

# Internal Monitoring Report

Policy #: EL-2A Treatment of Consumers

Monitoring Frequency: Annually in April

Date: April 24, 2012

I certify that the following information is true.

Signed  \_\_\_\_\_, General Manager

## Policy Language:

With respect to customers and consumers, the General Manager shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, untimely, or undignified, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

Accordingly, the General Manager shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that:

1. Fail to establish with consumers a clear understanding of their rights and what may be expected from the services offered by the Madison Water Utility.
2. Fail to maintain a process for accessible, fair, efficient and unbiased handling of complaints and issues, including a grievance process for those who believe they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their rights under this policy.
3. Fail to inform and educate consumers and customers about water and water utility services, events, research, or developments (like construction).

## General Manager's interpretation and its justification:

This Executive Limitations policy requires that beneficial and respectful treatment of consumers never be sacrificed, diminished, or neglected in order to achieve the Board-specified outcomes for the residents of Madison. This policy implicitly recognizes that Madison Water Utility has a natural monopoly on the provision of water services within the service area. Because customers cannot choose to purchase water from another provider, the normal market-based economic incentive to retain customers through the provision of superior customer service does not apply. Treating consumers well, therefore, transcends economics and becomes a moral obligation for MWU. The Board has enumerated in this policy three specific areas: consumer rights, complaint handling, and public understanding.

### **Data directly addressing the GM'S interpretation:**

1. *Establishment with consumers a clear understanding of their rights and what may be expected from the services offered by the Madison Water Utility*

A Madison Water Utility customer bill of rights has been established and is featured prominently on our website. We will also include this as a part of the package provided to all customers during Project H2O installations.

#### I report compliance.

2. *Maintenance of a process for accessible, fair, efficient and unbiased handling of complaints and issues, including a grievance process for those who believe they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their rights under this policy*

Madison Water Utility maintains a number of options for consumers to contact us, including:

- o Via telephone, either through our general number 266-4651 or to a specific department or individual
- o Via e-mail at [water@cityofmadison.com](mailto:water@cityofmadison.com)
- o Via our website [Ask Us, Tell Us](#) form
- o In person at our Administrative Offices at 119 East Olin Avenue

The complaint or issue is either handled by the recipient or routed to the appropriate staff person. If not satisfied, the customer may speak to a supervisor up to and including the General Manager. The customer may also file a complaint with the Public Service Commission, which then works with us to resolve the issue.

In 2011, there were zero complaints filed with the PSC. One complaint was filed erroneously under MWU; it was redirected to our wholesale customer Waunona Sanitary District No. 2 in the Town of Blooming Grove.

#### I report compliance.

3. *Informing and educating consumers and customers about water and water utility services, events, research, or developments (like construction)*

In May 2011 we held an Open House to coincide with National Drinking Water Week. We took this opportunity to educate and inform the public on all aspects of the services provided by Madison Water Utility. In lieu of an open house event in 2012, we are producing a documentary on the history of MWU to mark our 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The MWU website [www.madisonwater.org](http://www.madisonwater.org) contains a wealth of consumer information, including a popular application to determine which well(s) serve a given property.

In addition to required water quality data, the annual consumer confidence report, or Annual Water Quality Report, consists of 8 pages of utility news and information.

Our Public Participation Process for facility projects engages the community and provides opportunities for involvement and collaboration. In 2011/12 the East Side Water Supply Planning project was our largest public participation effort to date, and the individual projects spawned by ESWS continue to have an active public participation component.

I report compliance.