

# Press Release



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## **Gov. Brewer's Blue Ribbon Panel on Water Sustainability Issues Final Report on How to Improve State's Water Future**

PHOENIX (Dec. 9, 2010) – Gov. Jan Brewer's Blue Ribbon Panel on Water Sustainability has released its final report outlining recommendations to improve statewide water sustainability through increased recycling and water conservation.

The 139-page final report analyzes 26 priority issues and makes 63 recommendations on how to improve and promote water recycling and conservation by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The report is available at <http://www.azwater.gov/AzDWR/waterManagement/BlueRibbonPanel.htm> .

Among the recommendations:

- Coordinate and streamline permitting and data submission requirements to foster the increased use of reclaimed and recycled water;
- Promote research on human health effects of low levels of contaminants, such as pharmaceuticals, typically found in reclaimed water to ensure that the use of reclaimed water remains safe;
- Gain a better understanding of the energy needs to produce water and the water needs of energy production;
- Examine ways to safely expand the use of reclaimed water for environmental purposes in recognition of the derived net ecological benefits;
- Develop a comprehensive approach to matching the quality of water supplies to appropriate uses to save both water and energy;
- Establish financial and rate-making guidelines for regulated water utilities that mirror programs currently in effect for energy producing utilities.

The Blue Ribbon Panel was formed in August 2009 and conducted regular meetings about water resource issues for more than a year. The 40-member panel included stakeholders from large and small cities, counties, agriculture, industry, Native American tribes, environmental interests, Arizona universities, legislative leaders, and other experts. The panel's charge was to identify and overcome obstacles to increased water sustainability, a matter vital to the future of the state.

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ADWR Director Herb Guenther, ACC Chairman Kris Mayes, and ADEQ Director Ben Grumbles co-chaired the panel.

“We look forward to continued collaboration with our key stakeholders to secure a sustainable water future for Arizona. The recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel are a definite step in that direction,” Guenther said.

Mayes said the water planning effort also will be a key component for Arizona’s future growth and economic well-being.

"Arizona's water supplies are our lifeblood and completing this cooperative effort to boost recycling and conservation of water will help ensure our state's long-term prosperity," Mayes said.

Grumbles emphasized the importance of clean and safe water.

“This is a timely blueprint to help connect the dots, drops, and watts to sustain our most precious liquid asset. Arizonans can lead the nation in water conservation and recycling if we work together to increase awareness and embrace innovation,” Grumbles said.