

PHOENIX TERMINATES PERMITS TO COMPANIES TRANSPORTING CITY WATER TO NORTH VALLEY NON-CITY RESIDENTS

Recently, the City of Phoenix Water Services Department discovered that water hauling companies were filling tankers from metered fire hydrants and delivering that water to northern Maricopa County communities in the New River/Desert Hills area for a fee. As specified in Phoenix City Code 37-11, “fire hydrants are provided for the primary purpose of extinguishing fires.” Under Phoenix City Code 37-13, hydrant water can also be used for construction purposes “where an existing service connection is not available.” Therefore, water from fire hydrants is used for the primary purposes of firefighting and construction within the City’s service area.

In addition, continuing to provide water to these hauling companies poses risk to the City and our residents. Some of these include:

- **Service Area.** The customers served by the water hauling companies are outside of Phoenix’s 540 square mile service area.
- **Protection of Water Supplies.** Phoenix is acutely aware of drought and climate change possibilities. Phoenix is doing everything it can to conserve the water supplies that underlie our public health, economic opportunity, and quality of life for our residents.
- **Customer Fees.** Phoenix’s customers pay substantial fees to connect to the City’s system. Persons receiving water through a water hauling company are not paying those fees, so our customer base is subsidizing these communities.
- **Water Infrastructure.** Water infrastructure, including pipes and treatment facilities, are funded by our developers and rate payers, not taxes. The communities served by water hauling companies do not pay their fair share for the building and maintaining of water and wastewater infrastructure, yet they are reaping the benefits.
- **Water Quality.** Fire hydrants are used primarily for firefighting and construction purposes. While our water is safe, high quality and completely potable coming out of a fire hydrant, and the haulers are regulated by Maricopa County for potable water transportation, the City cannot guarantee it is safe for consumption once it has been removed from our system and transported by water haulers.

When the City first discovered this water hauling practice, we started issuing temporary permits to allow us time to assess the scope of this hauling, analyze its risks to the City, and develop a gradual phase-out. Over the last six months, the water hauling companies were notified that this service would be cut-off. On July 1, 2017, an official letter from the City was sent to the water haulers with an effective cut-off date of December 31, 2017, giving the haulers six months to make alternative water supply arrangements.

Ultimately, we are only eliminating Phoenix water as a source for water for these communities. According to the water hauling companies, there are other sources available to them elsewhere.