



STAFF REPORT
11/13/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Cástulo R. Estrada, Utilities Director

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 2024-60 A Resolution of the City Council of The City of Coachella Authorizing the City of Coachella to Enter into an Agreement with the State of California Department of Water Resources to Receive Funds for the Support of a Stannous Chloride Pilot Project and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Agreement on Behalf of the City of Coachella

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize Resolution No. 2024-60 A Resolution of the City Council of The City of Coachella Authorizing the City of Coachella to Enter into an Agreement with the State of California Department of Water Resources to Receive Funds for the Support of a Stannous Chloride Pilot Project and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Agreement on Behalf of the City of Coachella

BACKGROUND:

The City of Coachella, is a general-law City that provides water service through the Coachella Water Authority (CWA), a joint powers authority formed as a component of the City of Coachella and the Housing Authority of the City of Coachella, and manages municipal wastewater in its service area through its subsidiary Coachella Sanitary District. The City was incorporated in 1946 and encompasses approximately 32 square miles and has a sphere of influence that encompasses 53 square miles in the eastern Coachella Valley approximately 40 miles south of Palm Springs, California.

Coachella Water Authority has one principal source of water supply, local groundwater pumped from CWA owned and operated wells. There are currently six (6) wells within the City's distribution system; of which, all six (6) wells are currently operational. The total pumping capacity of active wells is approximately 11,400 gallons per minute (gpm) or 16.5 million gallons per day (MGD). CWA has three (3) storage reservoirs within the City, with a total reservoir storage capacity of approximately 10.5 MG. In addition, CWA operates two booster pumping stations. CWA's distribution system network consists of approximately 120 miles of pipeline, which range from 4-inches to 36-inches in diameter. The current system serves approximately 9,000 residential and commercial customers.

Chromium is naturally occurring constituent in the Coachella Valley groundwater. In 2014, California's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) established a hexavalent chromium (Cr6) maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 ug/L. DDW retracted the Cr6 MCL in September 2017 because it was determined the Water Board "failed to demonstrate Cr6 compliance as economically feasible." In March 2022, DDW proposed a draft MCL of 10 ug/L for Cr6.

CWA currently has 6 active groundwater wells, all of which have Cr6 concentrations above the proposed MCL. In 2016 the City completed the Coachella Water Authority Hexavalent Chromium Treatment Facilities Project Basis of Design Report. In 2022 the City through work performed via the Coachella Valley Water District analyzed the following: 1) Cr6 reduction using SnCl2 (0.5 mg/L dose as Sn) in a chlorinated system (0.5 mg/L as free Cl2).

In April of 2023, the City wrote a letter to Assemblymember Garcia and Senator Padilla to request a \$500,000 appropriation through the 2023-2024 State Budget to help the city finance a pilot demonstration project on the efficacy of stannous chloride to lower levels of hexavalent chromium 6 (Chromium - 6) in the city's drinking water. With the State Water Resources Control Board ("Water Board") expected to issue a new chromium-6 drinking water standard later this year, a pilot study demonstrating the efficacy of stannous chloride is the city's only viable path at being able to afford the cost of complying with the forthcoming chromium-6 standard.

On October of 2023, the City of Coachella received a direct-action grant from the legislature for the \$500,000 for the Support of a Stannous Chloride Pilot Project. On January of 2024, the funding for AB 102 CS 19.56 earmark was frozen due to state's budget shortfall, any work on the funding agreement for the earmark and work associated with it was put on hold with funding paused pending budget discussions. CWA received notification on February of 2024 from the Division of Fiscal Services that the earmark funding for the AB 102 Budget Act CS 19.56, which was frozen due to the State's budget shortfall, was reinstated and work would further proceed to continue.

The City of Coachella is currently working with the California Department of Water Resources Division of Regional Assistance, Financial Assistance Branch on finalizing the Funding Agreement to receive the funds. To finalize the Funding Agreement an Authorizing Resolution is required.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None