

Australia might drink recycled waste water

May 27 2006

City officials in Goulburn, Australia, are studying whether residents will concede to use recycled effluent for drinking water, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

If so, the federal government would spend \$11 million to construct a \$3 million recycling system.

Goulburn is experiencing a severe drought, having received only 0.12 inches of rain in April, compared to almost 2 inches on average for the month. Pejar Dam -- the city's largest surface water storage area -- is dry.

Treated waste water would be passed through 26 filtration barriers. It would first be used for non-drinking purposes.

"If it doesn't rain it could be (used) faster, but even if it rains we will proceed with the scheme because we could be in this (water shortage) position again," Mayor Paul Stephenson told the newspaper.

Last year, Frank Sartor, the former water minister, said people who wanted mass recycling of water were "hopelessly misinformed." Sartor said it was not a practical solution because people would not accept it.

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