

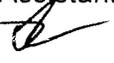


CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

FROM: Trish Rhay, Assistant Director of Public Works Services – Infrastructure & Operations 
Donielle Kahikina, Deputy Director of Public Works Services, Operational Support 
Michelle Tse, Senior Management Analyst 

DATE: August 11, 2015

SUBJECT: WATER CONSERVATION OUTREACH UPDATE

ATTACHMENT: None

This report highlights staff activities related to the City's Water Conservation and Outreach efforts.

General Updates

- Policies related to commercial car washing and washing of exterior buildings is scheduled for City Council consideration during its August 18, 2015 meeting. The proposed policies will be reviewed by the Public Works Liaison Committee (Vice Mayor Mirisch and Councilmember Brien) on August 12, 2015 prior to presentation to the full City Council on August 18th.
- A draft version of the Beverly Hills garden handbook is currently being reviewed by City staff and the Conservation Subcommittee. The handbook is expected to be finalized and made available later this month.
- Twenty-two Garden Guru appointments have been completed by Beverly Hills water customers, and an additional fifty water customers have signed-up for the program. Feedback from participants has been positive. Staff also participated by attending one of these visits and received positive feedback from the customer.

Public Education and Outreach

- The City is working with marketing firm Cook + Schmid to finalize the educational toolkit package to be mailed to all residential addresses (both single family and multi-family), which includes an exterior hose bib hanger, washing machine cling, and flyer to raise awareness of the drought conditions and water-saving tips. The toolkit is expected to be mailed out by end of the month. Outreach materials for schools and commercial water customers are currently in development.

- Supplemental information, such as water-saving tips for City staff tasked with water enforcement efforts, are in development so they can be as effective as possible in their interaction with customers.

Enforcement

- Staff continues to provide public outreach on outdoor watering restrictions. Additional staffing resources are being assigned to assist with public outreach and enforcement. A summary of the outdoor watering violations is included in the August 11, 2015 Commission packet under Item H7 as reference. Staff is finalizing a contract with a hearing officer to review appeals of violations issued to residents for violating the City's outdoor watering restrictions.

Water Rates, Penalty Surcharges, and Appeals Process

- At its June 30, 2015, meeting, the City Council voted to move forward with a Public Hearing to consider two water rate increases – a 5% increase in mid-October and a subsequent 5% increase in mid-December 2015. The Public Hearing notice was mailed out in mid-July to all Beverly Hills water customers, and any water customer can participate in the process. The Public Hearing will be held during the September 1, 2015, City Council meeting, forty-five days after the notice was mailed to customers, and both rate increases will be considered at this time.
- Letters regarding the penalty surcharges and appeals process will be mailed out to Beverly Hills water customers by August 7, 2015. The City recognizes that there may be instances which make it infeasible for water customers to achieve the 30% reduction in water use. Customers who have showed water savings from 2011 to 2013 will receive an adjusted conservation target and will be notified by the City. Other customers who want to submit an appeal may submit an application, which can be found online at www.beverlyhills.org/appeal, or calling Beverly Hills Utility Billing at (310) 285-2436.
- Starting on August 3, 2015, the utility bill will include information showing the customer's 70% baseline (i.e. allowed water usage), actual water usage, and usage target for next billing period.
- Starting August 1, 2015, Water Tracker now has a "Penalty Surcharge" tab which shows a customer's baseline usage (based on 2013 data), will allow customers to track current usage, and whether usage patterns may trigger penalty surcharge assessments.
- Staff continues to work with the Conservation Subcommittee and HF&H Consultants, LLC on the new tiered rate structure analysis and development. Staff anticipates the framework will be presented to the Public Works Commission in Fall 2015 and subsequently presented to the Public Works Liaison Committee for review. If the Public Works Liaison recommends the framework be moved forward, it will be presented to the City Council for consideration in December 2015.