

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	16056	Agenda Number	11.
Meeting Date:	8/2/2012		Department:	Austin Water Utility
Subject				
Approve an ordinance amending Chapter 6-4 of City Code relating to water use management. Related to Items # 10 and 12.				
Amount and Source of Funding				
There is no unanticipated fiscal impact.				
Fiscal Note				
A fiscal note is not required.				
Purchasing Language:				
Prior Council Action:	September 27, 2007- Water Use Management (Ordinance 20070927-006); August 8, 2007– Water Use Management (Ordinance 20070809-002); April 26, 2001 – Emergency and Peak Day Water Use Management (Ordinance 010426-17); August 26, 1999– Emergency and Peak Day Water Use Management (Ordinance No. 990826-066); December 11, 2003- Readopting Offenses and Providing Penalties (Ordinance 031211-11); October 23, 2003- Repealing and Replacing code relating to Environmental Control and Conservation			
For More Information:	Drema Gross, 974-2787; Denise Avery, 972-0104			
Boards and Commission Action:	Recommended by Water and Wastewater Commission and considered by the Resource Management Commission.			
MBE / WBE:				
Related Items:				
Additional Backup Information				

The Water Conservation Code provides a suite of regulations necessary for Austin Water to respond to LCRA's supply and demand triggers and water use reduction targets. Revisions to the code were developed in response to input from the public and government officials after concerns arose about impacts of the extreme drought conditions experienced during the summer and fall of 2011, and the limitations of the current code in effectively addressing long-term drought. The proposed revisions address both the environmental and economic concerns raised during the 2011 drought while also fulfilling recommendations made by the Resource Management Commission.

Major Revisions

- Repeals and replaces the existing code
- Deletes the existing Article I, *Plumbing Fixture Retrofit*. Most of the standards in the existing article were superseded by newer plumbing technologies and upgraded standards were codified in the City's Unified Plumbing Code and the associated Plumbing Criteria Manual.
- Provides for five (5) Water Use Conservation Stages which include a Conservation Stage (2 days/week irrigation), Stage 1 (2 days/week watering irrigation), a Stage 2 (1 day/week irrigation), Stage 3 (1 day/week irrigation) and Stage 4 (no outdoor irrigation allowed)
- Allows outdoor irrigation during Stage 3
- Requires audits of permanently installed irrigation systems for commercial facilities situated on properties one acre or more in size.
- Requires vehicle wash facilities to have annual verification of water efficient equipment
- Requires all hotels and motels to offer linen reuse programs
- Provides exemptions for hand watering and drip irrigation
- Provides exemptions for tree watering with bubblers and soaker hoses.
- Provides for an administrative enforcement process and offers an optional resolution of violations through the municipal court.

The code revisions included in this ordinance are necessary for the City to implement the updated Drought Contingency Plan, as required by contractual obligations between Austin Water Utility and the Lower Colorado River Authority. The revised code included in the draft ordinance responds to recommendations from the Citizens' Water Conservation Implementation Task Force and to requests the City has received from citizens to balance the City's water conservation needs and goals with important protections for additional community values, including preservation of Austin's urban landscape and tree canopy; protection of environmental and economic investment, opportunity, and sustainability; and insuring preservation of adequate water supplies for critical public health and safety needs, including emergency fire fighting and fire suppression response, disease and contamination control and prevention, and encouragement of responsible indoor and outdoor water use across all industries, locations, events, occupancies, and public or private users.