

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Dennis J. Campa, Director, Department of Community Initiatives

SUBJECT: Approving the calendar year (CY) 2006 Project Agua Plan and accepting \$120,341 from the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) to administer the Affordability Discount Program (ADP) during CY 2006

DATE: December 1, 2005

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. This ordinance approves the CY 2006 Project Agua Plan and accepts utility assistance credits in the projected amount up to \$88,830 for the period of January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006. This ordinance also authorizes execution of subcontracts with local non-profit agencies for distribution of Agua assistance credits to SAWS ratepayers.
- B. This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of \$120,341 from SAWS to administer the Affordability Discount Program (ADP) for CY 2006, extends the existing Inter-Jurisdictional Agreement through December 31, 2010, establishes a budget, and approves a personnel complement for administration of the program.

Staff recommends approval of these ordinances.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Agua

The City of San Antonio and the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) have developed programs to address the need of SAWS ratepayers requiring assistance with their utility bills and related expenses.

Project Agua is a utility assistance program developed by the City and SAWS. The project was implemented in January 2003 and will be continued on an annual basis under the terms outlined in the yearly Project Agua Plan. The Project Agua trust account is funded by SAWS and through private and corporate donations. The actual amount available each year for assistance credits is dependent on contributions and investment returns from the trust. Funds in the corpus of the trust are not used to provide assistance.

Project Agua credits are available to SAWS residential customers. Priority consideration is given to ratepayers with incomes at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (e.g. \$24,188 for a family of four) who meet at least one of the following criteria: age 60 and older, disabled, require continuous water service for life-sustaining medical equipment in the home, or have

children age three years and younger. Attachment A summarizes the 2005 Federal Poverty Guidelines. The maximum assistance credited to the ratepayer's account is \$115 and applicants may only receive assistance once per year. Ratepayers are required to make a minimum \$5 co-payment to SAWS. Attachment B lists 2005 Agua recipients by Council District.

This year the Department of Community Initiatives will seek to execute no-cost delegate agencies subcontracts for issuance of Project Agua utility credits. This is the first year the Department will enter into such agreements to provide this service to eligible SAWS customers.

Affordability Discount Program

Ordinance No. 92752, passed and approved on October 19, 2000, established the Water Meter Discount Affordability Program and Ordinance No. 93597, passed on March 15, 2001, approved the Inter-Jurisdictional Agreement implementing the program with the City and SAWS as partners. The Water Meter Discount Affordability Program (WMDAP), renamed the Affordability Discount Program (ADP), provides a sliding fee discount (from \$3.15 to \$8.40) on the monthly water meter charge to low-income SAWS ratepayers whose total household income is at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Attachment C outlines SAWS discount levels by household income.

While this program is available to all low-income SAWS ratepayers, emphasis is placed on enrolling senior households. Efforts to enlist additional ADP participants will be made through the City's 76 Senior Nutrition sites, the Elderly Resource and Referral One Stop Centers and through current delegate agencies. Current census data indicates that there are potentially 286,517 SAWS residential ratepayers. Once certified as eligible for the program, ratepayers continue to receive the monthly discount for the remainder of the calendar year in which they applied. City staff processes the re-certification of SAWS ratepayers for the program. Attachment D provides the number of households enrolled in ADP by Council District.

As a complement of the utility assistance programs, Project Agua and ADP are joined by Projects Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) and Winter Assistance Relief Mobilization (WARM) that address the needs of CPS Energy consumers in San Antonio and Bexar County, respectively.

POLICY ANALYSIS

The performance measures for the CY 2006 Project Agua and ADP are as follows:

Project	Assistance Credits	Projected Households Served
Agua	\$88,830	772
ADP	\$1,000,000	10,224
Total	\$1,088,830	10,950

These ordinances continue existing City policy of providing a community safety net to its most vulnerable residents. These ordinances also continue City policy of leveraging the funds of other entities as sources of utility assistance.

COORDINATION

Coordination has occurred with the City Attorney's Office, Department of Public Utilities and San Antonio Water Systems.

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS


Provisions of the City Ethics Ordinance do not apply.


ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: 2005 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Attachment B: 2005 Agua Recipients by Council District

Attachment C: SAWS Current and Increased Discount Levels


Dennis J. Campa, Director
Department of Community Initiatives


Frances A. Gonzalez
Assistant City Manager


Sheryl Sculley
City Manager

**2005 Federal Poverty Guidelines
125% of Poverty**

Family Size	Poverty Guidelines 125%
1	\$11,963.00
2	16,038.00
3	20,113.00
4	24,188.00
5	28,263.00
6	32,338.00
7	36,413.00
8	40,488.00

For households with more than eight members, add \$4,075.00 for each additional family member.

2005 AGUA Recipients
by Council District

Council District	Households Served	Household Members	Senior Households
1	32	113	10
2	79	241	29
3	23	68	8
4	31	110	6
5	41	106	12
6	38	123	10
7	16	50	6
8	8	23	3
9	4	19	0
10	9	37	1
County	6	16	1
Total	287	906	86

Affordability Monthly Discounts**Sliding Scale Discount**

Poverty Scale		Water & Sewer Discount 2005		2006 Discount		Annual Discount	
0-50%		8.00		\$8.40		\$100.80	
51-75%		5.50		5.80		69.60	
76-100%		3.60		3.80		45.60	
101-125%		3.00		3.15		37.80	