



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

### AGENDA ITEM

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Report: Programming to Incentivize Water Reductions.

- 1) Motion to Note and File Report on the Success of Glendale Water & Power's (GWP) Water Conservation Programs.
- 2) Motion directing staff relating to the allocation of Water funds for additional programs.

### COUNCIL ACTION

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**Item Type:** Action

**Approved for** September 27, 2022 **calendar**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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GWP has a successful suite of water conservation programs, primarily funded by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), that have helped residents and businesses save water in MWD's system. These programs have resulted in a 29% decrease in water use since 2006.

Glendale's groundwater rights are governed by a court Judgement, issued in 1979 which established water rights for the Cities of Glendale, Burbank, San Fernando, Los Angeles and the Crescenta Valley Water District. In the area where GWP produces groundwater, when customers use less water, the City has less water available to pump. This makes establishing a nexus between local funding for water conservation and a local benefit for water customers difficult.

GWP's water rates are set pursuant to the applicable Proposition 218 requirements. The Water Fund also collects about \$80,000 of "other revenues" from lease payments. These revenues could be directed toward water conservation programs without materially affecting the charges for water service in the City.

### COUNCIL PRIORITIES

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Environmental Stewardship: When Glendale residents conserve water, it helps MWD store water for future use in the region.

## RECOMMENDATION

Note and file this report on the success of GWP's Water Conservation Programs, and direct staff on the allocation of revenues derived from lease payments to provide additional water conservation program funding.

## BACKGROUND

GWP's water conservation programs have been tremendously successful in helping residents and businesses save water. The success can be measured in multiple ways. One way to look at the success of the programs is to list the number of residents and businesses that have used the programs as noted below.

### Turf Removal Rebates Since 2014

- 480 Glendale residents received a turf removal rebate and removed 732,293 square feet of turf for an aggregate rebate amount \$1,428,459.
- 27 Glendale commercial customers received a turf removal rebate and removed 1,700,017 square feet of turf at an aggregate rebate amount of \$3,358,635.
- Five of the 26 commercial rebates were for GWP sites, and totaled 38,406 square feet of turf removed for a rebate of \$50,198.

### SoCal WaterSmart Rebate Program for Water Efficient Appliances/ Toilets/ Irrigation Controllers

- Since 2008 a total of 4,439 residential rebates have been awarded, totaling \$280,196.
- Since 2013 a total of 7,132 commercial rebates have been awarded totaling \$1,056,251.

### Glendale's Residential Home Water Reports and Water Insight Web portal

Glendale receives funding from MWD for Member Agency Administered Programs. The current allocation is \$49,900 and GWP staff are using this funding for Glendale's Residential Home Water Reports and Water Insight Web Portal. These programs help give residents a sense of how much water they are using in comparison to similar properties, and these programs provide continuous monitoring of water usage in order to alert residents to potential leaks at their property.

### Success in Aggregate

Another way to measure the success of Glendale's water conservation programs is to track and monitor water use as a whole. In Fiscal Year 2006/2007, Glendale residents and businesses used 32,846 ACFT of potable water, which is equivalent to 10.7 billion gallons. In Fiscal Year 2013/2014, Glendale residents and businesses used 27,908 ACFT of water which is a 15% reduction in water use.

During the water shortage of 2015, the year 2013 was selected by the State as the year to use for comparison for compliance with the Governor's emergency conservation orders. Since that time Glendale's residents and businesses have held their

conservation levels at nearly 18% below 2013 levels, even prior to the current mandatory conservation implementation. The four-year period of 2017 to 2020, the average annual use was 23,361 ACFT, which is a 29% reduction from the 2006/2007 time period.

## **ANALYSIS**

The only sources of water that the City of Glendale owns are an agreement with the City of Los Angeles for 50% of the recycled water produced at the Los Angeles – Glendale Water Reclamation Plant (LAGWRP), and a prescriptive right to 3,856 ACFT of groundwater in the Verdugo Basin. Approximately 7% of the City's water demands are being met by recycled water, and approximately 5% of the City's water demands are being met by water production in the Verdugo Basin. Water not used from LAGWRP is discharged to the LA River. The City is only able to produce about half its water right in the Verdugo Basin because of long-term declining groundwater levels, and reducing pumping does not materially affect groundwater levels in the basin because of how the basin is formed.

The City of Glendale is entitled to pump groundwater from the San Fernando Basin (SFB) based on a formula delineated in a 1979 Court Judgement stemming from a decade-long litigation the court case referred to as in the matter of "The City of Los Angeles v. City of San Fernando, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 650079" (Judgment). The Judgement allows Glendale to pump from the SFB an amount equal to 20% of its total water sales in the areas overlying the SFB, and this is referred to as a Return Flow Credit. The Judgement allows Glendale to further pump and additional 5,500 ACFT above the return flow credit by paying the City of Los Angeles a Physical Solution Rate for each ACFT used. The current Physical Solution Rate is \$814.65/ACFT. Glendale's local supply from the SFB is pumped through the Glendale Water Treatment Plant which is part of an EPA Superfund clean-up project called the Glendale Operable Unit. The City is a party to the court ordered Consent Decree related to this project and currently about 25% of the City's water supply comes from this plant and the SFB. The project produces about 7,600 ACFT of highly treated drinking water year.

