

[ WATER MANAGEMENT ]

# Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



To curb its water woes, Pasatiempo Golf Club is negotiating with its water district to access unused, reclaimed water being sent to the Pacific Ocean. by Katie Tuttle

**W**ater is a big part of maintaining courses' pristine esthetics, especially in the stress of summer heat and drought. So what happens when water restrictions in your area prevent you from irrigating as often as you need?

A lot of California courses use recycled water as part of their irrigation regimen. In the past, this water was just piped out to the ocean. Now, it's being used to replace fresh water.

Pasatiempo Golf Club hopes to join the ranks or recycled water users in late 2014. Currently, the California course gets its water from the city of Santa Cruz, and is under a constant threat of a water shortage. Because of this, Pasatiempo is seeking an alternative that is both environmentally friendly, as well as the best choice for the course.

"If we have another drought year, we'll be in a fairly severe water restriction next year," says Scott Hoyt, Pasatiempo general manager. "It will definitely affect the condition of the course."

In steps Scotts Valley. The city produces more reclaimed water than it has customers for, so the access water is sent out to the Pacific Ocean. Pasatiempo is already in the position to have the water piped to the course for irrigation, but there is still one big step they have to take first.

"We have to put in an underground tank to store the water," says Hoyt. The underwater storage tank will have three separate chambers: one for the fresh water from Santa Cruz, one for the recycled water from Scotts Valley, and one for the well water from the well on the course. "To ensure our long term future, we want to use all three sources and mix them, depending on the exact quality of the water, and where it's being put: on the greens or

fairways or roughs. No matter what happens, meaning if one of our sources has a problem, we're still in good shape to keep the golf course in the type of condition we need to keep it in."

Another step the course needs to take is to negotiate a final price on the recycled water.

"We have not finalized any kind of negotiating with the [Scotts Valley Water District] relative with the price they want to charge us, or guarantee of supply," he says. "If we're going to spend all this money and go through all of this, obviously we want a fair price. We need them to guarantee supply for 50 years, meaning if they expand their system and decide they have other customers, they can't cut us off."

Money seems to be the only downside of the project. The club has currently invested five million dollars in the project, meaning they have had to cut back on money being spent elsewhere.

"[It] hinders us from making any further improvements and it slows down any other necessary improvements. We need to focus on this; we need to figure out how to pay for it," Hoyt says. "It's going to take us 10 to 12 years to pay it off, so it certainly hinders any future improvement."

Still, there's no reason for anyone to be against the project.

"There's no reason not to be supportive of the idea," says Hoyt. "There can't be one person that's not supportive of the idea. We want to take something that's currently being shipped out into the Pacific Ocean, that [Scotts Valley] is getting zero dollars for. We're going to save fresh water. We could save 40 million gallons a year of fresh water for the city of Santa Cruz."

*Katie Tuttle is GCI's assistant editor.*

