

STAFF REPORT
City of Lancaster, California

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07/08/08
MVB

Date: July 8, 2008

To: Mayor Parris and City Council Members

From: James R. Williams, Director of Public Works

Subject: **Consideration of Adoption of an Ordinance Prohibiting Water Wasting**

Recommendation:

Adopt **Urgency Ordinance No. 905**, an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Lancaster, California, adding Chapter 8.48 to Title 8 of the Lancaster Municipal Code which prohibits the wasting of water.

Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact is yet to be determined. Costs associated with the ordinance are increased staff time to investigate municipal code violations, provide educational information to Lancaster citizens and businesses, and process fines when the needed cooperation is not received. Revenues generated through the collection of those fines may partially offset the expenses associated with enforcing this ordinance.

Background:

The City of Lancaster recognizes the immediate and lasting need to eliminate the excessive use of water and water wasting within its borders. The City is responding to the Governor of California's Executive Order issued on June 4, 2008, proclaiming a statewide drought. This Executive Order follows two straight years of below-average rainfall, very low snowmelt runoff and the largest court-ordered water transfer restrictions in state history. Numerous California communities are being forced to mandate water conservation or rationing.

Before the City is required to enforce mandatory water conservation, staff recommends adoption of this ordinance which prohibits any water customer from wasting water both indoors and outdoors. At the first sighting of a violation, enforcement officers will issue a courtesy warning and an explanation to the customer regarding the nature of activities in violation. A second incident will result in the requirement to undergo a water use audit as provided by the water utility. After the audit, the customer may be ordered to make certain property improvements as suggested in the water use audit. A third incident shall be reason to issue an administrative citation and collect the appropriate fine as allowed under the Municipal Code.

NW:kw

Attachment:

Urgency Ordinance No. 905