

PURE

(Purify Usable Resources for the Environment)

Is a wastewater recycling project proposed by the City of Tampa.

Treated wastewater, also call **reclaimed water**, is today piped separately to some neighborhoods to be used to water lawns. However, Tampa warns not to drink it, use it for pools or use it on gardens where you will eat the skins of the fruits and vegetables.

Several options are being considered, including putting treated reclaimed water in:

- The aquifer under Tampa, which is called recharging the aquifer, and withdrawing it during the dry season, also called recovery of the water.
- Tampa's drinking water reservoir
- Deep underground using Deep Well injection
- Selling it to another water utility
- Treating it to drinking water standards and adding it to the water supply
- Or, The Hillsborough River below the dam

Contaminants are a major concern

- Wastewater has contaminants not in our drinking water supply or at often much higher levels
- Drinking water standards do not address all contaminants in wastewater
- City has **not** committed to treating the water to an agreed safe level, but instead is pursuing a plan to trade off lower cost for less effective treatments, risking keeping contaminants with yet unknown negative effects.
- Tampa must plan to use what the vast majority of utilities use - Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology - to remove contaminants, even those with no current safety standards, to safeguard public health

A treatment plant to process wastewater is expensive - not only to build but also to operate on a daily basis

- all costs must be included

Does Tampa need more water? The city has not clearly stated Tampa water needs

- City does not share what year more drinking water is needed, instead vaguely talks about drought-proofing
- City should promote conservation to extend drinking water supply
- Use of reclaimed water through purple pipes to water lawns could be increased and pipes extended to reduce using drinking water for lawns

Regional approach needs to be emphasized

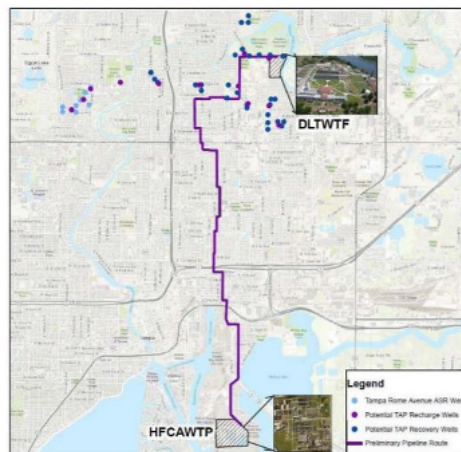
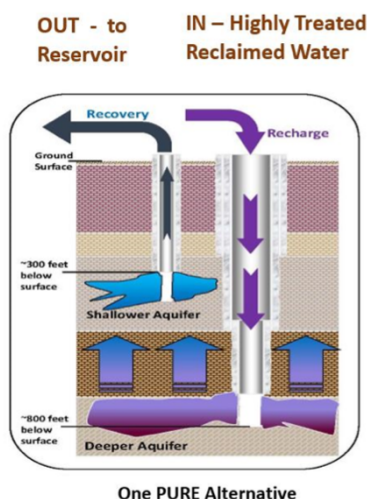
- Water is regional resource, Tampa Bay Water is regional supplier
- Costs for wastewater treatment for beneficial use could be shared across the region
- River flows can be met with a variety of sources, including Tampa Bay Water

State mandate, SB 64, for beneficial use of wastewater **is an excuse** to push expensive solutions that are not proven to be needed

- Tampa has not attempted to propose solutions based on Tampa's actual needs to the state

Public Outreach will begin – ask questions. More information and questions on

- Sierra Club Tampa Bay Group webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/tampa-bay>
- City of Tampa PURE page: <https://www.tampa.gov/water/projects/pure>



Map of transmission system and proposed recharge and recovery wells for the PURE Project, extending from the Howard F. Curren Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant to the David L. Toppin Water Treatment Facility. Source: Tampa Augmentation Project. Pilot Plan of Study. Final. March 2019

Contaminants:

See: Prescription drugs are contaminating Florida's marine life, researchers find

<https://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/2022/02/28/prescription-drugs-are-contaminating-floridas-marine-life-researchers-find/>

Photo of the "Drugstore Fish", part of the print edition

