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Purple pipes coming to Pleasanton

City agrees to start recycled water irrigation program

by Jeb Bing

Four agencies that provide water services in the Tri-Valley signed agreements Wednesday enabling the city of Pleasanton to conduct the necessary environmental reviews to continue to develop a recycled water program.

The move coincided with the Pleasanton City Council's approval Tuesday night to proceed with a recycled water feasibility study that could see much of the city's parks and landscaped street medians irrigated using recycled water.

Already, purple sprinkler heads which indicate that water coming from them is recycled, not suitable for drinking, are visible along the newly extended Stoneridge Drive and at Stoneridge Creek Park near the Stoneridge Creek retirement community.

"There's a global water crisis not only in supply but also in quality," Pleasanton Operations Director Daniel Smith told the council Tuesday. "The goal is to reduce potable (drinking) water usage by 20% by 2020 and recycled water can help meet that objective."

If all goes well with the environmental reviews, recycled water will begin to flow into Pleasanton parks, sports grounds, and roadway medians, saving precious potable water. These agreements make the best use of a limited supply of potable water, keep a local resource local, and demonstrate how local governments can cooperate for the greater good of the region.

"With these agreements in place, the reliability of our potable water supply in the Tri-Valley will improve and we will be better able to meet the state's mandate to use 20% less potable water per person by 2020," said Dave Requa, district engineer of the Dublin San Ramon Services District, which treats sewer and run-off water from Pleasanton.

DSRSD and Pleasanton have now agreed to use as much of the treated wastewater effluent from Pleasanton as possible for recycling and to share recycled water distribution facilities when practical to minimize operating costs. More than half of the wastewater DSRSD treats at its Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility is from Pleasanton; the rest is from Dublin and southern San Ramon.

In a separate contract, the DSRSD and the East Bay MUD Recycled Water Authority also have agreed to provide wholesale recycled water treatment and delivery services to Pleasanton. Already, recycled water is used to irrigate roadway medians, parks, sports grounds and golf courses in Dublin, San Ramon, Danville, and Blackhawk.