

- **Board of Directors**
Water Planning and Resources Committee

September 12, 2000 Board Meeting

9-7

Subject

Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between Metropolitan and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) establishing a joint effort to protect groundwater resources with the intent to seek reimbursement, should funds become available.

Description

This letter seeks authorization for the General Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the LARWQCB to fund, subject to possible reimbursement, a task force made up of Metropolitan employees to assist with the identification and assessment of contaminated sites which threaten underlying groundwater resources. The LARWQCB is underfunded and a lack of trained personnel adversely affects the speed of its contamination cleanup efforts.

The task force would consist of a manager and up to four technical staff positions committed to work with LARWQCB team for a two-year period. Metropolitan staff would not be authorized to exercise any enforcement powers.

It is anticipated that Metropolitan would initially fund the task force positions for a maximum of two years at a potential cost of up to \$600,000 per year in staff costs and related expenses. Legislation now planned, would, if enacted into law, permit LARWQCB to reimburse Metropolitan for its contributions toward the program from funds recovered through enforcement actions or other sources available to the LARWQCB.

By statute, the LARWQCB is charged with the responsibility for protecting ground and surface water quality in its jurisdictional area. LARWQCB seeks funding and other assistance to establish a program to identify, assess, and where appropriate, oversee soil cleanups to prevent the further contamination of groundwater basins within the geographic area of its jurisdiction. Metropolitan and many of its member agencies rely on local groundwater basins as part of their overall water management and supply planning efforts. Preservation of the quality of those resources, and where applicable, preventing the potential degradation of other basins, including those undergoing major cleanup activities, maximizes storage opportunities and serves the mutual interests of Metropolitan and its member agencies.

This action furthers the objective of making water quality and water reliability key components of Metropolitan's mission and is consistent with the goals set forth in Initiatives 2000, as presented to the Board (Item 10-4) at its February meeting. Specifically, by working cooperatively with the LARWQCB, Metropolitan will demonstrate its commitment to preserving and improving the quality of the region's groundwater supplies and its recognition of the critical role those supplies will play in Southern California's future.

Policy

Pursuant to Section 5108 of the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code, no expenditure shall be made unless appropriation has been approved by the Board for the purpose intended. The conjunctive-use policy adopted by the Board on January 11, 2000, encourages greater interagency cooperation in developing expanded conjunctive-use opportunities in the District's service area.

Board Options/Fiscal Impacts

Option #1

Authorize the General Manager to enter into a two-year agreement with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board establishing a joint effort to protect groundwater supplies with the intent to seek reimbursement, should funds become available.

Fiscal Impact: Up to \$600,000 per year for two years.

Option #2

No action.

Fiscal Impact: None.

Staff Recommendation

Option #1.


General Manager

8/28/2000
Date

bla#444