

## **Cryptosporidium parvum in Recycled Sewer Water**

A paper published in the Journal of Applied and Environmental Microbiology has raised fresh concern about the safety of Recycled Water. The article is titled **“Infectious Cryptosporidium parvum Oocysts in Final Reclaimed Effluent”** and appeared in the August 2003 issue of the Journal. The author is Dr. Joan Rose and she describes herself as a supporter of recycled water. In the article she reports the survival of disease producing organisms in tertiary-treated reclaimed water. The author of the paper recommends that recycled water be monitored for Cryptosporidium and for Giardia Lamblia and viruses. In a recent email following up a telephone conversation with Christina Lai, resident of Redwood Shores and Founder of Safewater Coalition, Dr. Rose said, “As I told you on the phone I am a supporter of reclaimed water, however I believe these facilities should be monitoring for viruses, Cryptosporidium and Giardia. Then a policy decision can be made regarding acceptability and assessment of health risk. **There is some degree of risk and we have found crypto in facilities in Calif meeting Title 22.**”

At present the South Bay Sewage Authority (SBSA) does not monitor their output of recycled water. Since a scientifically qualified supporter of recycling water advocates this monitoring and even though it is not legally required in California, monitoring should be started as soon as SBSA resumes production of recycled water at the end of this rainy season.

As was described in earlier publications, Cryptosporidiosis is usually benign in healthy persons but may cause serious illness or even death in people with suppressed immunity. These include young children, children who are ill or recovering from illness, persons receiving radiation or chemotherapy for cancer or anyone whose immunity is lessened by HIV-AIDs. Redwood City’s resolution that Recycled Water is safe may be correct for most of the population but it is a serious risk for several very vulnerable groups who need special protection.

If you live in one of the 25 Home Owners’ Associations (HOAs) whose board has asked that Recycled Water not be used in their neighborhood be assured that the City Council’s policy has not (at this date) been changed and you will be exempted from use of such water. Residents of other HOAs may expect to receive Recycled Water unless their Board asks the Council for exclusion.