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## SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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**DATE:** April 16, 2004

**SUBJECT:** **Water Conservation Master Plan 2004**

**AFFECTED COUNCIL DISTRICTS:** Utility Service Area

**STAFF REPORT BY:** Gary Mumford

**ADMINISTRATIVE DEPT. AND CONTACT PERSON:** Public Utilities  
Stephanie Duer and LeRoy Hooton, Jr.

**NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:** Public hearing with “reasonable, advance public notice” and delivery of the water conservation plan to the media  
Newspaper advertising occurred on April 12, 2004.  
News media provided copies of the Plan on April 2, 2004.

**cc:** Rocky Fluhart, LeRoy Hooton, Jeff Niermeyer, Jim Lewis, Stephanie Duer, DJ Baxter

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State law requires each culinary water retailer to update its water conservation plan every five years, hold a public hearing, and file it with the Utah Division of Water Resources (73-10-32 UCA). The City Council adopted a water conservation plan on April 6, 1999. The Department of Public Utilities recently updated the water conservation plan and forwarded it to the City Council for discussion. The Council discussed the plan at a work session on April 6, 2004.

At the work session, Stephanie Duer explained that an important component of the Water Conservation Master Plan is the identification of program initiatives that are directed specifically at the Department, at the City, and at customers. Salt Lake City has been very successful with voluntary conservation action. Per capita consumption currently averages 218 gallons per day per capita, including industrial customers. This average is below the state average of 298 gallons per day per capita. In July 2003, the Council adopted a Water Shortage Contingency Plan that contains water use recommendations and in some cases restrictions depending on the severity of the water shortage. In response to a Council Member question, Stephanie Duer explained that the Department of Public Utilities will work together with other City departments to ensure that ordinances and other city programs are in keeping with the long-term goals for water conservation.

### **POTENTIAL MOTION:**

The Department of Public Utilities requests that the City Council adopt the Water Conservation Master Plan and approve its submittal to the Utah Division of Water Resources before the end of April. Following the public hearing, the Council may wish to consider the following motion:

**“I move to adopt the 2004 Water Conservation Master Plan.”**

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The following information was provided previously. It is provided again for your reference.

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In 1997, the Department of Public Utilities hired a consultant to help prepare a water master plan. That study projected average annual demand of 130,500 acre feet of water by the year 2025. The Department's goal is to reduce that future demand to 114,000 acre feet through a combination of conservation measures and the utilization of secondary and reuse water. Achieving this goal will require that conservation measures be taken indoors as well as out of doors. Success of conservation programs depends on how well the public understands the need for conservation, perceives the fairness of policies, and has a willingness to conserve. The proposed water conservation master plan contains an introduction, background, history, current programs, conservation plan initiatives, and the next steps including annual reports. The plan also contains several appendices.

### **Conservation Plan Goal:**

The primary goal is to reduce overall water consumption by 13% by the year 2025, for a volume of 16,400 acre feet of water. To achieve the 13% overall reduction, the Department has set a goal to reduce indoor water consumption by an additional 5% and to reduce outdoor water use by an additional 20%.

### **Current and Ongoing Programs:**

The proposed water conservation plan highlights several ongoing programs including the following:

1. Loss preventions – Maintain distribution lines to reduce loss due to leakage and breakage.
  2. Indoor leak detection – Monitor winter usage levels and notify customers when usage is in excess of 20% of average winter usage providing for timely repair of indoor plumbing fixtures.
  3. Billing and brochures – Bill customers monthly, providing information on the volume of water used in each of three billing tiers and the price per unit per tier. Provide a comparison of water used over the previous 12 months. Include conservation tips in the message area of the bill. Regularly insert brochures providing more detailed water conservation information.
  4. Sewer charges – Continue to base sewer rates on metered winter water usage, which resulted in a 12.5% reduction in indoor water use following implementation in 1982.
  5. Rate structure – Adopted a conservation rate structure that charges an increasing cost for water through three blocks of water consumption. The impact of the new rate structure will be assessed after it has been in place for an entire irrigation season.
  6. Irrigation audit program – Continue to participate in the USU Extension Service water audit program. The Department pays an annual cost and customers may request free irrigation audits and lawn watering scheduling advice. The audit includes an inspection of sprinkler heads with a bullet list of “fix-its.” Over a thousand irrigation audits have been conducted for Salt Lake City water customers.
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7. Landscape – Encourage water conservation through the use of low-water plants and by not requiring turf in landscapes. The Department created a water-wise plant list for contractors, landscapers and homeowners.

### **Program Initiatives:**

The Department identified 27 potential program initiatives to be implemented over the next five years. Those initiatives are divided into three categories: programs directed at the Department; programs directed at the City; and programs directed at residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers. The initiatives are found on pages 16 and 17 of the Plan. Examples of initiatives include improve the usefulness of information on the water bills, develop a schedule for replacement of outdated City-owned irrigation systems, and place conservation materials in garden centers and plumbing supply stores.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The Department proposes to establish benchmarks within each customer category and for the community as a whole (one of the above program initiatives). Periodically the Department will analyze the success, acceptance, cost, and other relevant characteristics of each program and measure through the use of surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, and other methods. A water conservation annual report of progress will be prepared each year.

### **CHRONOLOGY:**

- April 6, 1999 – The Council held a public hearing and adopted a water conservation plan.
  - March 25, 2004 – The Public Utilities Advisory Committee adopted the updated Water Conservation Plan.
  - April 6, 2004 – The Council City devoted a portion of its work session discussing water conservation and the 2004 Water Conservation Master Plan.
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