
Meeting Date: May 20, 2015
Staff Contact: Katherine Yuhas, Water Conservation Officer

TITLE: R-15-12 – Authorizing a Two-Year Pilot Educational Component as an Alternative to Water Waste Fines

ACTION: Recommend Approval

SUMMARY:

This resolution creates an educational pilot program to be used in conjunction with the current Water Waste Ordinance. The current ordinance authorizes fines for the first observed violation of the water waste ordinance. The educational pilot program would allow for an educational warning system to be used for our residential customers prior to issuance of a fine. For the first report of water waste, the resident would be sent a post card explaining that water waste had been reported at their property, explaining what the waste was and asking the resident to please inspect their property to ensure the waste does not occur again. For the second report of water waste, the resident would be sent a second post card explaining that this is a second notice, explaining where the waste is occurring and offering assistance from Water Authority Water Use Compliance staff if the customer needs help identifying the problem. This postcard would also explain that further waste could result in a fine.

This pilot program is being recommended for residential customers because the residential sector has reduced their water use 55% since 1995. In addition, documenting water waste is a resource intensive activity (staff, vehicles, equipment and fuel) and can be very intrusive on our customers as it involves video-taping the water waste.

For the next two irrigation seasons, Water Use Compliance staff will track the effectiveness of the post card system and will report back to the Board with an evaluation and recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

**ALBUQUERQUE BERNALILLO COUNTY
WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY**

BILL NO. R-15-12

RESOLUTION

**AUTHORIZING A TWO-YEAR PILOT EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT AS AN
ALTERNATIVE TO WATER WASTE ENFORCEMENT FINES.**

WHEREAS, the Water Authority has had a Water Waste Enforcement Ordinance (O-09-4) since 1995; and

WHEREAS, water use in the Water Authority service area has been reduced from 251 gallons per person per day in 1995 to 134 gallons per person per day in 2014; and

WHEREAS, residential customers have reduced their water use 55 percent since 1995; and

WHEREAS, education programs have proven to be very effective in reducing water use throughout the service area and have been appreciated by customers; and

WHEREAS, during the FY14 Customer Conversation meetings, support for an educational/warning system received high approval ratings; and

WHEREAS, water waste enforcement is resource intensive, both in terms of staff time and use of vehicles, equipment and fuel and can be very intrusive to customers.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WATER AUTHORITY:

Section 1. Beginning June 1, 2015, the Water Authority will begin use of an educational warning system for residential water waste enforcement:

A. For the first report of residential water waste an informational post card will be mailed to the address where the waste was reported stating that waste was reported and requesting the customer to inspect their system to resolve the problem and providing them with Water Authority contact information.

B. For the second report of residential water waste an informational post card will be mailed to the address where the waste was reported stating that this is the second report of water waste and offering the customer assistance from Water Authority staff to identify the source of the problem.

1 C. For the third report of residential water waste, Water Use Compliance staff
2 shall conduct an inspection and proceed with enforcement of the Water Waste
3 Ordinance as appropriate.

4 D. At the end of the 2016 irrigation season, an evaluation will be completed
5 and a report will be provided to the Board to determine if the education in lieu of fines
6 should be continued.

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Water Waste Educational Program

Current Program

- First report of waste triggers an inspection
- If waste is found, a video tape is made (at night this can involve using a spotlight)
- First violation \$20, second \$50, third \$100 going up to \$2,000 for the ninth and all further violations

Pilot Educational Program

- First report of waste a post card is sent
- Second report of waste a post card is sent offering assistance
- Third report of waste, an inspection is made and we follow the Water Waste Ordinance

