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CITY of NAPA

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
1600 First Street
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 660
Napa, California 94559-0660
(707) 257-9520
FAX (707) 257-9522

September 16, 2003

The Honorable Scott Snowden
Presiding Judge
Napa County Superior Court
825 Brown Street
Napa, CA 94559

Subject: Response to 2002-2003 Grand Jury Water Report Finding 2 and Recommendation 2 – Water Conservation

Dear Judge Snowden and Members of the Grand Jury:

This letter is in response to the 2002-2003 Grand Jury Water Report Finding 2 and Recommendation 2 regarding water conservation efforts. The City would like to commend the Grand Jury Committee in their willingness to take on the monumental task of reviewing the many complex and diverse water issues in Napa County. In particular, the City is pleased to see an emphasis placed on water conservation efforts. The City places a high priority on water conservation and continues to implement innovative programs to increase conservation efforts by our customers.

The 2002-2003 Grand Jury Water Report suggested the following:

Finding 2
Public awareness of water issues needs to be heightened. Flowing water is constrained by inventory, funding, pipe capacity, entitlement programs and citizen consent.

Recommendation 2
Water consumption should be reduced.

- *Landscaping practices should accommodate environmental conditions.*
- *Reclaimed water should be used for irrigation and landscaping whenever possible.*
- *Potable water, including well water, should be designated for indoor, as well as outdoor, use.*
- *Water saving ideas should be promoted and publicly rewarded throughout the County.*
- *Water use in excess of a base line amount should not be subsidized.*

Response

The City of Napa is in agreement with Finding 2 and Recommendation 2 and has in place some very aggressive conservation programs benefiting the water system and its customers. Many of the programs are summarized in the City's

most recent *Urban Water Management Plan* (2000). The City is currently enhancing and expanding these programs because of its 2002 signing of the *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California* (MOU). The MOU specifies 14 Best Management Practices (BMP's) that guide the City's efforts (see attached list of BMP's). The City has also initiated more cooperative activities with other Napa County water suppliers, particularly in the area of water-wise landscaping.

Like most water agencies in California, the City of Napa instituted successful water demand reduction measures during the major drought of 1987-1992. Unlike many agencies, the City made permanent several of these measures, including school education, public information, and the Toilet Retrofit Program. Since 1991, the Toilet Retrofit Program has replaced more than 16,000 high-water-use toilets with new 1.6 gallon-per-flush models, in addition to installing thousands of low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators. Developers pay for installation of these more efficient plumbing fixtures in order to offset the water demand created by their new projects (hotels, subdivisions, pools, etc.). Fixture replacement is free to the participating water customer and they benefit from future water bill savings due to reduced indoor usage. Another 5,000 high-water-use toilets have been replaced through the Napa Sanitation District's Toilet Rebate Program, which is partly administered by the City.

Although memories of the drought have faded, these long-term water conservation programs have succeeded in reducing the City's per capita water consumption. For the period 1997-2002, annual demand on the water system averaged 175 gallons per capita per day (gpcd), peaking at 181 gpcd. During the mid-1980's (pre-drought, pre-conservation), annual demand averaged 184 gpcd, peaking at 193 gpcd. This nearly 5% reduction in per capita use means savings of about 800 acre-feet of water per year and puts the City more than halfway to its 8% conservation goal for the year 2010, part of the City's *Water System Optimization and Master Plan* adopted in 1997.

Meeting or exceeding the 8% water conservation goal will require additional incentives and educational programs directed at the City's residential, commercial, and irrigation users. With more than half of all water used outdoors for irrigation, the City has recently increased its efforts to promote water-wise landscaping practices. New commercial development with more than 1,000 square feet of landscape area must continue to meet the City's Water Efficient Landscape Guidelines. To help residential customers reduce irrigation, the City of Napa and the Town of Yountville have co-sponsored eight public workshops since 2000 covering topics such as soil preparation, sprinkler scheduling, drip irrigation, and low-water-use plants. The 2002 summer sessions generated articles in the *Napa Valley Register*, thereby increasing local awareness. The 2003 spring workshop series attracted more than 300 people from all over Napa County. More workshops are planned for both landscape professionals and the general public.

The City has embarked on two other innovative efforts to reduce outdoor water use. One is the development of a CD-ROM entitled *Water-Wise Gardening in*

the Napa Valley that will include an extensive landscape photo and plant information database, along with easy-to-use gardening and irrigation advice appropriate for our local climate. The City of Napa is paying for the software development, but other Napa County water suppliers have agreed to purchase copies of the final CD for distribution to their customers. The CD should be available in late 2003 for distribution at workshops and community events. The other innovative program is Central Control Irrigation for City of Napa park sites and Napa Valley Unified School District fields. This automated system uses local weather data to continuously adjust irrigation frequency and duration, providing potential 25-45% water savings compared to current practices. Savings of up to 200 acre-feet per year are possible when the project is fully implemented by 2005.

