



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item Number: 3

Agenda Date: August 23, 2022

In Control: Municipal Utilities Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Finance Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Troy Elliott, Deputy Chief Financial Officer

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Update on Drought Management

SUMMARY:

SAWS to provide a briefing on management of drought conditions including performance of diversified supplies and compliance efforts for watering rules.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The SAWS 2017 Water Management Plan outlines how SAWS will manage during extended drought periods using diversified water resources and reasonable watering rules to moderate discretionary water consumption.

The SAWS Drought Management Team has been convened since early 2022. This cross departmental team's roles include monitoring forecast conditions, assessing use of diversified water supplies, reviewing impacts of dry soils on water infrastructure, assessing how watering rules are impacting total system demand and making recommendations to Executive Management.

Drought management efforts fall into several key categories:

1. Management and integration of water supplies from multiple water sources including: Vista Ridge, Aquifer Storage & Recovery, Brackish Desalination, the Edwards Aquifer and several other regional water projects.
2. Monitoring customer demand patterns and ensuring compliance with applicable watering rules that are intended to moderate discretionary water usage.
3. Monitoring and managing impacts of dry soil drought conditions on SAWS infrastructure including prioritizing repairs of major pipe breaks to ensure essential services remain in place for customers.
4. Engaging the community to ensure that the public is aware of the drought conditions and appropriately convey that while the situation is not a crisis, continued cooperation with watering rules in place is a high priority.
5. Monitoring the safety of field employees in extreme heat and implementing strategies to prevent heat related risks to their health while still completing essential work.

The greater San Antonio community has been through multiple drought periods before. New water projects are performing well and providing nearly half of the total water needed by our community at this time. Years of building resilient landscapes and public support for water conservation has always provided a base from which to gain community support for reasonable watering rules. SAWS will continue to monitor conditions and work with the community for the duration of the drought currently being experienced.

ISSUE:

Briefing by SAWS to provide an update on drought management activities, water supply diversification and compliance efforts for watering rules.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only