

**City of Tempe
Water Utilities Department
Vision and Diversity Action Plan**

May 6, 2008

I. Vision

The Department Manager's vision for the Water Utilities Department (WUD) is for all employees to:

- A.** Support the City's mission, values and goals;
- B.** Help create a work environment that embraces the following characteristics:
 1. Supervisors lead their work teams by focusing their talents and energies on areas they can directly influence and control to make life better and more meaningful for those around them. For example:
 - Be trustworthy by possessing good character and professional competence, creating meaningful goals, and making sound and timely decisions.
 - Listen to and accept each other's feedback.
 - Actively counsel each other to work together on strategies we can use to sustain and improve our performance.
 - Foster healthy disagreement and exchange of ideas and insights; mentor; and
 - Practice humility and courage by admitting mistakes.
 2. Supervisors provide their work team with clearly defined expectations and standards.
 3. Supervisors hold individuals within their work team accountable by consistently enforcing established standards.
 4. Supervisors ensure their work team receives the resources necessary to perform their jobs.
 5. All employees work together to eliminate any barriers to two-way communication.

6. All employees work together to address and resolve conflict in a timely manner.
 7. All employees foster focused innovation, creative problem solving, and critical thinking.
 8. All employees promote and encourage professional growth, education, and development opportunities.
 9. All employees receive timely recognition for good work.
 10. All employees take personal responsibility for creating an environment in which everyone is treated with respect and looks forward to coming to work.
- C. Feel valued as individuals and know that our individual strengths contribute to the Department's overall effectiveness in supporting its mission to:
1. Maintain the highest level of service possible consistent with the City's mission and values of making Tempe the best place to live, work and play.
 2. Provide residents, businesses, and visitors of Tempe with a reliable and economical supply of drinking water that meets or exceeds federal, state, and local quality standards.
 3. Protect the community's health, safety, and environment through effective waste and storm water management; and collection and disposal of household hazardous materials.
 4. Operate an open and inclusive organization that values diversity and reflects the community we serve.

II. Diversity Action Plan

The Department's Diversity Action Plan responds to five areas identified as needing improvement in the *City's 2002 Diversity Audit*. These include:

Inclusion: "An inclusive workplace encourages all employees to participate fully and contribute at their highest level. Inclusion promotes equity."

Bias: "Everyone has stereotypes and biases. Continuous education and open dialogue is needed to promote understanding and awareness of the biases that create barriers."

'Good-old Boy' Network: "The 'Good-old Boy' network refers to favoritism based upon team affiliation. Effective workplaces help employees and managers move beyond their comfort zone by creating opportunities for networking and systems for hiring/promoting the 'best candidate', regardless of diverse characteristics. The term 'Good-old Boy' should only be used when referring to the Diversity Audit findings."

Promotions: "Effective workplaces ensure equity by developing and implementing fairness and objectivity in their hiring, recruitment and promotional practices," and

Conflict: "Effective organizations help staff recognize that conflict can be healthy. Employees and managers learn to accept and appreciate differences. They learn how to resolve conflict before it becomes a major issue."

A. What is the Water Utilities Department (WUD) doing to encourage inclusion?

The goal of creating an inclusive workplace is to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce and community by being respectful of other lifestyles regardless of personal beliefs. The Department, like the City, recognizes, appreciates, and respects differences. No one person or team is superior to another. The Department, City organization, and community benefit from the combined skills and experiences of all employees at every level of the organization.

The Department also recognizes and values the unique contribution of every individual in the organization. Each individual brings with them a unique history, perspective, education, and skill set. Water Utilities Department employees at all levels of the organization are provided opportunities to discuss their concerns or ideas, privately ask questions, team build, network, and celebrate individual and team successes, as follows:

Citywide meetings:

- Senior Management Team meetings (Department managers meet one week before scheduled Mayor & City Council meetings)
- Agenda meetings (Department managers and/or appropriate staff meet one week before scheduled Mayor and City Council meetings)
- "Eight of Us" meetings (Department managers reporting to the Assistant City Manager–bi-monthly)
- Development Coordination Meetings (DCM) (Assistant City Manager meets with department managers from Water Utilities, Public Works, Community Development, Development Services, and other departments as appropriate–bi-monthly)

Regional meetings:

- Arizona Municipal Water Users Association (AMWUA) meetings (Water Utilities Manager meets with Assistant City Manager and other members of AMWUA–monthly)
- Sub-Regional Operating Team (SROG) meetings (Water Utilities Manager, Assistant City Manager, and SROG Program Administrator meet with other SROG members–monthly)
- Central Arizona Water Conservation District meetings (Water Resources Administrator and District staff–monthly)

Departmental meetings:

