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DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS

WATER DIVISION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

June 8, 1988

1391-35TH AVENUE
SACRAMENTO, CA
95822-2911

916-449-5271

Joint Budget and Finance/
Transportation and Community Development Committees
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: WATER HYDRANT POLICY

SUMMARY

As a fire suppression agency and water purveyor, the City of Sacramento, has primary responsibility for preventing the misuse of water from its fire hydrants. Unauthorized use of hydrants can result in damage to the devices as well as the theft of treated water. It is recommended that the City Council adopt, by resolution, a fire hydrant policy which establishes the requirements for fire hydrant use and protection.

BACKGROUND

Unauthorized use of the City's fire hydrants can result in not only the theft of a valuable City resource but also, if the hydrant is not operated properly, damage to the device. Fire hydrants that are inoperable because of improper use present a threat to the Fire Department's ability to respond adequately to emergencies.

Hydrant Damage. Every year numerous fire hydrants are damaged by unauthorized use and abuse. During the past three years, City crews have been required to repair over 180 water system hydrants because of misuse. Examples of misuse range from damage to the hydrant operating unit to missing caps and chains. The types of damage sustained by improper fire hydrant usage include the following:

- * Broken hydrant operating parts due to turning valve in an improper direction.
- * Broken or lost hydrant nozzle caps and/or chains.
- * Broken, bent or cross-threaded hose or streamer nozzles.
- * Damage to main valve due to improper flushing to pass rocks or other debris.
- * Foreign materials induced into hydrants left unattended with caps off.

The cost associated with repair of these problems is significant. More than 60 fire hydrants must be repaired each year due solely to improper use. Total cost to repair the damage is estimated at more than \$6,000 annually. Repairing these damaged hydrants takes a water distribution crew away from other important system work.

During the past three years, Water Division crews have replaced over 65 operating nuts simply because someone used an improper wrench to operate the hydrant and damaged the unit. The average cost to replace an operating nut is \$75. This amounts to over \$4,875 in costs to the City not to mention the liability of having a fire hydrant out-of-service, unavailable for fire suppression.

Moreover, the unauthorized use of City fire hydrants results in the theft of water. City water served through hydrant sources is used for a variety of purposes. Most large construction jobs require some sort of available water supply for dust control and other construction-related activities. When earthwork is required, water tanker trucks are normally used. Their source of supply is generally a fire hydrant. Other unauthorized operations of fire hydrants include their use in small clean-up operations, pesticide/fertilizer spray applications, and water service to temporary structures. All of these involve the free use of City water. It is impossible to estimate the quantity of water lost over the years due to these unauthorized uses of the City's water supply.

Existing City Code. The City Code does address the unauthorized use of fire hydrants in Section 47.6 which states:

"No person other than employees of the Division of Water and Sewers, except members of the Fire Department, properly authorized, or persons authorized by the City Manager, or his designee, shall open any fire hydrant to attach any hose, tubing or pipe thereto for any purpose, without first obtaining written permission from the chief of the fire department or the manager of the division of water and sewers. Written permission shall be obtained on the city form titled "fire hydrant use permit" as on file in the principle offices of the Fire Department and the Division of Water and Sewers."

Unfortunately, over the past twenty years this section of the Code has been largely ignored, as it has not been strictly enforced.

Proposed Policy. In an effort to regain control over the City fire hydrant system and its use for non-fire suppression activities, the attached policy (Exhibit 1) is proposed for adoption. This new policy will institute clearly defined ground rules for the permitting and use of fire hydrants in addition to temporary water service. The existing City Code language is too general and non-specific. For this reason, it is recommended that the section of the City Code dealing with the use of fire hydrants be amended to reflect this new proposed policy. This policy will be enforced not only by Public Works personnel but also by members of the Fire Department.

A schedule of fees is also proposed to pay for the water supplied as well as associated program costs. The recommended fees schedule is shown in Exhibit 2.

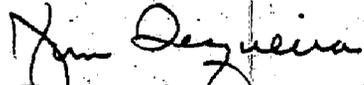
FINANCIAL

It is estimated that this proposed program will bring in \$20,000 annually in additional revenues. No additional manpower or equipment are required for the Water Division to implement the program.

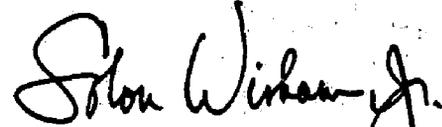
RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the attached Ordinance, amending the City Code Section 47.6, the resolution establishing a Temporary Water Service Tap and Fire Hydrant Water Service Policy, and the Resolution establishing fees for hydrant use be recommended for Council adoption.

