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DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC WORKS

WATER DIVISION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA

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April 28, 1992

City Council  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT: WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM FOR 1992**

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT**

City-wide.

**SUMMARY**

Recent February and March rainfall has brought local seasonal rainfall totals to near normal. However, Lake Shasta storage is still only half full while Folsom Lake is at about 60 percent capacity. While reservoir levels are not as high as desired, they are a marked improvement over levels at this time a year ago.

Although precipitation and reservoir storage levels are an improvement over previous years, the need to conserve water is still of great importance. This report presents the proposed Water Conservation Program for 1992 for the City of Sacramento which has, as its primary goal, the achievement of a 15 percent summer water savings or approximately 3 billion gallons of water.

**COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION**

None.

**APPROVED**  
BY THE CITY COUNCIL  
**APR 28 1992**  
OFFICE OF THE  
CITY CLERK

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

To meet the goal of 15 percent summer water savings and to continue efforts to encourage water conservation in the community, the following actions are proposed:

- Continue restricting outdoor irrigation to a maximum of three (3) days per week with the Monday prohibition.
- Continue to limit the period for summer outdoor watering to the hours between 6 pm and 12 noon.
- Continue the current restrictions on the use of water for washing down paved surfaces, except to alleviate immediate fire or sanitation hazards.

### **BACKGROUND**

California has had few periods of extended low rainfall or drought conditions. Except for occasional single years with less than average precipitation, California has had only three periods, within recent history, that can be considered droughts: 1928 to 1934, 1976 and 1977, and 1987 to the present. During each of these dry periods, Sacramentans, like other Californians, have had to practice significant water conservation.

Specific water conservation practices which have been, and continue to be, implemented by the City include:

- Adoption of water conservation ordinances.
- Employment of Water Waste Inspectors.
- Public information campaigns.
- Distribution of water conservation kits.
- Commercial water meter retrofit program.
- Participation with other area water purveyors in a regional water conservation program.

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In 1990, when California was in the midst of its fourth consecutive year of drought, the City's Water Division proposed a mandatory Water Conservation Program to supplement the ongoing voluntary program. The program, adopted by the City Council on May 22, 1990, included the following measures:

1. Prohibit use of City water to wash down sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, or other paved area, except to alleviate immediate fire or sanitation hazards.
2. Prohibit landscape irrigation between the hours of 12 noon and 6 p.m.
3. Initiate odd/even landscaping irrigation. Residences or businesses with odd address numbers will water landscaping only Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Even numbered addresses will water on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. Watering on Mondays will be prohibited.

Even as California, hopefully, emerges from five years of drought the need to conserve water continues to be of paramount importance.

### PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR 1992

Because our water supply remains below normal, it is critical that all of California's water supplies be conserved in order to insure that adequate water supplies will exist in the event 1993 is also a dry year. Toward this end, staff has designed a program that will maximize water savings while making efficient use of funding and staff resources. The proposed Water Conservation Program for 1992, outlined below, is designed to reduce summer water use by 15 percent.

#### √ Regulations

The existing City Code contains adequate language to prohibit excessive use of water. Current regulations confine outdoor irrigation to an odd/even, three day a week schedule. It is recommended that this mandatory measure, as well as the prohibition on washing down paved surfaces, continue.

#### √ Public Education

Sacramento Area Water Works Association. For the past 38 years, the Sacramento Area Water Works Association (SAWWA), consisting of about thirty local water agencies, has financed a conservation program each summer utilizing television, radio,

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posters, and newspaper coverage to impress upon the public the need to conserve water.

This year's program is being developed by the public relations firm of Deen & Black. Specific public relations strategies include program promotion, production of public service spots, increased media relations and awareness, a schools program, and cooperative efforts with other groups such as the California Landscape Contractors Association.

City Efforts. Since the 1976-77 drought, the Water Division has hired temporary Water Waste Inspectors during the months of May, June, July, August, and September. Last year, eight Water Waste Inspectors patrolled the City and responded to citizen water waste complaints. These patrols provided 24 hour per day, seven-day per week coverage.

These inspectors are extremely effective in providing direct contact with our customers, educating them with regard to water conservation. Last year, our inspectors made more than 33,000 customer contacts. This year's program continues our past practice.

In addition, the City has signed the *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California*. This agreement serves to institutionalize water conservation practices in California. As part of the implementation schedule, several best management practices (BMPs) must be implemented by the end of 1992. These are:

- Enforcement of water conserving plumbing fixture standards including requirement for ultra low flush toilets in all new construction beginning January 1, 1992.
- Support of State and Federal legislation prohibiting sale of toilets using more than 1.6 gallons per flush.
- Distribution of system water audits. (Leak detection and repair to be implemented by end of second year).
- Public Information.
- School Education.

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- Water Waste Prohibition.
- Water Conservation Coordinator.

All of these BMPs with the exception of the distribution system water audits, are in effect. The distribution system water audits and leak detection program will be proposed in the 1992-93 FY Capital Improvement Program. Its estimated cost will be \$50,000 annually.

✓ Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

Staff has already begun development of a water efficient landscape ordinance, as required by State law. A Task Force consisting of representatives of the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Public Works Department, Parks and Community Services Department, and Planning and Development Department have been meeting to draft an ordinance for consideration by the City Council in late Spring. Sacramento County adopted a water conserving landscape ordinance last October, and staff is currently drafting a City ordinance similar to the County law.

Staff estimates that at least one additional position will be required in order to enforce and monitor the new ordinance. No funds are requested at this time, however. Specific staffing and funding recommendations will be included when the proposed ordinance is presented for adoption sometime later this year.

✓ Alliance with SMUD and Sacramento County

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed to formally establish the *Sacramento Alliance for the Conservation of Water and Energy* in our metropolitan area. This Alliance, composed of the City of Sacramento, the County of Sacramento, and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), will focus on methods and programs that all three entities might jointly undertake to save water and energy. This first task for the Alliance will be a study to identify potential, cost-effective conservation measures. Consultant selection for the project is currently underway.

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The conservation program is funded in the approved two year operating budget. Funding for the leak detection element of the program will be proposed in the FY92-93 capital improvement budget.

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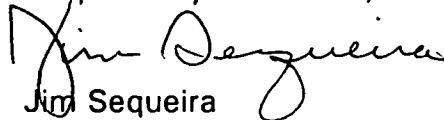
**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The City Council's policy on water conservation is contained in Chapter 47 of the City Code. The water conservation program implements that policy.

**MBE/WBE EFFORTS**

No impact.

Respectfully submitted,



Jim Sequeira  
Assistant Director of Utilities

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:



Walter J. Slpe  
City Manager

APPROVED:



Donald M. Dodge  
Director of Utilities

FOR COUNCIL MEETING DATE:  
April 28, 1992

Contact Person:

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