During the Water-Year (WY) of 2006/2007, GWP delivered 29,511 ACFT to its service area overlying the SFB, providing a return flow credit of 5,902 ACFT that could be pumped from the basin. After the successful conservation measures noted in the previous section, during WY 2019/2020, GWP delivered 21,997 ACFT to its service area overlying the SFB, providing a return flow credit of 4,399 ACFT. (A WY is October 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>).

Due to the Judgement, successful water conservation in the City reduced the amount of water available to pump without using Physical Solution water by 1,503 ACFT between 2006 and 2020.

Water conservation in Glendale saves water in the MWD system for use in the region while reducing the amount of water Glendale can pump itself without using Physical Solution water.

Glendale's water conservation rebates and programs are funded by MWD. One way to increase water conservation funding without a clear nexus between a local benefit being derived from local revenue, and while avoiding using revenue from all customers that would materially benefit a few customers, would be to use "other revenue" collected by the Water Fund. The Water Fund collects approximately \$80,000 per year of revenue from lease payments primarily related communication towers. This amount would provide additional funding for water conservation programs and is not tied to fees charged to customers.

## **STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH**

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Glendale's residents and businesses can find water saving tips and links to all of the utility's rebates at <https://www.glendaleca.gov/government/departments/glendale-water-and-power>. These rebates and programs are advertised in the monthly "GWP from the Source Newsletter". The programs are regularly featured at the GWP Commission meetings, and are advertised in the customers' bills and on social media. The programs are also listed in GWP's press releases and discussed on multiple television interviews and on GTV.

Current programs on the website include:

- Turf Removal Rebates - \$2 per square foot
- Laundry to Landscape Greywater System Rebate - Residential customers who install a Laundry to Landscape Greywater system that does not require a City permit may be eligible for a \$500 rebate.
- Smart Home Energy and Water Saving Upgrade Program - Evaluates the efficiency of customer homes, installs low cost energy and water saving devices, and makes recommendations regarding additional energy and water measures customers can implement. The program inspects a number of energy and water saving measures, including water flow rates at all sinks, showers, toilets and irrigation controller programming. Additionally, it installs a number of measures at no cost to the customer, including shower heads, faucet aerators, toilet displacement devices, toilet flappers, dual flushometer retrofits and sprinkler head replacements.
- WaterInsight Program - Provides customers with Home Water Reports that compare a customer's usage to similar homes, along with leak alerts, a web portal to view detailed water data and access educational tools to help change water usage behaviors.
- Smart Home Rebates - Helps customers save money on water bills by offering the following water rebates which are supplemental to MWD's rebates. Clothes washers, up to \$80 and Premium High Efficiency Toilets, up to \$60.
- Energy & Water Efficiency Marketplace - Offers online shopping for energy and water efficient products at discounted prices.
- In School Energy and Water Conservation Education - This program works on a cooperative basis with the Glendale Unified School District and private schools within Glendale. It seeks to educate sixth grade science students in the areas of energy and water conservation through a "hands on" curriculum that includes in-

home installation of conservation devices. The program was suspended during the pandemic but is scheduled to resume this current 2022-2023 school year.

- Student Art Contest - The annual “Water is Life” Student Art Contest was open to all K-12th grade students in Glendale. Sponsored by GWP and the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), participating students were asked to submit artwork portraying the water-wise “Water is Life” theme, along with a short message about water conservation for a chance to be featured in MWD’s 2023 Calendar and win a \$100 Amazon gift card.
- Glendale Water-Wise Gardening Website - If residents need help planting a CA Friendly landscape, they can visit [MySmartGarden.com/GlendaleCA](https://MySmartGarden.com/GlendaleCA) to help them transform their water guzzling landscape into a water efficient landscape. This Glendale website provides residents with access to local gardens with over 200 examples of CA Native landscapes.

Water Saving Tips and links on the website include:

- [MySmartGarden.com/GlendaleCA](https://MySmartGarden.com/GlendaleCA)
- Plant a Beautiful Water-Wise Garden
- Rain Barrel Information
- How to Program Your Irrigation Controller
- [SaveOurWater.com](https://SaveOurWater.com)
- [Bewaterwise.com](https://Bewaterwise.com)
- No Water Waste Policy
- Water Saving Tips
- Report Water Waste Anonymously

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report. Using approximately \$80,000 of revenue per year, compared to approximately \$60 million in revenue collected from water rates will not materially impact the cost of service analysis.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The requested actions herein are not related to any project and, thus, are not subject to environmental review. The first item is a report highlighting GWP’s successful conservation efforts, and the second item seeks further direction from Council related to additional funding of conservation programs.

## **CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE**

Not Applicable.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

Alternative 1: Note and file this report on the success of GWP’s Water Conservation Programs.

Alternative 2: Direct staff to use “other revenues” collected by the Water Fund to provide additional funding for water conservation programs.

Alternative 3: Consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

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**Approved by:**

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

#### **EXHIBITS / ATTACHMENTS**

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None.