



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** January 27, 2009

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Water Resources, Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:** Increase In Funding For Two Water Conservation Grants And Graywater Permit Fee Offset

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council:

- A. Accept an increase in grant funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in the amount of \$20,000 for the Sustainable Landscaping Television Series;
- B. Accept an increase in grant funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in the amount of \$20,000 for the Rain Sensor Program;
- C. Increase the estimated Fiscal Year 2009 Water Fund Revenues by \$40,000 and appropriate the same to the 2008-2009 Water Fund Operating Budget; and
- D. Authorize use of the Water Fund to offset a portion of the fee for issuance of graywater system permits.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City has accepted and implemented two grants from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). One grant assisted in funding the Sustainable Landscape Television Series ("Garden Wise Guys") and updated the regional water conservation website (sbwater.org). The other was used for the Rain Sensor Program, which provides rebates for the installation of sensors to shut off automatic irrigation controllers during and immediately after rain storms.

Public Works Staff applied for and received increased grant funding to enhance these two projects. The Sustainable Landscape Television Series was originally granted \$23,500. Approval of an additional \$20,000 brings the total grant to \$43,500. Increased grant funding will offset costs for landscape design, plant signs and brochures for the Firescape Garden, as well as advertising costs to promote the television show.

The original Rain Sensor Program grant was for \$19,125. An additional \$20,000 brings the total grant to \$39,125. The additional funds will be used to expand the scope of the Rain Sensor Program into an enhanced pilot program called the Smart Landscape Rebates Program, which will provide rebates for water efficient landscapes. Public Works Staff is planning to launch this pilot program in the spring of 2009.

Public Works Staff is working in conjunction with Building and Safety Division Staff to streamline the graywater permit process. Reducing the required permit fee for a single family graywater system is one of the first steps to making it easier for residents to construct legally permitted graywater systems. The Public Works Department is proposing to use the Water Fund to partially offset the \$360 graywater system permit fee so the applicant will pay only \$50 for a simple single family graywater system.

**BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

City Water Conservation staff will provide in-kind staff support for these two grants. Goleta Water District and the Santa Barbara County Water Agency will also provide staff assistance.

There are sufficient funds in the 2009 Water Fund budget to cover the costs of off-setting graywater permit fees. Staff estimates that this cost will not exceed \$3,500.

**PREPARED BY:** Rebecca Bjork, Water Resources Manager/AJ/spm

**SUBMITTED BY:** Christine F. Andersen, Public Works Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office