

Agricultural Water Rates Task Force

Questions Posed by Members

WA-3 / WA-9

Question 1: Are there any current WA-3/WA-9 customers that can receive Gage Canal water?

Answer: Yes, there are approximately (41) WA-3 and WA-9 customers that could technically receive water from Gage at the WA-8 rate, however in order for this to happen there would need to be steps taken by the customer to facilitate this delivery. This would include building a pond, installing a pump and filter, separating the irrigation system from the potable system onsite, and installation of a backflow device on any onsite potable water meter. Some of these properties may not have a conveyance lateral in place from the Gage system, which would be an additional cost to have installed.

Question 2: Do we still want to allow WA-3/WA-9 service to customers outside City limits?

Answer: To be discussed by the Task Force.

Question 3: How many of the WA-3/WA-9 customers are actually engaged in agricultural businesses or farming/non-farming?

Answer: In progress (Joyce)

Question 4: What is quantity of use by the WA-3/WA-9 customer groups and class and is it enough revenue to cover cost of service?

Answer: In progress (COSA / Brian/Alex)

Question 5: How often are WA-3/9 properties inspected for rule compliance?

Answer: Number 1 of the Special Conditions section of the WA-3 rate requires that customers “continuously meet the criteria set out in the “Applicability” section” to remain eligible for the WA-3 rate, however it does not suggest or specify an inspection interval. The Special Conditions section of the WA-9 rate does not call out any similar requirement for continuous compliance with the Applicability of the WA-9 rate.

WA-8

Question 1: Why do the WA-8 rate conditions require pressurized sprinkler systems to receive Gage irrigation water onsite?

Answer: To ensure efficient water use and to get away from wasteful and inefficient furrow type irrigation practices.

Question 2: How much water do the WA-8 customers actually take from Gage canal and what are the usage patterns?

Answer: In progress (Gage/Rick)

Question 3: Can the Lamar/Coon property at 2732 Mary Street receive WA-8 water?

Answer: No, it cannot. 2732 Mary Street (cross Victoria Ave.) used to receive water from Gage years ago but the conveyance line from the Gage Canal, down Mary Street to this property, was abandoned about 10 years ago. Unfortunately, this property is not a candidate for WA-8 water at this time without capital investment in Gage conveyance infrastructure.

Gage Canal

Question 1: How much was paid for Gage by City during condemnation and what revenue was used for that purchase?

Answer: Starting on Page 3, line 27, of the Stipulation for Judgement in Eminent Domain and Final Order of Condemnation (dated June 9, 1965) it states the total payment by the City to the Gage Canal Company was \$547,276.86. Our research shows that Riverside Public Utilities' ratepayer funds paid this cost to acquire Gage assets. Per accounting procedures, fixed assets are recorded to the Fund that provided the funding and all fixed assets from Gage are recorded in the Water Fund. In addition, per City Finance, no Gage Canal related assets are found in any other City Fund(s).

Question 2: Why so much vacant land on southeastern side of Gage canal?

Answer: This is a geographically challenging area regarding service from the Gage Canal and requires pumping uphill. The Gage canal was designed as a gravity flow system, except for a handful of private pump companies that assisted pumping Gage water to properties located on the southerly side of the canal.

Question 3: How can the Corona Farms, on Madison x Victoria, be served Gage water?

Answer: The conveyance lateral between the last delivery point and the property was abandoned many years ago by Gage Canal. This lateral would need to be replaced in order to get Gage water to the property. After that, there would need to be a pond built to receive the water, a pump installed to pressurize the water, an electrical service installed to power the pump, a filtration system installed to filter the water pulled from the pond and finally this system tied into the existing irrigation system onsite. We estimate all this work to cost upwards of \$100,000.

Question 4: What about organic farmer concerns in regards to type of water they receive?

Answer: Gage canal water has no additives in it except for when algae growth within the canal needs to be chemically treated. When this happens Gage notifies all downstream users of the planned application so they can decide whether the treatment will adversely affect their crops, trees or plants.

Question 5: Regarding GrowRIVERSIDE, are increases in “Other Ag” due to them receiving Gage canal water?

Answer: In progress (Joyce)

Question 6: What happens to Gage Canal shares that are not paid? Why do they go back to the City?

Answer: In progress (Rick)

Cost of Service

Question 1: What does it cost to get water to the Greenbelt since Gage water has been co-mingled with City water?

Answer: The majority of the water that ends up providing irrigation service to Gage shareholders and the Greenbelt area originates in the same place as the water provided to the City from Gage. The only area this is not the case is when water is pumped from the Utilities’ Olivewood Booster station from the Riverside Canal (per the Gage Exchange agreement) or when the Olivewood wells operated by the Gage Canal Company (on RCC property) are pumped to the Gage Canal. Both of these two inputs enter the Gage Canal above Poly High School. This would be the first place where any “co-mingling” takes place and the City does not receive any of the water beyond this “co-mingling” point. The Cost of Service Analysis (COSA) should answer the question of how much it costs to produce Gage water from the production wells in San Bernardino. When The Gage Exchange does run, the Gage Canal receives 1.25 times the amount of water taken at the Linden/Evans Reservoir complex (the City’s potable water supply).

Question 2: How were the revenue requirements determined?

Answer: In progress (COSA / Brian/Alex)

Question 3: Why isn't agriculture identified as a unique/separate customer class?

Answer: In progress (COSA / Brian/Alex)

Ag Development Options / Resources

Question 1: How can low cost loans through RCRC help equip farmers to receive Gage water?

Answer: In progress (Seth)

Misc

Question 1: Can staff confirm how the final recommendation affects everyone on the Task Force?

Answer: It would be very difficult for staff to determine how the final recommendation will ultimately affect Task Force members directly or indirectly.

Question 2: Where are we headed with agriculture in the City and what is Riverside's best future regarding Ag?

Answer: To be discussed by the Task Force.

Question 3: How does San Antonio Texas and Albuquerque NM utilize their agricultural water canals and can we learn anything from them that can help in our venture?

Answer: In progress (Task Force members/Seth/Rick)

Question 4: Does RPU work in concert with other City departments to coordinate rate development in order to fall in line with other standards, initiatives, zoning and general planning that the City has?

Answer: RPU develops rate recommendations that will fund needed Water and Electric capital improvements as well as ongoing operations and maintenance costs.

Question 5: Has any GFT monies subsidized the Water Utility?

Answer: In progress (Brian/Aileen)

Question 6: How much independent control of Charges from Other Funds does the Utility have?

Answer: In progress (Brian/Aileen)