



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Public Hearing and Approval of the City of Sunnyvale's 2016 Public Health Goal Report on Water Quality (2013-2015), Direct Staff to file with the California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water, and Find that the Action is Exempt from CEQA

BACKGROUND

The California Health and Safety Code requires all California water retailers serving more than 10,000 service connections to prepare a report every three years to inform consumers of water quality constituents that exceeded the Public Health Goals (PHGs). PHGs are non-enforceable water quality goals established by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and are based solely on public health risk considerations. Maximum Contaminant Level Goals (MCLG), established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), are the federal equivalent to California's PHGs.

Public water systems are also required to hold a public hearing for the purpose of accepting and responding to public comment on the report, which may be done as part of a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

The report is now being presented to Council to satisfy the public hearing requirements and to obtain Council approval before submittal to the California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (DDW).

EXISTING POLICY

Goal EM-4 Adequate Water Quality: Ensure that all water meets state & federal standards for aesthetics, quality and health.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Approval of the 2016 Public Health Goal Report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act as is it an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guideline Section 15378(b)(5)).

DISCUSSION

The PHG Report (Attachment A) covers calendar years 2013-2015. It was prepared by HydroScience Engineers, Inc., a consultant employed by the City. Using an outside consultant helps to maintain objectivity in the analysis and preparation of the report. During the three year period covered by the report, one constituent (coliform bacteria) was detected above the federal MCLG, and one constituent (hexavalent chromium VI) was found a level higher than a California PHG.

Coliform Bacteria

Coliform bacteria, is a non-harmful indicator organism that triggers follow-up testing for the presence of any pathogens. The federal Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for total coliform bacteria is five percent (5%) positive samples of all samples collected each month. The MCLG is zero, while there is no California PHG for coliform bacteria. Each month the City collects at least 140 samples from sites located throughout the distribution system that are analyzed for the presence of coliform bacteria. It is not unusual for a water supply system to have an occasional positive sample for coliform bacteria.

During this reporting period such coliform testing for the City resulted in average monthly results of 0% to 2.8 % of samples testing positive, but in all cases follow up testing revealed negative results for E.coli or other harmful pathogens. Therefore, this detection does not trigger any further notification to public or action to remove the indicator organism from the water supply. Further, the City has implemented a vigilant monitoring and maintenance program that is intended to meet the requirements of the Total Coliform Rule and protect public health. A more detailed description of this testing, monitoring and maintenance program is presented in Attachment A. No further action is proposed or warranted at this time.

Hexavalent Chromium VI

The MCL for chromium VI is 10 parts per billion (ppb) which went into effect on July 14, 2014. The California PHG for chromium VI has been set at 0.02 ppb. Chromium VI can be naturally occurring and found in natural deposits throughout California. However, chromium VI was used in industrial and manufacturing operations, and past incidents have shown that its contaminated byproducts can migrate in groundwater supplies. Chromium VI has been categorized in the health risk category as being carcinogenic through inhalation and ingestions. The cancer risk at the MCL level of 10 ppb is one per 2000, and the risk at the California PHG level of 0.02 ppb is one per million.

The City's results for chromium VI for the six groundwater wells averaged 1.3 ppb. The levels are well below the MCL of 10 ppb. As such, the City will continue to monitor chromium VI levels in compliance with state and federal regulations. There are no plans to install treatment systems at affected wells due to being cost prohibitive with marginal/unknown benefit.

The PHG report also satisfies the requirements of the Health and Safety Code by presenting the following information:

- Public health risk categories and definitions of these categories for the constituents identified in excess of the PHG or MCLG;
- The Best Available Technology to remove or reduce the concentration of the identified constituents, if any;
- Recommended action for reduction of constituents exceeding PHGs and basis for that decision.

The report concluded that the City of Sunnyvale meets all drinking water standards established by the state and federal governments to protect public health. No additional treatment is recommended in an effort to decrease the incidence of total coliform bacteria and hexavalent chromium.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact in the review and consideration of the information included in the attached report, and there are no recommended actions that would require monetary expenditure.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Find that the Action is Exempt from CEQA, Approve the City of Sunnyvale's 2016 Public Health Goal Report on Water Quality (2013-2015) and Direct Staff to file with the California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water.
2. Provide other direction to staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Approve the City of Sunnyvale's 2016 Public Health Goal Report on Water Quality (2013-2015) and Direct Staff to file with the California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water.

Prepared by: Mansour Nasser, Water and Sewer Division Manager
Reviewed by: John Stufflebean, Director, Environmental Services
Reviewed by: Kent Steffens, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENT

1. City of Sunnyvale- 2016 Public Health Goals Report