Recycled (or reclaimed) water provides another option for irrigating some of the larger landscapes in the City's service area. A 1998 agreement between the City of Napa and the Napa Sanitation District allows for the eventual supply of recycled water to large users such as Napa Valley College and Napa State Hospital, thereby reducing irrigation demand on the City's potable drinking water supply. Recycled water pipelines have already been installed to Kennedy Park and recycled water irrigation was initiated at Napa Municipal Golf Course on June 24, 2003.

Addressing the top two indoor uses of water, the City has enhanced the Toilet Retrofit Program in recent years and is planning to introduce high-efficiency washing machine rebates. In late 2001, the Toilet Retrofit Program expanded beyond residential customers and began allowing commercial and institutional buildings to receive free toilet replacements. Dozens of local hotels, restaurants, offices, and other businesses have taken advantage of this water-saving offer. In addition, during 2001, the City began allowing free replacement of poorly designed 1.6 gallon-per-flush toilets from the early 1990's. As a strong incentive for purchasers of new clothes washers, the City will provide significant rebates for high-efficiency models that use 40% less water than conventional models. Program details will be publicized in the fall of 2003.

The City of Napa routinely publicizes its water conservation offerings through water bill messages and inserts, press releases, *The Reservoir* newsletter, and appearances at public events such as Napa Downtown Farmers Market, Napa-Solano Home & Garden Show, and Napa Town & Country Fair. From the Water Division's office and at these annual public events, the City has provided thousands of customers with free conservation tools such as rain/sprinkler gauges, lawn watering guides, "water miser" garden hose nozzles, toilet leak detector dye, low-flow showerheads, and shower timers.

Instilling a water conservation ethic in local students is another ongoing mission. The City regularly offers 3rd-6th grade teachers a classroom presentation, Water Week teaching kit, and field trip to the Jameson Canyon Water Treatment Plant. More than 500 Napa students have toured the plant since the fall of 2001. Hundreds more have enjoyed the classroom presentation that includes a fun brainstorming session on household water-saving ideas. The City's Water

Division was one of the founding members of the Environmental Education Coalition of Napa County (EECNC), a group of local agencies and non-profit organizations offering field trips, speakers, and teaching materials. The City is also a regular participant in Earth Day at Connolly Ranch, which has hundreds of school-age children visiting the water conservation display each April.

The City of Napa does not subsidize water use in excess of a baseline amount. Customers are billed strictly based on volume of use. Current rates are $3.23 per 1,000 gallons inside the City limits and $4.32 per 1,000 gallons outside. There are no fixed service charges. The City of Napa rate structure is considered conservation pricing under BMP #11 in the MOU.

The City dedicates a Water Resources Specialist and Water Conservation Representative to coordinate all of the water conservation programs. These staff members are taking steps to address all water conservation BMPs, expand the City's water conservation program, and cooperate more fully with neighboring agencies. The City plans to spearhead the formation of a countywide water conservation committee with representatives from all major cities and the County.

The City respectfully submits these responses for your review and acceptance. Please contact the City's Water Resources Specialist, Pat Costello, at 257-9309 or myself at 257-9316 if you have any questions or require additional information.

Very truly yours,

Michael N. O'Bryon
Public Works Director

Attachment

cc: Mayor and Council
City Manager
City Clerk
Water General Manager

Water Conservation
Best Management Practices (BMPs)

as contained in the

Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California

as amended December 11, 2002

BMP #	BMP DESCRIPTION
1	Water Survey Programs for Single-Family Residential and Multi-Family Residential Customers
2	Residential Plumbing Retrofit
3	System Water Audits, Leak Detection and Repair
4	Metering With Commodity Rates for All New Connections and Retrofit of Existing Connections
5	Large Landscape Conservation Programs and Incentives
6	High-Efficiency Washing Machine Rebate Programs
7	Public Information Programs
8	School Education Programs
9	Conservation Programs for Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional (CII) Accounts
10	Wholesale Agency Assistance Programs*
11	Conservation Pricing
12	Conservation Coordinator
13	Water Waste Prohibition
14	Residential Ultra Low-Flush Toilet Replacement Programs

* BMP #10 Not Applicable to the City of Napa