

DATE ISSUED: January 11, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-014

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
Agenda of January 16, 2002

SUBJECT: Annual Water Conservation Report

REFERENCE: Council Policy 400-11

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

San Diego relies mostly upon imported water from Northern California and the Colorado River. Its pleasant Mediterranean climate attracts large numbers of potential residents, businesses, and tourists every year. It is important that the City of San Diego practice careful water resource planning to ensure an adequate water supply to sustain its economy and lifestyle.

The Water Department is committed to improving water supply reliability through an aggressive capital improvements program, and investigating new alternative sources of water (i.e., desalting, water transfers, groundwater storage management). In addition, water conservation is a critical component of the City's water resources management, as every gallon saved reduces the need to purchase, store, treat and deliver imported water. As part of its commitment to water conservation efforts, the Water Department has prepared the attached report outlining key conservation programs and initiatives.

DISCUSSION

The City's Water Conservation Program has been and continues to be effective in promoting permanent water savings. Established by the City Council in 1985, the Water Conservation Program now accounts for over 18,000 acre-feet (AF) of potable water savings each year. One acre foot of water equals 325,851 gallons, or enough water to cover an area of land about the size of a football field, one foot deep. Depending on water use, one acre foot of water can supply two average California homes with a years' worth of water for all indoor and outdoor needs. Conserving 18,000 acre feet a year also means the City saves \$11,700,000 in water purchase, treatment and delivery costs annually.

The City's water conservation program includes such initiatives as the Residential Interior/Exterior Survey Program, the Ultra Low Flow Toilet and High-Efficiency Clothes Washer incentive programs, the Professional Assistance for Landscape Managers program, a

web based Landscape Watering Calculator, and a variety of public outreach and education efforts. Through these efforts not only is the City achieving its goal of improving water supply reliability, but it is also demonstrating its ongoing commitment to implement proven water conservation measures recognized as Best Management Practices throughout California. The commitment by the City to continually improve its water conservation efforts means that in 2001, the City conserved enough water to fill Lake Murray 3.8 times.

CONCLUSION

The attached report provides an update on the City's on-going water conservation efforts. It outlines the City's efforts to meet recognized best management practices, provides the details of the City's various water conservation programs, and documents the Water Department's effort to insure the responsible use of water by all its customers.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: Richard Mendes
Utilities General Manager

Submitted by: Larry Gardner
Water Department Director

AUR/CDR/cdr

Attachment 1. [Water Conservation Report January 2002](#)
