

# Agenda Report

August 16, 2010

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Municipal Services Committee (August 10, 2010)

**FROM:** Water and Power

**SUBJECT:** Report on Water Quality Public Health Goals

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

- Find that the following proposed actions related to the reporting of the City of Pasadena's 2010 Water Quality Report are exempt from review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b) (3);
- Hold a public hearing on August 16, 2010 for the purpose of accepting and responding to public comments on the City of Pasadena's Water Quality Report Relative to Public Health Goals (PHGs);
- Accept the City of Pasadena's Water Quality Report Relative to Public Health Goals.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The water that Pasadena Water and Power (PWP) delivers to its customers complies with all applicable drinking water standards, or Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), which are enforceable regulatory standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act and must be met by all public drinking water systems. MCLs are set by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), which is the primary State agency responsible for protection of public health and the regulation of drinking water.

The California legislature has established criteria for adopting MCLs in drinking water by creating the concept of a Public Health Goal (PHG). As a result, the preparation of the PHG report is required pursuant to the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 1307, which amended provisions of section 116470 of the Health and Safety Code. This report is intended to provide information to the public in addition to the Annual Water Quality Report mailed to each customer annually.

Section 116470 of the Health and Safety Code requires that public water systems with more than 10,000 service connections prepare a report to inform the public when one or more PHGs are exceeded. During the period covered by the report, 2007-2009, there were instances when contaminants were detected in PWP's drinking water at levels above the PHG, or if no PHG, above the Maximum Contaminant Level Goals (MCLG). These contaminants include trichloroethylene, tetrachloroethylene, total coliform bacteria, nitrate, perchlorate, fluoride, lead, copper, arsenic, uranium, and gross alpha.

A PHG and a MCLG are health risk assessment measurements, not proposed drinking water standards. They are the levels of a contaminant in drinking water, which are considered not to pose a significant risk to health if consumed for a lifetime. PHGs are based solely on public health considerations. The risk-management factors that are considered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) or the California Department of Public Health in setting drinking water standards are not considered in setting the PHGs or MCLGs. These factors include analytical detection capability, treatment technology available, benefits and costs. The PHGs are not enforceable and are not required to be met by any public water system.

PWP's PHG report provides the following information for all contaminants detected in the water supply in years 2007, 2008 and 2009 at levels exceeding the applicable PHGs or MCLGs:

1. Numerical public health risk associated with the MCL and the PHG or MCLG
2. Category of risk to public health associated with each contaminant
3. Best Available Treatment Technology that could be used to reduce the contaminant level.
4. Estimate of the cost to install that treatment if it is appropriate and feasible

The PHG Report does not propose any further actions. The drinking water quality of the City of Pasadena (City) meets all State of California, Department of Public Health and USEPA drinking water standards set to protect public health. To further reduce the levels of the contaminants identified in the report would require costly treatment processes and the effectiveness of these treatment processes to provide any significant reductions in contaminant levels is uncertain. The health protection benefits of these hypothetical reductions are not clear and not quantifiable.

The Health and Safety Code requires that a public hearing be held for the purpose of accepting and responding to public comments. The law mandates that PHG reports be completed by July 1, 2010, and every three years thereafter, and that the public hearing should be held within a reasonable time after completion of the report. PWP staff completed the PHG Report on June 17, 2010.

Copies of the report have been made available for public inspection at PWP's administrative offices located at 150 South Los Robles Avenue, Suite 200 and on the web at <http://www.cityofpasadena.net/waterandpower/yourwater/default.asp>. In addition, a notice of public hearing has been published in the Pasadena Star News on August 2, 2010.

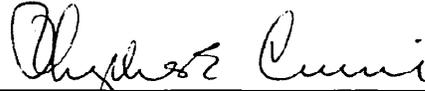
**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The City's 2010 Report on Water Quality Public Health Goals is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the "Environmental Guidelines and Procedures for the City of Pasadena" as a Class 8 exemption (Section 15308 of the State CEQA Guidelines), an action by a regulatory agency for the protection of the environment.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Acceptance of the Report will have no fiscal impact on the City.

Respectfully submitted,

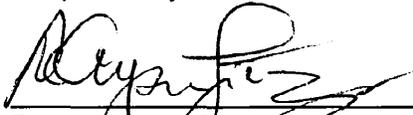


PHYLLIS E. CURRIE

General Manager

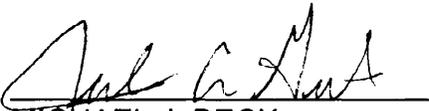
Water and Power Department

Prepared by:



Diana Ayson-Fitzsimmons  
Principal Chemist

Approved by:



MICHAEL J. BECK  
City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment A – Public Health Goals Report