

## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**

**DATE:** May 6, 2025

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Melinda Moritz, Public Works Director

**THROUGH:** Crystal Caldera, Ph.D., City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Action to Consider Approval of an Appeal from a Leon Valley Water Customer to Reduce the Amount of the February/March 2025 Water and Sewer Bill at 5309 Cilantro Place

**SPONSOR(S):** None

### **PURPOSE & BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this item is to consider an appeal by a Leon Valley water customer to reduce the amount of a water surcharge and/or allow a payment plan for the remaining water bill for the Feb/March 2025 billing cycle.

In August of 2024, the City Council enacted a drought management water surcharge for Stage III drought management which states:

“(vi) A drought surcharge is assessed on all accounts for water used or assumed to be used for landscape irrigation. The surcharge is to remain in effect for a minimum of one complete billing month and will remain in effect if Stage III is still in effect at the beginning of the next billing month.”

The surcharge is \$10.37 per 1,000 gallons for water usage of over 20,000 gallons.

The drought surcharge policy states in part:

“8. Appeals. The responsible party may appeal the decision to apply a drought surcharge to the account. All appeals must be requested in writing by the customer within ten days of receipt of notice of the drought surcharge being applied to the account.

Appeals received will be routed to the Public Works Director for review and recommendation. Once a recommendation has been made, the appeal will be forwarded to the City Council for a final decision.”

The customer states that she had her children at home for spring break and while playing outside, they turned on the backyard water spigot. They forgot to turn the water off after they were finished playing and the water was allowed to run for a long period of time, which flooded both her neighbor's and her backyards. She is requesting the surcharge be waived and/or possibly get assistance on paying the bill or approving payment arrangements to pay off the balance.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The customer averages 8,400 gallons per month, with an average monthly bill of \$105.00. The Feb/Mar 2025 consumption was 146,000 gallons resulting in a total bill of \$2,880.13, which included a surcharge of \$1,306.62.

### **Recommendation**

The Public Works Director recommends the surcharge or a portion of the surcharge be waived for the Feb/March 2025 billing cycle and that they be allowed to pay off the remaining balance in a 12-month payment plan.

Total bill	\$2,880.13
Surcharge	<u>\$1,306.62</u>
Remaining charge	\$1,573.51
12-month plan	\$ 131.13

They would be required to pay the normal monthly bill on time, in addition to the restitution of \$131 per month, which would result in estimated monthly payments of \$236.00.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SAUNDRA PASSAILAIGUE, TRMC**  
City Secretary