

February 23, 2022

CM Fuentes

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2022, the City of Austin issued a city-wide precautionary boil water notice due to an internal treatment process issue that resulted in high turbidity within the Ulrich Water Treatment Plant.

WHEREAS, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) determined Austin Water failed to meet the minimum treatment technique requirements for the month of February 2022 and faced a multiple barrier failure treatment technique violation and combined filter effluent turbidity readings above 5.0 NTU.

WHEREAS, due to the nature and severity of the violation, the TCEQ required a public notice to all Austin Water customers to boil their water prior to consumption.

WHEREAS, emergency water use restrictions were also issued to protect public health, safety, welfare, infrastructure, and other available resources to ensure water would be available for basic needs.

WHEREAS, on February 6, 2022, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office established a limited supply of bottled water for distribution throughout the community, prioritizing the high-needs communities, such as those in the top ten food insecure zip codes.

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2022, Austin Water completed Step 2 of the 5-step process to lift the boil water notice due to all three Austin Water treatment plants being fully operational and producing normal volumes of water. Austin Water also received approval from the TCEQ to begin Step 2, which prompted the water sampling process.

WHEREAS, on February 8, 2022, Austin Water lifted the boil water notice for all customers. Businesses and residents were notified they no longer needed to boil water used for drinking, cooking, and making ice. Water quality testing was submitted to the TCEQ, which confirmed the tap water met all regulatory standards safe for human consumption.

WHEREAS, the boil water notice experienced in February 2022 further compounded the hardships experienced by customers due to Winter Storm Uri.

WHEREAS, the boil water notice in February 2022 also occurred during the billing average period, which runs mid-November through March, and therefore has impacted customers best possible fixed monthly rate for the remainder of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager shall provide recommended temporary ordinance changes related to mitigating adverse utility bill impacts experienced by customers due to the February 2022 boil water event, including but not limited to:

- one-time bill credit and fee adjustments
- excluding unusually high utility bills in the 2022 wastewater averaging

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

The City Manager is directed to report back his recommended actions and bring any necessary ordinance changes back to the Council beginning with the March 24, 2022 City Council meeting.

DRAFT