Respectfully submitted,


Jim Sequeira
Water Division Manager

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:


SOLON WISHAM, JR.
Assistant City Manager

APPROVED:


MELVIN H. JOHNSON
Director of Public Works

June 8, 1988
All Districts

City of Sacramento
Water Division

TEMPORARY WATER SERVICE TAP
AND
FIRE HYDRANT WATER SERVICE POLICY
JULY 1, 1988

Section 1 INTENT

It is the intent of this policy to set forth regulations for the installation and use of temporary water services and the use of fire hydrants as a source of water supply for construction projects or other purposes other than fire suppression. It is also the intent of this policy to discourage the use of fire hydrants for purposes other than fire suppression.

Section 2 AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

No person shall open or operate any public fire hydrant or attach any hose, tubing or pipe to any public hydrant, or draw water from any, public fire hydrant without first obtaining a permit from the Water Division.

Authorized employees of the Water Division, City Fire Department, and other individuals duly authorized by the City Manager or his designee are exempt from these provisions.

Section 3 CONDITIONS OF TEMPORARY SERVICE

Temporary water service will be furnished through fire hydrants only if the Water Division finds that circumstances exist that make it impractical to furnish water through a normal underground service tap.

Section 4 TYPES OF SERVICE

Two types or means of providing temporary water service include (1) underground water service taps and (2) service from fire hydrants. Service from fire hydrants includes limited day use or unlimited use for a period of one (1) year.

Temporary underground water services can be provided in sizes ranging from one (1) inch in diameter through, four (4) inches in diameter depending upon the capacity limits of the existing distribution system. A metered service installed at current charges and a reduced pressure backflow preventer furnished and installed by the owner/contractor shall be included as a part of the temporary water service.

Service from fire hydrants consisting of limited day use, maximum of sixty (60) days, or annual use such as for filling of water trucks shall be allowed subject to certain terms and conditions contained herein.

Service for Construction Projects. The use of hydrants for construction projects will be discouraged and the development of alternative water sources encouraged. However, for all construction projects which hydrant service has been approved (Section 3) a fire hydrant use permit shall be obtained from the Water Division and all appropriate fees paid.

Hydrant Policy (con't.)

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For projects that require temporary water service for less than sixty (60) days, a fire hydrant use permit may be obtained subject to the following conditions:

- a. All physical connections to hydrants shall meet Water Division standards.
- b. The Water Division may designate the particular hydrant or hydrants at which temporary service shall be furnished.
- c. Only approved hydrant tools shall be allowed to operate the hydrant.
- d. Backflow prevention devices shall be used per Water Division policy.

For projects requiring water service for more than sixty (60) days duration a tap and metered service must be purchased. In addition, a reduced pressure backflow prevention device shall be required.

When the Water Division determines that the duration of a proposed service will be temporary, the Division may provide service on a temporary basis without payment of the Water Development Fee.

Applicants for a temporary tap and metered service shall pay the Division's estimate of the cost of the tap and installing (based on current Installation Charges) and removing the service connection plus a security deposit for the meter. Payment of the Water Development Fee may be required if the temporary service tap is connected to a permanent service depending upon applicability as set forth in the water development fee policy.

Water Transport. All water transportation vehicles utilizing City hydrants as a water source shall first obtain a fire hydrant use permit from the Water Division. In addition, all water trucks shall be in compliance with the current "Cross Connection Control Policy" by being equipped with an air gap separation device. These vehicles shall be inspected and certified annually by the Water Division.

Evidence of having a valid use permit and having had inspection shall be displayed and clearly visible on the vehicle at all times.

Where feasible and practical, water truck fill stations may be provided by the City at appropriate locations to dispense water to transport trucks to avoid having contractor use fire hydrants.

Other Uses. Fire hydrant use for a short duration by small business for clean-up operations, and other similar purposes of short duration shall be discouraged. However, if there are no water service alternatives, a fire hydrant use permit may be approved by the Water Division Manager on a case by case basis.

Section 5 HYDRANT USE PERMIT

Applicants for a permit required by Section 4 shall complete an application form available from the Water Division. Fees for such permits will be as listed in the current "Fee and Charge Schedule" and shall be paid in advance upon submitting application.

Two types of permits are available: An annual permit and a limited day permit. The annual permit will be primarily for water transport vehicles and other uses that are not site specific and City-wide in application. The limited use permit is applicable to specific project sites of generally short duration.

