

Message from Special Projects Assistant Rusty Vetter



April 2024

THE PIPELINE

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

This year, the Utah Legislature had a number of bills that were closely watched by Salt Lake City's Department of Public Utilities. In the past few years, water-related bills were dominated by issues related to the protection and health of the Great Salt Lake (GSL) and other water resources. This year, there were fewer GSL bills, but the future of the GSL continues to be a significant concern. Many of this year's bills involved fine tuning prior efforts to protect and enhance water resources, particularly for the GSL. Efforts to help the mining industry were also prominent in this session and the City worked to ensure that any changes to the law will not impact our water quality and the health and safety of our water customers.

Bills Supporting Proposed Parleys Mine

The Department monitored three mining bills that were designed to help the proposed Parleys gravel mine. The City, Millcreek City and Salt Lake County, have been actively opposing mine due to the negative impacts on the Wasatch watershed and impacts on health and safety of our water customers.

One of the three bills was particularly concerning as it would have forced the City to provide water outside of our designated water service area. We believe that part of the bill was in violation of the Utah State Constitution by effectively forcing a transfer of our water rights. In the end, that part of the bill was not adopted and only one of the three bills passed after it was substantially modified.

Water Development and Infrastructure Bills

One of the significant themes of the session was developing enough water resources to support future growth in the State. Bills were proposed to support funding for future water infrastructure needs. HB280 deals with efforts to coordinate the future prioritization and construction of water infrastructure projects. The bill also requires the study of a new possible fee that would be charged for water usage. This is a topic of concern since we want to make sure that our customers are not paying more than their fair share for the use of water.

SB211 was a significant bill that is entitled Generational Water Infrastructure Amendments. This is a bill to encourage finding more potential sources of water for long term needs of the State. This is another matter that we will be actively monitoring going forward.

Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake Bills

There were several bills related to the GSL and Utah Lake that we closely watched, but they do not appear to result in significant changes for the City. Legislators have

come to recognize the importance of maintaining appropriate levels of the GSL and the City very much supports efforts to protect the GSL. Utah Lake serves as an important source of water for the City to meet our contractual obligations to provide irrigation water in the Salt Lake Valley. The City is an active participant in any legislation that involves the GSL or Utah Lake.

HB507 Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control

One bill that will have an impact on the Department is HB507. The bill affects storm water protection and limits the regulation of construction site storm water. There was a lot of discussion about the bill and it doesn't take effect until the end of the year. We hope there will be further opportunities to fine tune the changes to the law so that we can continue to protect the environment affected by construction projects.

Other Water Related Bills

For several years, the construction community has been pushing for changes to the blues stakes laws that relate locating underground utilities. SB145 was adopted this year and a number of process changes were made, including shortening times for marking areas that will be excavated for construction. We hope these changes will not negatively impact the City's operations.

Several water-related bills did not pass but will likely come back next year. Bills that we closely monitored included topics such as water efficiency, use of canal easements for trails, protection of riparian areas, water data gathering, and a fee that would be collected by the State Division of Water Quality to support public water system supervision.

Little Cottonwood Canyon Gondola

We have many concerns with the proposed gondola that is proposed to be built by UDOT in Little Cottonwood Canyon. It is estimated that the cost will exceed \$1 billion, but those funds have not been appropriated. We were watching to see if the funding would be appropriated by the Legislature this year to facilitate the construction of the gondola, but funding was not made available this session. This was good news.

In case you missed it...

SLCDPU's City Creek Water Treatment Plant hosted representatives from the White House, Salt Lake City's Mayor Erin Mendenhall, and Salt Lake County's Mayor Jenny Wilson for a news event in March



Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities (SLCDPU) has been approved for a \$39 million loan for lead service line inventory and replacement throughout the City service area's drinking water system.

Salt Lake City's Mayor Mendenhall was joined by Second Gentleman of the United States Doug Emhoff; Tom Perez, Senior Advisor and Assistant to President Biden and Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Salt Lake County Mayor Jenny Wilson at the City Creek Water Treatment Plant for the announcement on World Water Day.

Get Involved!

- **Join the team!** We're hiring. Explore career opportunities and submit your application on [Salt Lake City's Careers website](#).
- **Did you know the Public Utilities Advisory Committee (PUAC) meets monthly?** These meetings are open to the public. Visit [their webpage](#) to learn more about these meetings and the function of our PUAC.
- **Follow SLCDPU on social media!** Find us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).

Join SLCDPU's Team



Are you using your Smart Meter & Customer Portal?

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Let us help you access your Customer Portal!

801-483-6900

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Are you using your Smart Meter & Customer Portal? Customers using the Customer Portal have shared with us that it helps them to use water wisely, prevent water waste, and set custom alerts. Let us help you access your Customer Portal! Call us at 801-483-6900 or [send us an email](#).

Project Updates

Salt Lake City's Department of Public Utilities manages a number of construction projects to maintain and improve our system. Many of these projects are smaller in scale but we've highlighted a few of our larger projects below. If you're interested in learning more about other SLCDPU projects, please [visit our website](#).

- **Lead & Copper Program:** SLCDPU staff are working to complete an inventory of service lines in Salt Lake City. We are seeking input from residents to identify the material used in private service lines. Determining the material used in the construction of private service lines will help us better protect your water while also meeting the most recent updates to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper rule. [Click here](#) to learn more about the EPA's Lead and Copper rule, SLCDPU's Lead & Copper program, and take our survey.
- **North Bench Pump Station:** In March, SLCDPU representatives attended the Greater Avenues Community Council (GACC) meeting to share plans to replace the North Bench Pump Station. This pump station, located on Hilltop Road just north of 18th Avenue, delivers culinary water to

residents north of downtown SLC. The facility was initially built in the 1950s and is nearing the end of its life. [Click here](#) to review the GACC presentation, or [send us an email](#) with your questions or concerns.



Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities | Salt Lake City

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