

INQUIRY INTO A SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY FOR SYDNEY

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Telephone:

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Subject:

Summary

The purpose of this submission is to support the use of extensive water recycling in Sydney and other cities in NSW.

Our state is far behind many other places which face water shortages. There are numerous websites giving the story of how these places are making multiple use of their precious water. Here are just a few of them, from California cities and the US Government.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/sbwr/>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/water/recycled/>

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/quality.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/recycling/index.html>

I believe it is high time that our state government recognize that we are wasting stormwater and sewage water by simply casting it into the sea. Water is the most easily recyclable substance around. In fact all of the water we use now is recycled and millions of years old.

The previous state government and premier covered themselves in shame by their grossly biased and tendentious survey, apparently designed to further Bob Carr's ambition to build a desalinisation plant. It was significant to me that he made his announcement while in an oil-rich desert country. NSW is neither of those, and we cannot afford to continue to waste money and water on projects that will not deal with the underlying cause of our problem, our use-it-once-and-throw-it-away approach to water in our state.

Most of the water we use in city is not for drinking but for other uses, all of which are being met by recycled water in the places I have referred to above, and many others as well.

We could also take a leaf from Adelaide's approach by having recycled water a required part of new developments, and by offering accelerated approvals for development applications which include significant water recycling in their plans.

I am pleased that the state government has shelved the plans for desalinisation, and disgusted that the previous government made a deal that will cost taxpayers 120 million dollars to do so. It's time for us to use both our water and our money wisely.

Though I am no friend of privatisations and public private partnerships, I do understand that some companies have offered to try out water recycling schemes at their own expense. I encourage the government to give these proposals a fair hearing with appropriate regulations, with an eye to using these companies' methods themselves if they work.

Thank you

Richard Maguire