

Water Reuse Advisory Group Meeting

Water Reuse Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Minutes

Virtual Meeting – June 22, 2026, 1 p.m.

This is the first of a series of bi-monthly Water Reuse Advisory Group meetings focused on identifying reuse barriers, developing policy recommendations, analyzing technical issues, and sharing information across sectors. The goal is to promote transparency and shared understanding across public and private interests.

Attendees (Groups)

- Amazon Web Services (AWS)
- Association of Oregon Counties
- Jordan Ramis (Attorney)
- League of Oregon Cities
- Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA)
- Oregon Department of Agriculture (DOA)
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)
- Oregon Environmental Council
- Oregon Farm Bureau
- Oregon Health Authority (OHA)
- Oregon State University (OSU)
- Oregon Water Resources Congress
- Oregon Water Resources Department (WRD)
- Pacific Northwest WaterReuse
- Special Districts Association of Oregon
- WaterWatch of Oregon

Meeting minutes

Welcome and Member Introductions

- Individuals from groups/organizations were introduced

Purpose and Goals

- DEQ reviewed intent of forming the group
 - Review barriers and obstacles to water reuse, specifically focusing on recycled water. Compile barriers and obstacles and use this information to create solutions through potential statutory or rule changes of DEQ's Recycled Water Rules (Ch 340, Div 55)
- Tasks/requests from DEQ
 - Water Reuse Advisory Group members are asked to advise on program recommendations, help identify and address barriers, provide technical and sector-specific support, inform planning and prioritization efforts, reflect private and public perspectives, and support transparency and shared understanding.

Water Reuse Program Overview

- DEQ provided an overview of the Water Reuse Program including:
 - Definitions of water reuse, recycled water, beneficial purposes, and industrial water
 - OR Water Reuse history and regulations
 - Overview of water reuse within the US and around the world
 - 2023 Recycled Water use statistics
 - Current program status, focusing on identifying barriers to reuse, creation of the Interagency Water Reuse Team, the Water Reuse Advisory Group, future efforts such as the creation of a Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) for Recycled Water rules, and public education efforts
 - Goals and directives behind this work, emphasizing expanding reuse in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment, increasing permitting consistency, clarifying the regulatory permitting process, and improving data tracking and performance metrics
 - Engaging with municipalities, industries, and interested parties early and often
 - Next steps in the reuse program such as updates to the Recycled Water Rules (Ch 340, Div 55) and then creation of Industrial Reuse Regulations
 - Water Reuse obstacles and barriers such as regulations for irrigation canals, funding limitations, and current classification of waters of the state with direct nexus.

Key Obstacles and Barriers – Open Discussion

The advisory group held an open discussion on barriers to implementing water reuse projects in Oregon. The points below summarize key themes raised during the discussion. This list is not exhaustive and should not be interpreted as representing the views or consensus of all participants.

- There is confusion of the regulatory process and involvement of each of the Oregon state agencies
- Perceived agency risk aversion that can delay or halt water reuse projects.
- Limited knowledge and capacity among some smaller municipalities to initiate and navigate the water reuse process.
- The long permitting process increases uncertainty for large investments and adds financial burden
- Lack of consistency of rule implementation within agencies
- Some specific regulations aren't appropriate for the intended use (ex: fish bearing streams on some irrigation canals)
- Confusion around pilot projects – What is the process?
- Differing definitions between state agencies (reclaimed vs. recycled water vs. water reuse)

Next Steps

- Water Reuse Advisory Group members will contact DEQ with barriers they are aware of or have experienced.
- DEQ will create a collective document of this information to share at the next meeting for group discussion in August 2026.

Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in the administration of its programs and activities. For translation or other formats, visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).