PORTLAND WATER BUREAU

FROM FOREST TO FAUCET

Randy Leonard, Commissioner
David G. Shaff, Administrator

1120 SW 5th Avenue, Room 600
Portland, Oregon 97204-1926
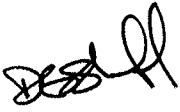Information: 503-823-7404
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DATE: June 2, 2011

TO: Mayor Adams
Commissioner Fish
Commissioner Fritz
Commissioner Leonard
Commissioner Saltzman

FROM: David G. Shaff, Administrator

RE: Emergency designation for annual ordinance transferring delinquent sewer system user fees to the Multnomah County Assessor

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The Portland Water Bureau provides services for City Water and Sewer utility accounts including the billing, receipting and collection of any unpaid accounts. Approximately 5,000 of these accounts do not have associated water services being provided by the City of Portland. These wer only accounts can not be shut off due to non-payment with some customers then taking advantage of this limitation.

Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 454.225 provides some relief for municipalities providing sewer only services. This statute allows for the transfer of unpaid sewer billings to the County Assessor in very limited circumstances. When transferred these balances then become an assessment and are billed as part of the customer's annual tax bill through the County.

In order to accommodate as many customers as possible, the Bureau allowed customers to resolve these delinquencies through the end of May. Transfer of remaining unpaid delinquent sewer only account balances to the Multnomah County Assessor must now be completed by July 15th as required by ORS 454.225. Financial Planning with OMF needs the completed and Council authorized list prior to June month end in order to accomplish this transfer.

Given these circumstances the Bureau is requesting that this annual ordinance be granted emergency designation so that it can be processed timely. In the past, this particular ordinance has been part of the consent agenda and has not generated any discussion. Bureau staff is available should there be any questions regarding this effort.