



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:14-1018

Agenda Item Number: 17.

Agenda Date: 5/29/2014

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Finance

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Troy Elliott

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S) IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT: Updates to Chapter 34 Regarding Drought Restrictions

SUMMARY

San Antonio Water System (SAWS) requests City Council approval of updates to Chapter 34 of the City Code in order to modify the time of use provisions under Stage I drought restrictions and apply the drought surcharge provision under Stage IV drought restrictions to the District Special Project (DSP), the former Bexar Metropolitan Water District.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under Chapter 34, SAWS has the ability to assess a drought surcharge to residential, residential irrigation and non-residential irrigation customers during extreme cases of drought. The purpose of the drought surcharge is to discourage discretionary water consumption by customers during Stage IV drought restrictions.

In January 2012, SAWS assumed control of the former Bexar Metropolitan Water District utility, now referred to as the DSP. DSP customers are currently charged for water under the old BexarMet approved rate schedules. These rate schedules did not provide for any drought surcharge. The proposed changes to Chapter 34 would extend the application of the drought surcharge to DSP customers. Any drought surcharge assessed during Stage IV drought restrictions would now apply to DSP customers in the same manner that it currently applies to SAWS customers.

Under the proposed amendments, the drought surcharge would continue to apply to SAWS residential, residential irrigation and non-residential irrigation customers. Additionally, the drought surcharge would apply to DSP residential customers and any DSP customer with a separate irrigation meter. The drought surcharge

rate is the current highest, inside-the-city limits (ICL) SAWS volumetric water rate. The rate that currently meets this criteria is the Irrigation Seasonal ICL fourth tier rate of \$0.4764 per 100 gallons. The application of the surcharge would be in addition to all other customer charges from current fees and rates.

Other key changes to Chapter 34 include time of use changes for sprinklers under year-round, non-drought stage conditions, and under Stage I conditions. It is recommended that the use of sprinklers during non-drought stage conditions be allowed year-round before 11:00 a.m. and after 7:00p.m. Allowable watering times during Stage I will be from midnight to 11:00a.m. and from 7:00p.m. to 11:59p.m. on the assigned watering day.

ISSUE:

Chapter 34 provides that a drought surcharge is to be assessed by SAWS to residential (including residential irrigation) and non-residential irrigation customers in order to discourage discretionary water consumption by customers during Stage IV drought restrictions. Under current rules, DSP customers are not subject to the drought surcharge.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose to not approve the proposed changes, thereby allowing DSP customers to be exempt from the drought surcharge during Stage IV drought restrictions until such time that the DSP is fully integrated into SAWS.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no projected fiscal impact to the City's budget as a result of the proposed amendments to Chapter 34.

RECOMMENDATION:

The SAWS Board of Trustees and City Staff recommend approval of the proposed ordinance.