- ‘WUD UP’ meetings (Water Utilities Department Manager, Deputy Manager, and staff; Assistant City Manager; and managers/staff from Public Works/Engineering, Financial Services/Customer Service, Community Services, City Attorney’s office–quarterly).
- Department staff meetings (All Department employees meet quarterly)
- Tailgate meetings (All Water Utilities Department divisions and work teams meet a minimum of monthly; most meet bi-weekly).
- Supervisory Team meetings (All Water Utilities Department supervisors – monthly)
- SEIU Local 5 Non-supervisors Union (NSU) meetings (Water Utilities Department manager, deputy manager, and administrator meets with SEIU Local 5 NSU Department representatives–monthly)
- Tempe Supervisors’ Association (TSA) meetings (Water Utilities Department manager, deputy manager, and administrator meets with TSA department representatives–monthly)
- Individual meetings (Department employees may meet with any member of the Department’s management team upon request)
- Field visits (Water Utilities Department manager and deputy manager meet with various work teams–weekly)
- Safety Team meetings (Water Utilities Department manager and deputy manager meet with the Department’s safety and training coordinators and employee volunteers from each WUD work team–monthly)

Informal meetings and events:

- Birthday celebrations (Department manager provides cake–monthly)
- Holiday luncheon (Department employees celebrate holidays–annual)
- Various potlucks/BBO’s (Department work teams celebrate various events and activities throughout the year)

Department employee recognition programs:

The Department has implemented several employee award programs, e.g., 'Way-to-Go' Award, Attendance Award, Safety Award, and Service Anniversary Awards. *(Note: These programs are currently under review.)*

Water Utilities Department employees are encouraged to participate on citywide boards and committees, attend other departments' work team meetings, and participate in formal and informal training programs. Examples include:

Citywide programs, boards, and committees:

- City's Mentorship Program
- Tempe Professional Development Club (TPDC)
- Women's Networking Program
- Gay/Straight Alliance
- Downtown Employee Parking Board
- Public Works work team meetings
- Neighborhood Task Force
- Citywide Public Information Officers' (PIO) meetings
- Wellness Committee
- Security Task Force
- Rio Salado Task Force
- Special Events Committee
- Diversity Outreach Committee
- Tempe Learning Center (TLC) Advisory Board
- Mandatory Skills Training workshops (now called the Leadership Development Program)
- Team Colors Program (Temperament assessment tool)
- Tempe Learning Center (TLC) personal development workshops
- Arizona Government Training Service (AGTS) personal development workshops
- Information Technology Department (ITD) computer training courses
- Certified Public Manager (CPM) program
- Educational Partnerships programs
- Water Utilities Department (WUD) Skill-Based Pay/Workforce Flexibility Program
- Tuition Reimbursement program

Regional associations, programs, and committees:

- American Water Works Association (AWWA)
- Arizona Municipal Water Users Association (AMWUA)

- East Valley Water Forum (EVWF)
- Arizona Hydrologic Society (AHS)
- Arizona section of the WaterReuse Association
- Central Arizona Salinity Study (CASS) group
- American Metropolitan Water Association (the other AMWA)
- Western Coalition of Arid States (WESTCAS)
- Arizona Water and Pollution Control Association (AWPCA)
- 91st Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant Sub-regional Operating Group (SROG)

Agencies and institutions we interact with on a regular basis:

Water supply agencies

- Salt River Valley Water Users Association / Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District—collectively Salt River Project (SRP)
- Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) – Central Arizona Project (CAP)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)

Water regulatory agencies

- Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)
- Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI)
- Maricopa County Environmental Services Department

Other agencies – Flood Control River Channel Permits

- Maricopa County Flood District
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Other agencies – Endangered Species Act, Habitat Conservation Plans, Riparian Habitat Projects

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZG&F)
- Arizona Water Protection Fund Commission
- National Ground Water Association
- Water ISAC (Water Security Network)
- Tap Into Quality Committee
- Water Use it Wisely Committee
- North American Hazardous Materials Managers Association (NAHMMA)

- Solid Waste Association North America – Special Waste (SWANA)
- American Industrial Hygienist Association (AIHA)
- American Indoor Air Quality Council (IAQ)
- Environmental Information Association (EIA)
- American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE)

Educational institutions

- Arizona State University (ASU) – ASU Decision Center, ASU Decision Theater, ASU Institute of Global Sustainability
- University of Arizona (U of A) – U of A Water Resources Research Center, Arizona Water Institute
- Gateway Community College Internship Program
- Gateway Community College ‘Work in Water’ Outreach Consortium
<http://www.workinwater.org>

The Department encourages facilitation of timely and effective communications among all employees, between the Department and other city departments, between the Department and Tempe’s community, and between the Department and other municipalities/agencies. Methods of communication include:

- Person to person
- Telephone
- Open door policy
- Email
- Intranet and Internet
- Video and teleconferences
- Weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly and annual employee meetings
- Citywide programs and committees
- Regional associations, programs and committees
- Informal social events
- Manager’s *Non Pay Day Message* (Bi-weekly)
- Work team meetings (Department manager, deputy manager and administrator rotate attendance at all work team meetings)
- Informal field visits (Department manager and deputy manager conduct informal weekly field visits)
- Kyrene Campus off-site office (Department administrator works at off-site office on weekly basis to improve accessibility)

In addition, the Water Utilities Department contracted with a consulting firm (Childress) in early 2008 to assist the Department in developing a continuous improvement plan. Forty-eight department employees volunteered to participate in the interview process. A summary of the employees’ feedback (Assessment Report) was written to provide a baseline for the Department’s

continuous improvement plan. To date, the Department created a cross-functional team of supervisory and non-supervisory representatives from each work team to develop the Department's strategic plan, vision, and expectations; and will then create the Department's code of conduct.

