

Comment Letters

From: Gregg Short [mailto:Gregg@wcminc.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 05, 2016 3:01 PM
To: Frevert, Kathy@Waterboards
Cc: Dave Ferguson
Subject: Water - Solana Beach California

Kathy,

Dave Ferguson shared your contact information with me and said you had interest in gathering feedback for an upcoming Water Board meeting. Please allow the following to function as a layperson/customer's view of the situation.

In 2008 we finished an extensive remodel, including the addition of 41 solar panels, artificial turf (>4,000') and drought tolerant, low water usage plantings at 313 San Lucas Drive in Solana Beach. These environmental features cost over \$100,000 but we felt they were the right thing to do and were hoping they would make us less dependent on government provided resources.

A few months ago we were asked to reduce our water usage. We were not given 'credit' for the investments we made in 2008, we were asked to reduce our water usage based on the prior year NOT on average usage per capita with a home/lot the same size. In essence we were punished for the substantial investments we made years ago.

As a business owner I understand fixed costs like pensions, rent, leases and the like; costs that do NOT go down when customers use less of your product, like water, and therefore you generate less revenue. Fixed costs are different than variable costs, costs that fluctuate dependent on how much of a given product, like water, you sell. So I believe what happened is:

1. The Governor established arbitrary water usage reduction numbers NOT based on LOCAL conditions but a generalized reduction plan
2. Santa Fe Irrigation District (SFID) customers did a good job meeting reduction targets
3. SFID revenue fell in direct correlation with the reduction and the higher priced water rates were reduced by more than the lower per unit users
4. This led to a revenue shortfall at SFID
5. SFID decided to make up for this shortfall by raising the revenue per unit by increasing the costs per unit, adding penalties and fee increases
6. SFID customers are asked to pay MORE for LESS based on erroneous 'logic' over a voodoo water shortage (for our area) – had we been left alone or had we been allowed to more readily access reclaimed water we could have been left alone by the Governor's arbitrary order and everyone, including SFID, would have been just fine

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This is how I see it as a water user and customer. I believe we are being wrongly punished for and by misguided policy. I suggest:

1. If any water reductions are required that objective criteria be used to establish targets NOT prior year usage because it doesn't give credit for investments made in years before the 'prior year'. Criteria like per capita, per age (my teenage daughter certainly uses more water than I do....probably more than 4 people even with a concerted effort on our part including a light timer) with considerations for lot size and location.
2. Allow us more and easier to access usage of reclaimed water that we apparently have more of than we can 'use'.
3. Don't punish customers for poor business practices or excessive fixed costs.

Thank you for your time and your service!

Gregg R. Short