

BENEFICIAL REUSE OF WASTEWATER: AN UPDATE ON TRENDS IN FLORIDA AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

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Reclaimed water is former domestic wastewater that has been treated and disinfected at a wastewater treatment facility and is then discharged to the environment or put to some form of reuse. To meet both water quality and water quantity needs in Florida, recent legislative actions in the state are focused on the reuse of reclaimed water. In particular, there are new statewide rules related to expanding the use of reclaimed water for agriculture and as a potable drinking water source, as well as new rules that may disallow almost all future surface water discharges of reclaimed water. Here we report on the current state of the science and the legislation of reclaimed water use in Florida. We discuss reclaimed water usage trends, the implications of new rules related to its reuse, current understandings of public perceptions related to reuse, and the need for interdisciplinary research to ensure effective and safe reuse of reclaimed water in Florida and other water-stressed areas of the world. To that we end, we also introduce the UF Water Institute Graduate Fellows (WIGF) faculty team, which was created in 2020 to address statewide research needs associated with expanded reuse of reclaimed water.

PRESENTER BIO: Dr. Mary Lusk is an assistant professor in the University of Florida Soil and Water Sciences Department. She researches strategies for water stewardship in urban landscapes, including water conservation and nutrient management, with emphasis on reclaimed water, stormwater, and wastewater effluents.