



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-6138, **Agenda Item #:** 6.

11/21/2024

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*) to provide for new water restrictions for drip irrigation systems; create exemptions from certain water conservation and drought response regulations related to drip irrigation; provide for the hours of operation of splash pads during certain drought response stages; and enact other related provisions. Funding: This item has no fiscal impact. Related to Items #3, #4, and #5.

Lead Department

Austin Water.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

August 16, 2012 - Council approved an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 6-4 of the City Code related to water use management.

May 5, 2016 - Council approved Resolution 20160505-0004, adopting a new Drought Contingency Plan and applicable revisions to the City Code, Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*).

December 10, 2020 - Council approved Ordinance No 20201210-007, adopting updates to City Code Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*).

May 5, 2022 - Council approved Ordinance No 20220505-003, adopting new penalties related to violations of City Code, Chapter 2-13 (*Administrative Adjudication of Violations*) and Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*).

May 2, 2024 - Council approved Ordinance No 20240502-006, adopting updates to Chapter 2-13 of the City Code relating to water conservation penalties, Chapter 6-4 of the City Code relating to water conservation and drought stages, and Section 15-9-191 of the City Code relating to administrative review used for water conservation actions, policies, and decisions.

For More Information:

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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

November 4, 2024 - The Drought Contingency Plan and the Water Conservation Plan, which these code changes implement, were recommended by the Austin Integrated Water Resource Planning Community Task Force (Water Forward Task Force) on a vote of 8-0 in favor of the Drought Contingency Plan and a vote of 7 in favor with Task Force Member Moriarty opposed on the Water Conservation Plan.

November 13, 2024 - The Drought Contingency Plan and the Water Conservation Plan, which these code changes implement, will be reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission.

November 19, 2024 - The Drought Contingency Plan and the Water Conservation Plan, which these code changes implement, will be reviewed by the Resource Management Commission.

Additional Backup Information:

On May 2, 2024, City Council approved the City's current Water Conservation Plan (WCP) and Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). At the time of adoption, City Council requested Austin Water conduct further reviews of the WCP and DCP in collaboration with the Austin Integrated Water Resource Planning Community Task Force and in conjunction with proposed 2024 updates to Austin's Water Forward Integrated Water Resource Plan.

If approved, the ordinance will amend City Code Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*) to address the restrictions described in the DCP and WCP. The ordinance includes recommended Code changes, which are described below. These recommendations are the result of collaborating with the Task Force.

Highlights of Recommended Changes to City Code :

- Amend Chapter 6-4 (Water Conservation) to:
 - Include restrictions on the days that drip irrigation can be used in the Conservation Stage and Drought Stage 1 - 4.
 - Specify when a splash pad may be operated in Drought Stage 3 and 4, in lieu of a reference to a related rule.

If approved, the proposed ordinance will codify changes necessary to implement proposed updates to the 2024 WCP and DCP that Council will also be considering on the same Council agenda. Additionally, limitations on drip irrigation in Drought Stage 4 are also required to comply with the Lower Colorado River Authority's DCP.