

Reclaimed Water Operating Guidelines

The following outlines the approved uses, restrictions, and operating guidelines for reclaimed water to protect human health and the environment, as regulated by Federal, State, and/or County agencies.

Approved uses for reclaimed water identified in Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Chapter 62-610:

Landscape irrigation via an in-ground sprinkler system. Reclaimed water may also be applied using a hose bibb (connection) assembly that is located in a below-ground locked vault or service box and clearly labeled as being of non-potable quality (bearing the words in English and Spanish: "Do Not Drink -- No Beber" together with the equivalent standard international symbol). Hillsborough County requires that the hose bibb connection assembly, including the lock box and rubber hose, be as specified in the Water, Wastewater, and Reclaimed Water Technical Manual, Section 6.

Cooling water, wash water, or process water at industrial facilities per DEP Rule 62-610.650 FAC.

Irrigation of edible crops. Direct contact (application) is allowed on crops that will be peeled, skinned, cooked, or thermally processed before consumption is allowed, such as tobacco or citrus. An indirect application method, such as ridge and furrow irrigation, drip irrigation, or a subsurface distribution system that will preclude direct contact of the crops, is allowed for edible crops that are not peeled, skinned, cooked, or thermally processed before consumption.

Aesthetic purposes. Reclaimed water may be used in decorative pools, fountains, ponds, and other aesthetic features. An aesthetic feature that is a water of the state or will discharge to waters of the state is subject to compliance with Chapter 62-650 F.A.C.

Toilet Flushing and Fire Protection for commercial or industrial processes as per DEP Rule 62-610.476 FAC.

Dust Control at construction sites per DEP Rule 62-610.478 FAC.

Other reuse applications such as washing of vehicles, roads, sidewalks, and outdoor work areas and mixing of concrete as per DEP Rule 62-610.480 FAC. Reclaimed water shall not be used to fill swimming pools, hot tubs, or wading pools.

Customer's irrigation system. Reuse customers shall install and maintain both a cut-off valve on the customer's side of the service connection and an operable automatic rain sensing shut-off device, per County Ordinance 94-12. Customers shall maintain their irrigation systems in proper working condition and adjust sprinklers and timing schedule to preclude reclaimed water from pooling or draining onto adjacent properties, streets, storm sewers, or water bodies.

Separation distance. A separation distance of 75 feet is required between a potable water well and the reclaimed water spray area. Low trajectory nozzles are required for any areas irrigated by reclaimed water within 100 feet of public eating, drinking, or bathing facilities.

Potable water protection. To protect the public potable (drinking) water supply, the customer shall install and maintain a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention device at points of connection where the customer's potable system is connected to the public potable water main.

Cross connection protection. The customer's reclaimed water system shall be completely isolated and may not be linked by valve or direct connection to any other water source including the public water supply, any groundwater well, or lake withdrawal system. Cross connections or dual connections with other potable or non-potable water sources are not allowed.

Identification of pipes, valves, etc. All reclaimed water pipes, valves, and outlets shall be color-coded purple or appropriately tagged or labeled in English and Spanish: "Do Not Drink --No Beber" together with the equivalent standard international symbol to differentiate reclaimed water from domestic or other water sources and to inform the public that the water is not intended for drinking.

Signage. The customer shall post County approved advisory signage notifying the public of the use of reclaimed water in accordance with DEP Rule 62-610.468(2) - (5), at their facility entrances and intermittently throughout the zone of application. The County will provide the appropriate signage to the customer.