

RESOLUTION NO. 20220303-062

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2022, the City 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; and

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; and

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; and

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; and

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; and

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 and Austin Water also received approval from the TCEQ to begin Step 2, which prompted the water sampling process; and

WHEREAS, on February 8, 2022, Austin Water lifted the boil water notice for all customers and businesses and residents were notified they no longer needed to boil water used for drinking, cooking, and making ice; and

WHEREAS, Water quality testing was submitted to the TCEQ, which confirmed the tap water met all regulatory standards safe for human consumption; and

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

WHEREAS, the boil water notice in February 2022 also occurred during the wastewater 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; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Water utility is responsible for a \$654 million operating budget, nearly 1,300 employees, and a Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal years 2022 to 2026 projected to cost approximately \$1.1 billion; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to 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, and
- excluding unusually high utility bills in the 2022 wastewater averaging.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

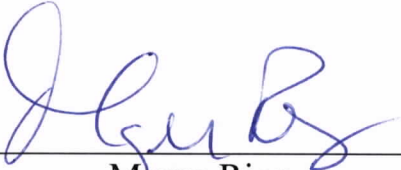
The City Manager is directed to also provide alternative recommendations to reduce risk which, for instance, may involve a one-time reallocation into Austin Water's operating budget or its 5-yr Capital Improvement Plan in lieu of direct utility bill relief to customers. The recommendation shall consider the potential amount of utility bill relief available to Austin Water customers as a result of the February 2022 boil water event.

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.

ADOPTED: March 3, 2022

ATTEST:



Myrna Rios
City Clerk