

## Sustainable Water Projects at a Glance

### RECENTLY COMPLETED

#### **Identifying and Addressing Tap Water Quality Concerns: Tools for Disadvantaged Communities in Greater Los Angeles**

*Funder: Water Foundation and Environment Now*

In 2018, the Luskin Center for Innovation (LCI) hosted a convening that engaged more than 100 community members and other stakeholders in discussions about the challenges and solutions to address mistrust of public drinking water. As a result, we launched a working group to develop policy solutions to address drinking water contamination and mistrust due to premise plumbing as well as pipes that run from the lot line of a property to the tap and are the responsibility of landowners.

#### **L.A. County Community Water Systems: Atlas and Policy Guide**

*Funder: Luskin Center for Innovation's Foundation*

As featured in the [Los Angeles Times](#), LCI comprehensively characterized the supply vulnerabilities, at-risk populations, conservation opportunities, pricing policies, and customer assistance programs of the 228 community water systems across Los Angeles County. Policymakers use this atlas to better understanding disparities in service. It also provides a data resource for future research. A related [policy brief](#) from LCI focused on disparities in drinking water cost within Los Angeles County.

### CURRENT RESEARCH

#### **Providing Affordable Drinking Water to Low-Income Californians**

*Funder: California State Water Resources Control Board*

LCI is working with all major water system providers and environmental justice groups in California to provide the conceptual and empirical evidence base for alternative policy designs for a state-wide low-income rate assistance program for drinking water—the first of its kind in the U.S.

#### **Quantifying the Benefits of and Designing Governance Structures for a Water Market in Los Angeles County**

*Funders: UCLA Sustainable LA Grand Challenge and the Water Foundation*

LCI is analyzing volume and cost data for all major water stakeholders in Los Angeles County to assess how to develop governance structures for water trading, feasible pathways of market expansion, and the size of the regional benefits of each alternative and necessary policy reforms to enable market operation.

#### **Fighting Drought with Stormwater: From Research to Practice**

*Funders: University of California Multi-campus Research Programs and Initiatives*

LCI is working with researchers across the University of California system to assess the economic feasibility of stormwater permittees using enhanced stormwater capture techniques to address drought conditions, safely augment water supplies, and minimize flood risk in urban California.

## **The Future of Energy Use for Recycled Water in Southern California**

*Funders: U.S./China Clean Energy Research Center for Water-Energy Technologies and the California Energy Commission*

This project evaluates the energy and cost intensity of the production of recycled water by comprehensively assessing energy inputs into wastewater and reclamation plant operations in Los Angeles County. The results of this study will inform both water and energy planners in making decisions to increase local and regional water reliance by using water to its fullest potential.

## **Analyzing Southern California Supply Investments from a Human Right to Water Perspective**

*Funder: Resources Legacy Fund*

In the context of a broader suite of water security and local water reliance strategies currently being pursued by nearly all major water suppliers across the Southern California region, this study evaluates the costs and benefits of various water security and local water reliance strategies, with an emphasis on the impacts on disadvantaged ratepayers.

## **Lead Testing Program Development & Policy Recommendations in Early Care and Education Sites**

*Funder: First 5 LA*

This partnership with First 5 LA supports the implementation of a state-legislated program to test for and remediate lead in drinking water and other water quality issues affecting children in daycare facilities in Los Angeles County. LCI is convening three community roundtable discussions that will inform final policy recommendations for facilities and state agencies regarding implementation.

## **UPCOMING AND PROPOSED**

### **Do Quality Investments in Publicly-regulated Drinking Water Systems Improve Health Outcomes?**

LCI proposes assessing system-level and individual-level health outcomes attributable to drinking water system investments made through the California Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, which is the primary means by which the state addresses drinking water contamination.

### **How Much Untapped Recycled Water Opportunity Exists in California?**

Through a joint initiative with the Pacific Institute and the California Association of Sanitary Agencies, LCI proposes a statewide assessment of recycled water viability accounting for volume, geospatial availability, and the potential cost of developing necessary infrastructure.

## **CONTACT**

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