

Water Supply & Conservation



TO: Brian Denmark, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Adrienne L. Widmer, P.E., RES/TS Administrator *aw*

THRU: Jorge A. Garcia, PhD, P.E., Director of Utilities *JAG*

DATE: November 18, 2013

SUBJECT: City of Las Cruces Water Supply and Conservation

Utilities has prepared two Power Point Presentations for the November 25, 2013 Water Supply Work Session for the City Council. Below is a brief description for your use.

Water Supply: This presentation provides an overview of the City's Water Rights, local and regional water supply and use. This presentation will show that the City currently has over 1,000 acres of surface water rights and 45,111 AF of groundwater rights. We will present to them definitions commonly used with groundwater rights and that the 40 Year Water Development Plan only provides for some protection for our water rights and that they could be challenged in the adjudication process. We also provide to them where the supply is coming from and how the City is using a minuscule amount of the total underground water available. We explain that we have a Water Level Monitoring Program to keep track of our water supply and aquifer health. Reclaimed water is introduced showing the City does reclaim a portion of its water which results in less required pumping of ground water and that any reclaimed water use outside of City facilities requires separate permitting through NMED. In showing the Council how much water is being used by the City, we provide information from the Office of the State Engineer which clearly shows how much groundwater is being used regionally and that the City is using less than 6.5% of all water pumped from the region.

Water Conservation: This presentation provides an overview of the City of Las Cruces Water Conservation Program and general ideas for changes to the Water Conservation Ordinance as discussed at the Las Cruces Utilities Board May 9, 2013 and June 13, 2013 Work Sessions. The Water Conservation Program has three objectives: to encourage wise water use throughout the City; to lead by example within City government; and to maintain compliance with the City's water right permits. We will describe the educational activities and audits that the program conducts. We provide examples of conservation projects in City government, including the Munson Center Project to reduce water usage and costs. We describe the downward water usage trends and the 2030 target of 180 gallons per capita per day. The specifics of the current water use restrictions and prohibitions are presented. We draw attention to the water wasting problem and the need for more active enforcement. And we propose that the Water Conservation Ordinance be streamlined and modified to create an administrative process that charges water wasting fees to violators of the ordinance.

We look forward to the Work Session and if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to let us know.

