

# Sonoma County Water Agency Energy Policy

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The Water Agency has a special interest in energy matters that arises from a unique set of circumstances:

**The Water Agency is a large energy consumer.** The Water Agency is among the region's largest users of electricity. The pumping and distribution of potable water to more than 600,000 Sonoma and Marin County residents takes large amounts of electrical power, as does treatment processes in the Water Agency's sanitation facilities.

**The Water Agency is an electricity producer.** The Water Agency's enabling statute allows it to produce electrical power. The Water Agency owns hydroelectric and solar facilities, which provides it with renewable, carbon-free electricity.

**The Water Agency is a leader in climate mitigation activities.** The Water Agency is a leader in developing projects and programs to reduce the risk of climate change through innovative projects and programs. In addition to investigating alternative renewable power sources, such as biogas, fuel cells, wind, wave, and geothermal energy projects, the Water Agency has supported the deployment of energy-conserving measures such as plug-in hybrid vehicles and LED lighting.

While it will always be a major consumer of energy, the Agency is committed to developing sources of power that balance its responsibilities to its customers and to the environment. It is the Agency's policy to meet this commitment through:

**Carbon Free Water** - Recognizing the threat to economic security and public safety posed by climate change, the Agency will continue to implement programs that reduce the Agency's greenhouse gas production, with the goal of achieving a net carbon neutral energy supply by 2015.

These programs include:

**Develop Renewable Energy Sources** - The Water Agency will continue to develop projects that reduce the carbon intensity of its power supply. Projects could include solar, wind, wave, geothermal, anaerobic digestion, or pyrolysis energy systems.

**Water Conservation** - Conserving water means conserving power. The Water Agency will continue to promote cost-effective water conservation measures.

**System Efficiency** - The Water Agency will implement cost-effective energy conservation measures wherever possible, saving ratepayers' money and reducing environmental impacts.

**Projects of Regional Benefit** - The Agency will continue to seek and develop more reliable sources of electricity for the region, including participating in local energy projects and programs that promote self-sufficiency and make North Bay residents less dependent on outside energy sources subject to market fluctuations, natural disasters, and transmission system failures. To accomplish this, the Agency will seek to work with partners, such as the County of Sonoma and other local jurisdictions.

