West Basin Municipal Water District's Designer Water

West Basin Municipal Water District in Carson, California, has developed a series of water products derived from the same wastewater source that meet the needs of specific customers. These products include the following:

Irrigation, Tertiary Water – This water is tertiary treated and is designed for irrigation, certain industrial applications, and street sweeping. This water is delivered to over 200 customers.

Cooling Tower, Nitrified Water – This water is designed for use in industrial cooling towers and is delivered to several oil company customers.

Low Pressure Boiler Feed Water – This water is treated by microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and decarbonation, and is designed for use in low pressure boilers. This product is delivered to several oil companies.

High Pressure Boiler Feed Water – This water is similar to the low pressure boiler feed water, except it is passed through the reverse osmosis process twice to the meet the ultra-pure water requirements of high pressure boilers. This product is delivered to Chevron.

Seawater Barrier Injection Water – This water is used for injecting into the coastal aquifers to prevent seawater intrusion. It is similar to the low pressure boiler feed water, except it is also treated with peroxide and ultraviolet light to oxidize specific contaminants. Finally, it is softened to be compatible with the pipes that convey it to the injection wells. This product is delivered to the Water Replenishment District in Southern California.

All of these water products use the same source water and, when viewed as a whole, communicate that recycled water is a manufactured product - water that is adapted for the application. It also positions the utility (West Basin) as the source of quality, which is absolutely true. Each year, West Basin conducts over 30,000 water quality tests and works with an independent advisory panel to ensure high water quality. Finally, these water products are priced differently. Prices range from 70-80 percent of potable water for irrigation water and some industrial waters, moving to double the price of potable water for water that meets the requirements of high pressure boilers. Customers will pay for value.

This case study is an excerpt from *Building the Wastewater Utility Brand: Practical Advice for Increasing Trust, Support, and Investment* published by the Southern California Alliance of Publically Owned Treatment Works (SCAP) in 2008.