



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT STATE WATER PROJECT WATER & WATER QUALITY

Q.: Why is water that MWA imports from the State Water Project and delivered through the California Aqueduct, not purified at treatment plants within MWA's service area before use by consumers?

A.: Purification is not necessary. State Water Project (SWP) water is recognized as high quality water and is used statewide (serving 25 million residents) as a supplemental water source. Testing has proven the water meets or exceeds all primary and secondary state and federal drinking water standards. SWP water also exceeds secondary standards (taste, color, odor) for aesthetics.

Q.: What is done to make sure that SWP water is fit for consumption by end users?

A.: Since 1968, water quality monitoring for the SWP has been conducted by the State's Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of Operations and Maintenance (O&M), Water Quality Section (WQS) to monitor eutrophication (an increase in chemical nutrients) in the SWP facilities, and salinity for agricultural users. The SWP water quality program reviews parameters of concern for drinking water, recreation, and fish and wildlife purposes.

DWR staff ensures compliance with state drinking water regulations, supports source water assessments, promotes drought preparedness and water conservation efforts, as well as oversees equipment installation and responds to operational emergencies.

Today chemical, physical, and biological parameters are routinely monitored throughout the SWP from the Feather River drainage in the north and to Lake Perris in the south including more than 40 sites and over 200 individual chemicals.

For the seven locations where MWA releases SWP water into the aquifers, Mother-Nature acts as a natural purifier. As the water percolates to the water table contaminants such as TDS (Total Dissolved Solids), arsenic or chromium are removed or greatly reduced. The amount of contaminants left is negligible and the end user (typically water districts) uses strict standards to further ensure that the water is safe. All retail water districts must annually prepare and share with their customers a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) by July 1 that shows the quality of the water it uses.

Q.: If treatment plants were required for SWP water, what would be the cost implications and would those costs be borne by end users?

A.: Costs to build and operate a Water Treatment Plant are very costly. Mojave Water Agency imports SWP water that is delivered through the California Aqueduct at two locations (White Road in Adelanto and Rock Springs Road in Hesperia). MWA manages seven sites where SWP water recharges our water table. To add the additional cost of operating treatment plants with other charges associated with SWP water (water purchases, SWP operations, repairs and maintenance) would likely result in an increased property tax obligation for customers.

Of the 29-State Water Contractors that import SWP water statewide, only [EITHER THE NUMBER OR NAMES] treats the water before storing it either in a reservoir or underground.

Q.: How long has MWA imported SWP water and have there been problems with water quality before?

A.: Since 1991 MWA has used SWP water for recharge operations and there are no known instances of degradation in water quality.