The limited use permit may be metered depending upon the duration of service required. If the hydrant is metered a deposit will be required for the water meter and billing at the current rate for metered service shall apply. The permittee is financially responsible for any meter, backflow device, valve, or adapter which is furnished and for any damage to the fire hydrant. A deposit, as listed in the "Fee and Charge Schedule", shall be required of all City furnished equipment. This deposit shall be refunded if the equipment is returned to the City undamaged.

The permit may require that the permittee obtain water only at a specific locations(s) and at such times as are deemed by the Water Division Manager to be in the best interests of the City.

The Manager may revoke a permit issued under this policy upon a finding that the permittee has violated any provisions of this policy, the rules and regulations of the City, or terms and conditions of the permit.

Section 6 PENALTY

An individual or corporation tampering with a City fire hydrant without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$100.00. An individual or corporation found tampering with a City fire hydrant a second time without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$200.00. Third and subsequent offenses will be punished by a fine of \$500.00.

NEW FEE SCHEDULE
FOR
FIRE HYDRANT WATER SERVICE

LIMITED DAY USE

	Service Charge Amount
1 - 10 Days	\$ 20.00
11- 30 Days	\$ 50.00
31- 60 Days	\$100.00

WATER TRUCK USE

Truck Capacity	Annual Fee
1000 gallons or less	\$100.00
2000 gallons	\$200.00
3000 gallons or more	\$300.00

ORDINANCE NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL ON DATE OF

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 47.6
OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE RELATING TO
FIRE HYDRANT USE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 47.6 of the Sacramento City Code be amended to read:

Section 47.6 ~~Water/Waste~~ Fire Hydrant Use

No person other than employees of the division of water ~~and/sewers~~, except members of the fire department, properly authorized, or persons authorized by the ~~city~~ city manager ~~manager~~, or his designee, shall open any fire hydrant or attach any hose, tubing or pipe thereto for any purpose, without first obtaining written permission from the ~~chief//of//the//fire//department//or~~ the manager of the division of water and/sewers. The policy governing fire hydrant use shall be established by resolution of the City Council. ~~Written permission shall//be//obtained//on//the//city//for//the//fire//hydrant~~ use//permit//as//on//file//in//the//principal//offices//of//the ~~fire//department//and//the//division//of//water//and//sewers/~~

Any individual or corporation tampering with a City fire hydrant without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$100.00. An individual or corporation found tampering with a City fire hydrant a second time without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$200.00. Third and subsequent offenses will be punished by a fine of \$500.00.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

ORDINANCE NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL ON DATE OF

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 47.6
OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE RELATING TO
FIRE HYDRANT USE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 47.6 of the Sacramento City Code be amended to read:

Section 47.6 Fire Hydrant Use.

No person other than employees of the division of water, except members of the fire department, properly authorized, or persons authorized by the city manager, or his designee, shall open any fire hydrant or attach any hose, tubing or pipe thereto for any purpose, without first obtaining written permission from the manager of the division of water. The policy governing fire hydrant use shall be established by resolution of the City Council.

Any individual or corporation tampering with a city fire hydrant without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$100.00. An individual or corporation found tampering with a city fire hydrant a second time without a permit shall be punished by a fine of \$200.00. Third and subsequent offenses will be punished by a fine of \$500.00.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

RESOLUTION No.

Adopted by The Sacramento City Council on date of

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING TEMPORARY
WATER SERVICE TAP
AND
FIRE HYDRANT WATER SERVICE POLICY

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

That the policy shown on Exhibit 1, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby established as the City's temporary water service tap and fire hydrant use policy. This resolution shall take effect on July 1, 1988.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

RESOLUTION No.

Adopted by The Sacramento City Council on date of

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO
FEE AND CHARGE REPORT TO ESTABLISH WATER
HYDRANT USE FEES FOR WATER PURSUANT
TO SECTION 47.321 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

That the City of Sacramento Fee and Charge Report is hereby amended to include the following water fire hydrant use fees to take effect on July 1, 1988.

IX. FIRE HYDRANT USE FEE

LIMITED DAY USE

	Service Charge Amount
1 - 10 Days	\$ 20.00
11- 30 Days	\$ 50.00
31- 60 Days	\$100.00

WATER TRUCK USE

Truck Capacity	Annual Fee
1000 gallons or less	\$100.00
2000 gallons	\$200.00
3000 gallons or more	\$300.00

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK