



King County

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King County DNRP
Wastewater Treatment Division

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CLERK
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

The Honorable Dow Constantine
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

June 2, 2009

Dear Councilmember Constantine:

I am pleased to provide the King County Council with a report and motion regarding the reclaimed water program of the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks. Reclaimed water is wastewater that is treated to such a high level that it can be used safely and effectively for non-drinking purposes.

The motion and report are submitted per the 2009 Budget (Ordinance 16312), which included the following proviso:

Of this appropriation, \$100,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the wastewater treatment division of the department of natural resources and parks transmits to the Council for review and approval by motion a report on: 1) the status of the work program related to reclaimed water and progress on the reclaimed water backbone project; 2) a status report on the division's efforts to market and establish contracts for the sale of reclaimed water produced at King County wastewater treatment facilities; and 3) analysis and development of preliminary rate structures and policies for the sale of reclaimed water from King County facilities. The report should be submitted by June 1, 2009.

The enclosed report addresses each of the elements of this proviso. It describes WTD's current activities relating to reclaimed water, including work to market and establish contracts for use of reclaimed water from existing facilities, and reports on the status of the Brightwater reclaimed water backbone project. It discusses current rate structures and approaches for the sale of reclaimed water from existing facilities and outlines key issues for systematic development of long-term rate policies through the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan.

As the report describes, WTD's reclaimed water program has been in existence for over 10 years. Section 28.86.100 of the King County Code provides policies that guide the county's current reclaimed water program, developed as part of the Regional Wastewater Services Plan. Among other things, these policies call for the county to pursue the use of reclaimed water, to

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work with local water purveyors, and to investigate uses for reclaimed water to enhance fish runs or defer the need to develop potable water supply projects. The current pricing approach described in the enclosed report is consistent with those policies and grew out of findings of a stakeholder process in 2000.

The report describes the breadth of the current reclaimed water program. However, the report also makes clear that there are key areas of policy development that are needed, particularly in order to develop a systematic approach to pricing. The report identifies a partial list of questions and issues that will need to be addressed and resolved in the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan, currently under way, and which may lead to policy modifications. WTD looks forward to discussions with the council, the Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC), the Metropolitan Wastewater Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee, water purveyors, and other parties on these issues during the council's review of this proviso response. In addition, there will be many opportunities for input on these questions during the comprehensive planning process, which will eventually be before the council and RWQC in the form of an amendment to the Regional Wastewater Services Plan.

I support WTD's efforts to pursue reclaimed water from existing facilities, and to systematically develop long-term policies on financing and policy direction through the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan. I appreciate the council's interest in this important matter and the opportunity to provide you with the report that documents the status of the division's efforts on this topic. I recommend that the council pass the motion approving this report.

If you have any questions or concerns about the report, please feel free to contact Christie True, Director of the Wastewater Treatment Division in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-684-1236, or at christie.true@kingcounty.gov.

Sincerely,



Kurt Triplett
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Tom Bristow, Interim Chief of Staff
Saroja Reddy, Policy Staff Director
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council
Frank Abe, Communications Director

Bob Cowan, Director, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Beth Goldberg, Deputy Director, OMB

Theresa Jennings, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Christie True, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP

...Title

A MOTION approving a report by the wastewater treatment division in the department of natural resources and parks on the status of the work program related to reclaimed water, the division's efforts to market and establish contracts for the sale of reclaimed water, and to develop preliminary rate structures and policies for the sale of reclaimed water from King County facilities, as required in the 2009 Budget Ordinance 16312, Proviso P1.

...Body

WHEREAS, King County's existing reclaimed water program is guided by policies in the Regional Wastewater Services Plan, contained in Section 28.86.100 of the King County Code, and

WHEREAS, these policies specify that King County shall actively pursue the use of reclaimed water while protecting the public health and the environment, and

WHEREAS, King County seeks to maximize environmental and economic benefits from reclaimed water while minimizing the cost of the program to ratepayers, and

WHEREAS, King County is in the process of constructing the Brightwater Treatment Plant, which has the potential to produce up to 21 million gallons per day of Class A reclaimed water, and

WHEREAS, current policies contained in the Regional Wastewater Services Plan may not provide sufficient direction for future reclaimed water rates and financing policies, and

WHEREAS, King County is in the process of developing the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan, that will lead to the development of financial and other policies relating to the future use of reclaimed water from King County facilities, and

WHEREAS, a proviso in the 2009 adopted budget requires approval by motion of a report addressing the status of the work program related to reclaimed water, the division's efforts to market and establish contracts for the sale of reclaimed water, and the analysis and development of preliminary rate structures and policies for the sale of reclaimed water from King County facilities, and

WHEREAS, in discussions on this motion and attached report, the county is seeking initial input on important policy issues for consideration in the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The report describing the status of the wastewater treatment division's work program related to reclaimed water, the division's efforts to market and establish contracts for the sale of reclaimed water, and the analysis and development of rate structures and policies for the sale of reclaimed water from King County facilities is hereby approved.

Attachment: A. Report on Status of the Reclaimed Water Work Program of the Wastewater Treatment Division, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, June 2009.