



Legislation Text

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Fiscal Note

Approximately \$25,000 is available in the 2008 Water Utility Operating Budget for expenses related to the Conservation and Sustainability Plan. Future year expenses under the Plan will be considered in Water Utility Operating Budgets and rate structure requests with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

Title

Accepting the Conservation and Sustainability Plan of the Madison Water Utility and its recommendations.

Body

WHEREAS: Madison is fortunate to have abundant supplies of groundwater that if protected and used in a sustainable manner will last long into the future--with proper management, planning and conservation now.

However, if the utility is to meet expanding customer demand every year as the city grows, it has to continually increase its pumping and delivery capacity, and it may eventually have to find additional sources of water if its primary source is overwhelmed. Each increase in capacity and supply costs the utility money to develop and operate, and it is actually cheaper for both the utility and its customers to invest in water efficiency rather than increased supply. Additional benefits of water conservation include improved water quality; a reduced burden on surface water quality, as less wastewater is generated; reduced greenhouse gas emissions due to reduced energy spent on water pumping; and increased spring, stream, and river flows, as less of the groundwater that feeds them is withdrawn.

With these factors in mind, a task force was begun a year ago to address the issue of sustaining the groundwater that supplies Madison's wells. This task force has studied the issues involved and developed a plan and list of recommendations to insure that Madison can maintain its current rate of water pumping, even with population growth, by reducing per capita usage 20% by the year 2020.

The foundation for being able to maintain the current annual pumping rates, which is the overall goal, is reducing per capita water consumption. In the City of Madison, the residential average daily use per capita (indoor and outdoor) has leveled at about 73 gallons per day for about 10 years. By 2020, the City of Madison is expected to have over 245,000 residents, assuming a growth rate of 1.1%. Gradually reducing per capita residential water use 20% by 2020 would keep total residential water usage approximately equal to, or perhaps slightly less, than current rates. The daily average use would need to be about 58 gallons per person.

The Water Utility Board approved the plan on July 22, 2008 as well as the plan's recommendations in the attached chart.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Common Council does hereby adopt the "Madison Water Utility Conservation and Sustainability Plan."