two years and may continue to increase with demand.
- The average family of four can use 54 cubic feet of water a day. Approximately 30% is used outdoors and lost. Average predicted direct savings at today’s rates would be \$5.13 per month plus water redemption credit, in an in-home recycling credit system.

References:

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/utilities/customer-service/documents/201220132014WATER.pdf>

<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/pubs/indoor.html>

http://ngwco.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Ratesheet_Oct2013.pdf

<http://www.waterresources.saccounty.net/scwa/Documents/Projects%20and%20Programs/Meter%20Retrofit%20Fact%20Sheet%20FINAL.pdf>

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