



BBARWA

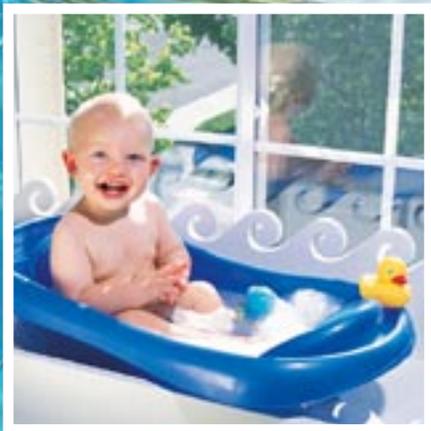
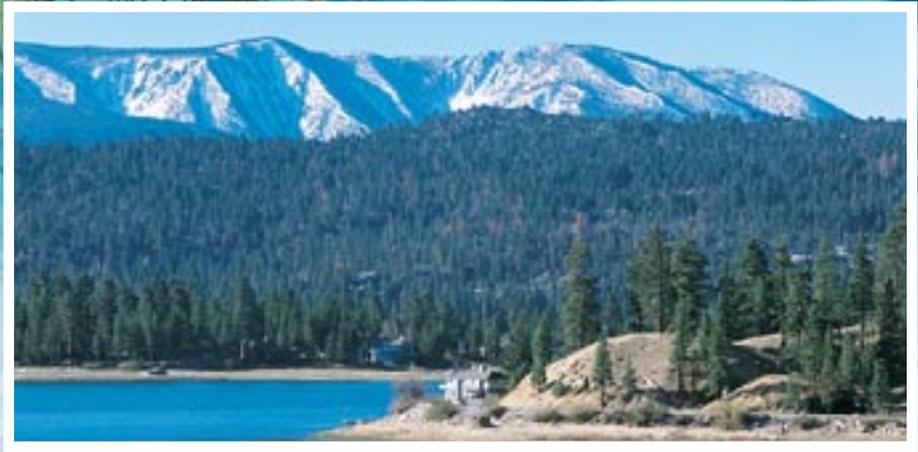
Reclaiming Our Community's Vital Water Resources

# BIG BEAR AREA REGIONAL WASTEWATER AGENCY

## Replenishing the Water Supply Is Vital to Our Future

**A**s essential as it is to life and nature's abundance, fresh water is a limited resource. Nowhere is this clearer than in our community.

In Big Bear, our water comes exclusively from groundwater, a fragile and limited supply which is replenished by rain and snowmelt. Although rain and snow levels vary widely, water use steadily increases each year, and we have been in the midst of a drought for the past six years. Current trends are simply not sustainable without far-sighted planning and advanced application of technologies to create new water sources. The Valley's continued prosperity and the livelihood of our residents will depend on maintaining a reliable and local supply of water.



## Reclaiming Our Water Supply

The Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency (BBARWA) understands the challenge, and is examining the feasibility of developing safe, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly solutions to create a new water supply, support economic vitality and preserve our area's natural beauty.

BBARWA is conducting studies to expand its recycled water program and to develop a new groundwater replenishment system. Currently, Big Bear's recycled water is transported by pipeline to the Lucerne Valley, where it is used to irrigate alfalfa fields. BBARWA is conducting engineering, environmental and financial studies that may allow for redirecting this water to our community, where it can irrigate parks, golf courses, school grounds and nurseries. In addition, greater amounts of recycled water may be able to be treated to a pure level using microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet disinfection, then allowed to naturally filter back into the local groundwater aquifer.



