

Oregon Water Resources Department
Water Conservation, Reuse and Storage Grant Program
Evaluation for September 2, 2008 Applications

APPLICANT:	City of Hillsboro / City of Beaverton		
STUDY TYPE:	Water Conservation		
APPLICATION NO.:	GC0020 09		
STUDY NAME:	Water Sense Rebate Feasibility Study		
BASIN:	Willamette	WRD DISTRICT:	18
WRD FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$15,000	TOTAL COST:	\$30,000

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The City of Hillsboro has had a high efficiency washing machine rebate program in place for more than six years. The program has been highly successful and the washing machine market has been transformed in Hillsboro. The popularity of the rebate program and the need for financial and retrofit incentive programs provides an opportunity to develop different rebate programs that will better target water efficiency standards and should increase water savings and drop per capita consumption. Beaverton does not currently have a rebate program. Hillsboro and Beaverton would like to pioneer programs in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Sense labeling program.

The goal of this study would be to evaluate the cost benefit analysis and feasibility of a Water Sense Rebate Program for the Cities of Hillsboro and Beaverton. The information gained from this study will help assist in program and policy revisions to a conservation rebate program that meets OAR Chapter 690, Division 86 rules (Water Management and Conservation Plans), and may reduce the overall per capita demand on the water system. The information will be presented to the Hillsboro Utilities Commission and Beaverton City Council, and portions of the study may be implemented based on staff resources, budget availability and policy adoptions.

APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION:

The Application Review Team recognized that some of the most difficult data to gather are related to participation rates in rebate programs. The locally developed data collected from this study has a high probability of being acceptable to the Greater Portland Metropolitan Area.

The application discusses the success of Hillsboro washing machine rebate program, but no other potential rebate programs are mentioned. The team would have liked additional information on the type of rebate programs being considered. The team would have also liked to have had greater details concerning the current water demand, and how the associated project would meet the demand. The team recognized that this was one of the questions the study would seek to answer, but still felt that a “ball park” estimate could have been provided, and the study would have refined this estimate.

The study is a priority for funding under SB 1069 because it is identified on the Department’s statewide water assessment and inventory of potential conservation opportunities. The study could begin in July 2009 and be completed by March 2010.

Application Review Team Funding Recommendation: Do Fund: Contingent on Adequate Funding at \$15,000.

COMMENTS:

A letter of support for this application was received from Niki Iverson and Tacy Steele, City of Hillsboro. The letter indicated that the application should have received a higher priority ranking and that the study will analyze the administrative costs and water savings of several different products to determine the most cost effective programs for the Cities to implement. The study seeks to answer several policy questions, including: “Which products will result in the biggest water savings for the smallest investment? What products are consumers most interested or receptive to changing out? How much should the rebate be to minimize free-riders? What is the value of the water that is saved through a WaterSense rebate program? How does the cost of the rebate program compare to the cost of new source/capacity development? What are total projected savings over the life of the product?”

Kimberley Priestley of WaterWatch indicated that a higher percentage of funding should be dedicated to conservation and reuse projects.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Do Fund at \$15,000.

Commission Action:

On December 5, 2008, the Water Resources Commission took action to:

“Release funding to all feasibility study applicants the Commission authorized at its’ November 20 meeting, at a level representing 95% of staff recommendations, and move forward with grant agreement negotiations and signatures.”

This feasibility study received an award amount of \$14,250.