Self-Regenerating Water Softener Ordinance

Public Hearing
June 15, 2011
Why are Water Softeners a Problem?

Self regenerating water softeners require salt

18,000 IEUA households, maybe more, have them

They discharge over 3,000 tons of salt each year into the regional water system

Salt is the single most important constraint to recycled and groundwater supplies.

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Economic Impacts of Salt

Potential Effects
- Loss of reliable recycled water
- Reduce availability of groundwater supplies
- Increase dependence on expensive and unreliable imported water
- Need to construct expensive new treatment systems

Potential Community Costs
- $435 million* to desalt recycled water
- Up to $439 million* if recycled water must be replaced with imported water

* Estimates are prior to MWD’s recent rate increases which have almost doubled the cost of imported water
Keeping salt out is less expensive

- Tons of salt kept out of the regional sewer system because of brine line use every year
- $ Per ton of salt that goes down the brine line (keeping salt out before it reaches the regional sewer system)
- $ Per ton of salt removed during sewage treatment process (taking salt out once it is in the water)
- NET $$$ SAVINGS (by keeping salt out of the regional sewer system)
Salinity Management History

1966- Salinity management started with construction of North Non-reclaimable Brine Line

Prior to 1999 most contracting agencies had water softener bans in place

2002- Salinity Management Action Plan adopted

1999 lawsuit invalidated all water softener ordinances in California

2004 Maximum Benefit Plan set TDS permit limits - requires management of salinity for all sources of TDS

2009 AB 1366 allows local agencies to adopt new water softener control ordinances

On February 3 the Regional Technical and Policy Committees unanimously voted to recommend IEUA and contracting agencies adopt **ordinances that prohibit future installations of self-regenerating water softeners**
Recommended Draft Amendment to IEUA Ordinance 87:

- **Future** installation prohibited
- Local ordinances required
- Exchange Tanks OK
- Voluntary rebate program will continue
Community Support

Informational Workshops for City Councils
- City of Fontana: January
- City of Upland: February
- City of Rancho Cucamonga: June

Community Briefings
- Business Groups: Building Industry Association; Water Quality Association; Inland Valleys Association of REALTORS
- Service Groups: Rotary and Kiwanis: 12 briefings
- Chambers of Commerce: Montclair and Fontana

Voluntary Removal and Rebate
- Over 400 residents have voluntarily removed their self-regenerating water softeners.
- This keeps over 70 tons of salt per year from entering the regional sewer system

Draft Ordinance Support
- 23 statements of support from local businesses, state and regional regulators and environmental organization.
- 111 letters of support from residents in the IEUA service area.
Next Steps
Questions and Comments

IEUA Public Hearing:
June 15, 2011, 6:00 PM

IEUA Ordinance Adoption:
July 2011

Contracting agencies public hearing/ordinance adoption:
August 2011 and ongoing