## Recycled Water – A Valuable Resource

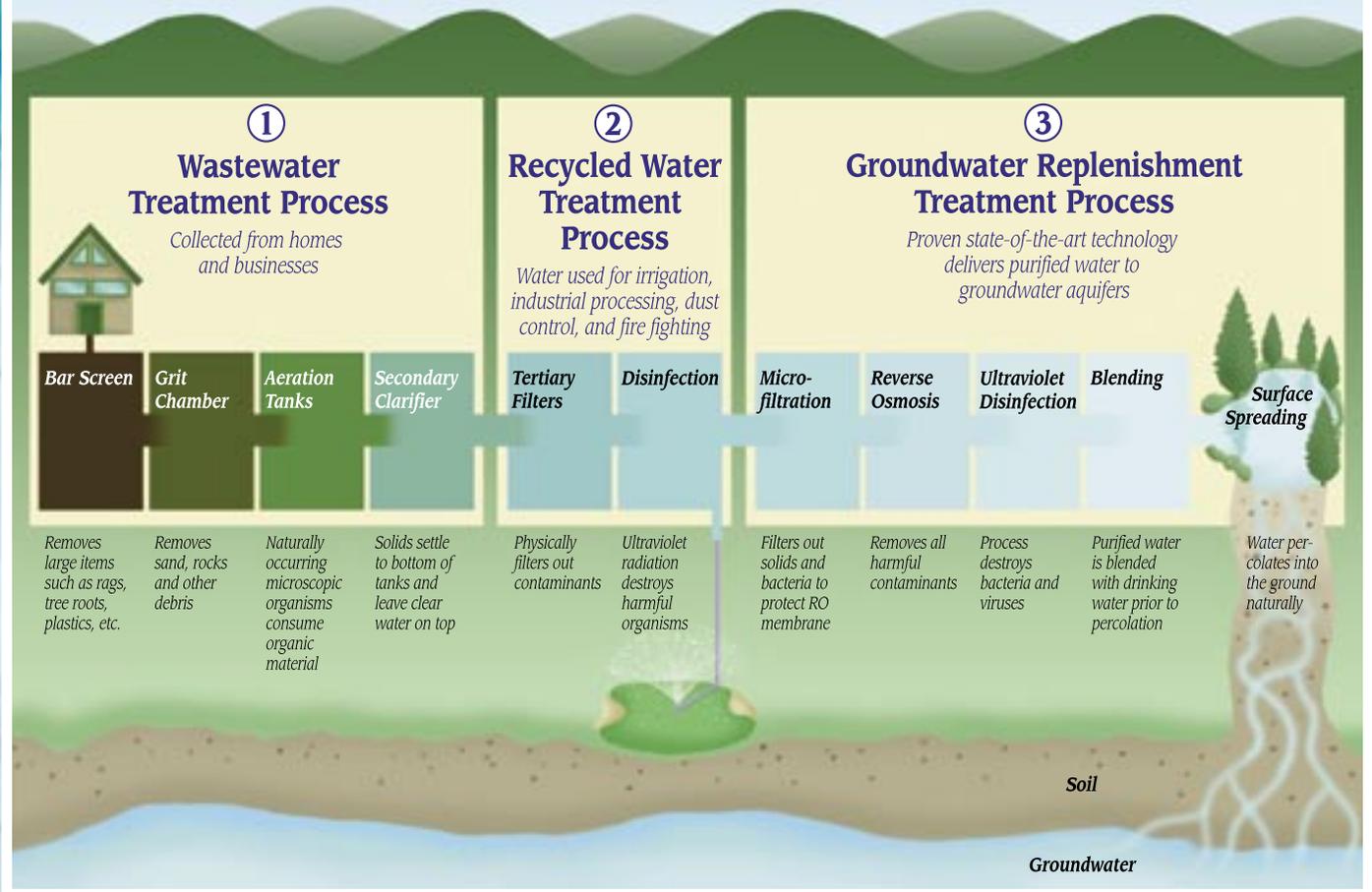
By safely reclaiming water, BBARWA can create a promising new source that can be used for landscape irrigation, industrial processing, dust control and firefighting. Recycled water will allow us to conserve our drinking supply and help prevent overdraft of groundwater. And this new source will always be under our control – created locally, used locally; a supply that will be steadily available even in times of drought.

The recycling of water is similar in concept to the recycling of paper, cans and glass. The idea is to reuse, rather than wastefully discard. Recycled water originates as domestic wastewater or sewage. At the BBARWA treatment facility it undergoes a series of physical, chemical and biological processes that purify and disinfect the water, resulting in a product that looks like drinking water and is safe to use in a wide range of applications.

Because the water is reclaimed from wastewater, BBARWA and regulatory agencies take extra precautions to ensure the public health is protected. Recycled water that is used for irrigation and other nondrinking water uses flows through a separate pipeline system – readily identified by purple pipes, tags and meters – that keeps it separate from drinking water. In addition, recycled water's safety has a proven track record. Programs such as this have flourished in California and throughout the nation for the past 75 years. There are strict federal and state monitoring and reporting regulations with all recycled water and drinking water projects.



## Three Steps in Reclaiming Big Bear's Water Supply



### The Groundwater Replenishment System

The water we drink today is the same water that was here at the birth of the planet. All water is recycled – plants, soil and the atmosphere have been managing nature's filtration process for millions of years. The BBARWA treatment process can essentially replicate nature's purification

system, but at a quicker pace. The groundwater replenishment program can take recycled water that has already been treated and put it through an additional three-step process of microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet disinfection.

