

Consideration and Action Regarding Water & Wastewater Operator Licensing Incentive Pay

At the May 20, 2024, Columbus Utilities Commission meeting, the Commission approved the standardization of Water and Wastewater Utility licensing, including a recommendation that employees receive **\$0.50 per hour for each applicable Water or Wastewater license/certification obtained**, up to the maximum number of approved licenses.

The intent of this compensation structure was to provide an incentive for Water and Wastewater Operators to obtain and maintain additional professional licenses and certifications that benefit Columbus Utilities and increase the employees' qualifications and capabilities.

I am recommending that the **Commission clarify and revise the implementation of the previously approved licensing compensation as follows:**

- Employees shall receive \$0.50 for each approved Water or Wastewater license/ certification successfully obtained and maintained.
- The incentive shall continue to be available for approved Water and Wastewater license/certification subclasses, up to the maximum of 11 licenses/certifications (\$5.50).
- The licensing compensation shall be classified as "Incentive Pay" and shall not be incorporated into the employee's base hourly wage or base salary.
- The Incentive Pay shall be identified and displayed separately on the employee's paycheck/payroll records from the employee's regular base rate.
- Licensing incentive pay shall apply only to hours worked. Incentive pay shall NOT be paid on non-worked paid leave or other compensated time, including but not limited to vacation, sick leave, personal time, compensatory time, stand-by, bereavement leave, holidays, or other paid leave.
- The Incentive Pay shall be paid based upon the employee's qualifying licenses/certifications and shall be subject to applicable payroll, tax, and other statutory requirements.
- This action does not change the previously approved \$0.50 per license/certification per hour incentive amount; it clarifies that the compensation is an incentive payment separate from the employee's base wage.

Requested Commission Action:

The Commission is requested to consider and take action on the Director's recommendation to revise the implementation of the Water and Wastewater licensing compensation approved May 20, 2024, so that the \$0.50 per qualifying license/certification per hour is paid and recorded as separate "Incentive Pay" rather than being incorporated into the employee's base hourly wage.