



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**15-5188

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**Agenda Item Number:** 5.

**Agenda Date:** 10/1/2015

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Finance

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Ben Gorzell

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City-wide

**SUBJECT:**

Briefing from San Antonio Water System (SAWS) on High Bill Inquiries.

**SUMMARY:**

This item will be a briefing from the SAWS on inquiries from customers in various areas of the city regarding high water bills. SAWS President/CEO Robert Puente has acknowledged that issues have occurred which have led some customers to receive uncharacteristically high bills. During this briefing, SAWS will outline the conditions which contributed to these billing issues and the response that Mr. Puente has instituted to address the situation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Certain residents recently received water bills uncharacteristically higher than previous months. This action resulted in inquiries to SAWS regarding this occurrence. According to SAWS, bill estimations and heavy rain months, coupled with an ongoing program that replaces aging meters with more precise instruments, and hotter and drier conditions are the primary reasons for the spikes in bills.

During the briefing, SAWS will discuss the conditions which led to these billing issues and the response plan that has been implemented to address the situation and correct any billing statements which may be incorrect. Steps taken range from meeting with community groups, creation of a dedicated phone line and email address for reporting concerns and also recently held a "rapid response" event Sept. 25 at SAWS headquarters. SAWS has pledged to bring on more Customer Service and metering staffing resources, including meter technicians to mitigate these issues in the future. Additional information will be provided by SAWS during the presentation of this item on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**ISSUE:**

San Antonio Water System has received inquiries from customers in various areas of the city regarding high water bills.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is a briefing for informational purposes only.