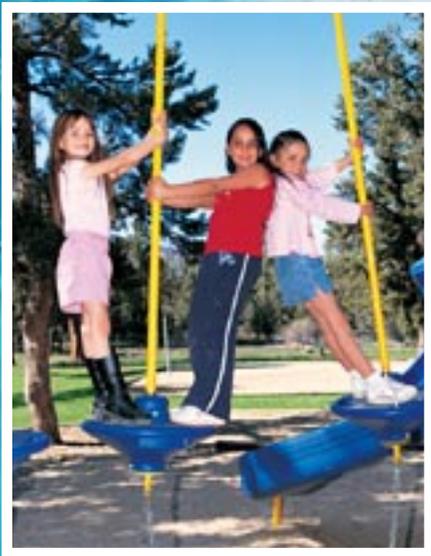
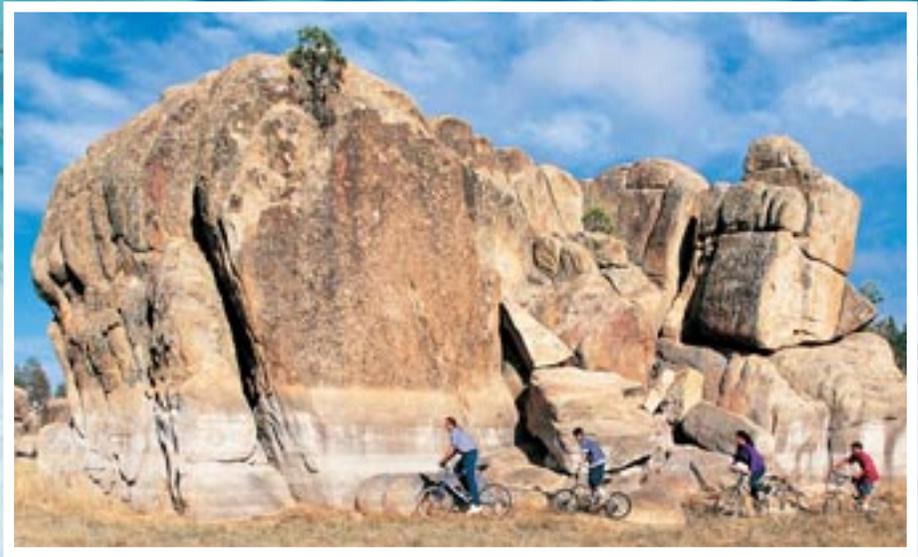
At the end of this three-step purification, the reclaimed water can be poured onto surface spreading ponds where it blends with drinking water and filters naturally into the aquifer through the soil, just as rainwater does. For six months, the reclaimed water blends with groundwater before it is extracted via wells into the drinking water supply. This technology has been safely used in other parts of California and the United States. The Department of Health Services is responsible for regulating and monitoring groundwater recharge programs.

The groundwater replenishment system can do more than expand existing supply. It can

improve the quality of local groundwater. The addition of purified water to the aquifer helps soften the local groundwater, thereby reducing corrosion and scaling of plumbing fixtures and appliances. A healthy, stable supply of groundwater can help us be responsible stewards of our natural environment by reusing this valuable resource.

*Pilot Spreading Basin*





## Message From the General Manager – Steve Schindler

Fresh water is one of our most precious natural resources and an integral part of our lives, our economy and our quality of life. I am pleased BBARWA is playing a key role in planning for, conserving and securing future water supplies for Big Bear Valley. Public health and safety and fiscal responsibility will be the primary focus of our future water projects. By reclaiming this valuable resource we can ensure a safe, cost-effective, reliable, high-quality water supply for our residents and future generations.

## Contact Us for More Information

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## The BBARWA Governing Board

Ken Dally – Chairman, representing the City of Big Bear Lake

Bob Colven – Vice Chairman, representing the Big Bear City Community Services District

Jeff Newsome – Secretary, representing the Big Bear City Community Services District

Dr. Don Eads – Director, representing San Bernardino County Service Area 53B

Liz Harris, Ed.D – Director, representing the City of Big Bear Lake



## About BBARWA

The Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency was established in 1974 with the goal of providing centralized, environmentally-friendly conveyance, treatment and disposal of wastewater for Big Bear Valley area residents and businesses.

