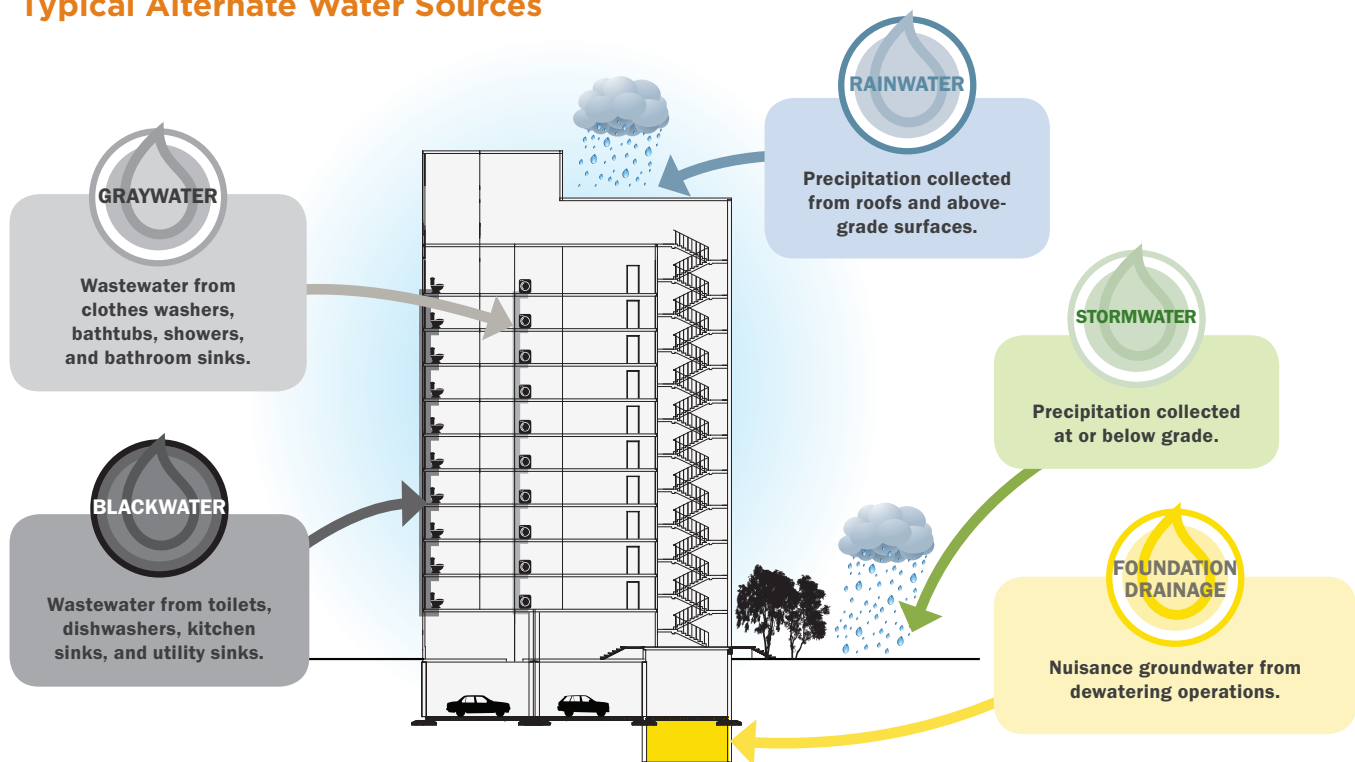


San Francisco's Non-potable Water Program

In 2012, the City and County of San Francisco adopted the Onsite Water Reuse for Commercial, Multi-family, and Mixed-Use Development Ordinance. Commonly known as the Non-potable Water Ordinance (NPO), it added Article 12C to the San Francisco Health Code, allowing the collection, treatment, and use of alternate water sources for non-potable uses such as toilet flushing and irrigation.

Since its adoption, the NPO has been amended to allow for district-scale projects, where two or more parcels can share alternate water sources and it now requires new development projects of 250,000 square feet or more of gross floor area to install and operate an onsite non-potable water system. Developments between 40,000 and 250,000 square feet of gross floor area do not have to install an onsite non-potable water system, but must evaluate the potential onsite alternate water sources and non-potable demands through submission of a water budget application and accompanying water use calculator.

Typical Alternate Water Sources



Non-potable Water Program Resources

The following resources are available at sfwater.org/np to provide developers, architects, and engineers with the necessary tools to collect, treat and use alternate water sources for non-potable uses:

- Case Studies of San Francisco Non-potable Water Projects
- Non-potable Grant Program Application
- Non-potable Water Program Guidebook
- Non-potable Water Use Calculator
- SFDPH Rules and Regulations Regarding the Operation of Alternate Water Source Systems
- Synergies for Compliance with the Non-potable Water Ordinance and Stormwater Management Ordinance Guidebook
- Water Budget Applications for single-buildings and district-scale

Steps to Successfully Implement an Onsite Non-potable Water System

The Non-potable Water Program is administered through an inter-agency partnership among the San Francisco Department of Public Health-Environmental Health (SFDPH-EH), San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), San Francisco Department of Building Inspection-Plumbing Inspection Division (SFDBI-PID), and San Francisco Public Works (SFPW). The following process outlines the steps to effectively design, permit, and operate an onsite non-potable water system in San Francisco:

- 1 Submit a Water Budget Application to SFPUC**
Assess available alternate water supplies and non-potable demands utilizing the SFPUC's Non-Potable Water Use Calculator
- 2 Submit a Non-potable Implementation Plan to SFPUC (district-scale projects only)**
Provide details on the proposed district-scale design, operation, phasing schedule, and additional information identified in the SFPUC Checklist for Non-potable Implementation Plan
- 3 Submit Engineering Report, Permit Application, and Fee to SFDPH-EH**
Provide detailed treatment system design and technical information for the onsite non-potable water system for approval by SFDPH-EH
- 4 Obtain Plumbing Plan Check and Permits from SFDBI and Complete System Construction**
Contact SFDBI-PID for a plumbing plan check after receiving approval on project's Engineering Report and adhere to construction and plumbing code requirements to ensure proper installation
- 5 Obtain Encroachment Permit from SFPW (if applicable)**
Contact SFPW for review of utility conflicts and obtain encroachment permit if system components are located within the public right-of-way
- 6 Conduct a Cross-Connection Test with SFPUC and SFDPH-EH**
Verify separation of potable and non-potable water systems to ensure protection of drinking water supply
- 7 Obtain a Permit to Operate from SFDPH**
Provide required documentation to SFDPH-EH, pay annual license fee to the Tax Collector, and begin operating the onsite non-potable water system with SFDPH-EH oversight
- 8 Conduct Ongoing Monitoring, Reporting, and Inspections**
Ensure compliance with water quality and monitoring requirements, follow routine maintenance and sampling protocols, conduct visual inspections, and submit timely payment of annual license fee

San Francisco's Non-potable Water Program Guidebook

The Non-potable Water Program Guidebook provides more in depth information on the permitting process, water quality and ongoing monitoring requirements, and example treatment trains. Visit sfwater.org/np to download the guidebook and other Non-potable Water Program resources.

For questions, email nonpotable@sfwater.org