Moreover, the Department continues to:

- Identify additional formal and informal means of communication and networking opportunities.
- Support and improve the Department's Workforce Flexibility/Skill-based Pay Program.
- Support additional cross-training opportunities whenever possible.
- Use individuals from a variety of areas (including those from local peer cities) on department interview panels.
- Identify opportunities for department employees to serve as project leads or perform duties that are out of their comfort zone to broaden their exposure to citywide issues and enhance personal growth.
- Continue to encourage open, honest, and respectful communication by soliciting feedback from department employees.

B. What is the Water Utilities Department (WUD) doing to assist employees in enhancing their awareness and understanding of personal stereotypes and biases?

The Department currently employs approximately 138 culturally diverse men and women who bring different talents, lifestyles, backgrounds, beliefs, and value systems together to serve the Tempe community, City organization, and Department.

The Department encourages its employees to respect each other's differences by using inclusive language, avoiding stereotyping, and being aware of personal biases during all communications. One of the Department's ground rules is to be open, honest, direct, and respectful (verbally and non-verbally)—regardless of one's method of communication; i.e., email, telephone, or in person. Employees are also encouraged to be better listeners, make time for each other by increasing person-to-person interactions whenever possible, and acknowledging and taking responsibility for one's mistakes.

Moreover, the Department encourages employee participation on committees, in meetings, at programs, seminars and workshops, etc., to

learn constructive ways to converse, to understand how actions and words can be misinterpreted, and to value differences. For example:

- In 2007 the Department hosted a class entitled, “All I Said Was . . . *Avoiding Unintended Insults, Injuries and Slight in Today’s Diverse Workplace.*”
- The Department works with the Human Resources/Tempe Learning Center (TLC) to host ongoing mini-Mandatory Training Skills classes (now called the Leadership Development Program), Civil Treatment workshops, and Team Colors classes (a temperament assessment tool) to understand each other’s differences.
- Department employees are encouraged to participate in Arizona State University’s CPM (Certified Public Manager) program. To date, 50 city employees have graduated from the CPM program – 10 of whom are from the Water Utilities Department.
- Department employees are encouraged to participate in the City’s Mentoring Program, which was piloted by the Diversity Office in 2005 and implemented citywide in 2006. To date, sixty-two employees (thirty-one mentor/mentee pairings) have participated in the program citywide. Of those, four Water Utilities Department employees have completed the program as a mentee and/or a mentor.
- Department employees are encouraged to participate in the City’s Associate, Bachelor and Master degree partnership programs and/or use the City’s Tuition Reimbursement Program. Currently, citywide participation is tracked annually, but individual department participation is not tracked.
- The Department promotes participation in city programs such as the Women’s Networking Program, Gay/Straight Alliance, and Meet Your Neighbor brown-bag luncheons.
- A Department representative serves on the City’s Diversity Outreach Committee.

- The Department uses a variety of individuals (representing all levels of the organization, including those from local peer cities, on its interview panels.
- The Department has researched over 160 Internet job boards and recruitment websites to increase the diversity and quality of its applicant pools.
- The Department welcomes and encourages the solicitation of unfiltered feedback at unscheduled field visits.
- The Department encourages diverse representation on boards and committees.
- The Department continues to identify new training and/or educational opportunities that will benefit employees at all levels of the organization.

C. What is the Water Utilities Department (WUD) doing to promote healthy networks?

The Department routinely strives to be inclusive, open, and timely in its communications and promotes a work environment in which employees believe that their opinions and ideas are not only heard, but also respected.

The Department uses individuals representing all levels of the organization on interview panels and committees; seeks unfiltered employee feedback; encourages participation in various professional organizations and membership on different boards and committees; promotes attendance at various seminars and workshops; and supports employees who wish to take advantage of personal growth opportunities.

The Department is aware that the perception of favoritism exists for some and therefore makes every effort through action and word to overcome that perception.

D. What is the Water Utilities Department (WUD) doing to overcome a perception of inequity in its recruitment and promotional practices?

The Water Utilities Department values the recruitment, retention, and promotion of individuals who are committed to the City's and Department's mission and values, and who consistently contribute to those missions and values through action and word. It is these basic expectations that are the Department's foundation for how employees respect and treat each other.

The Department also values competence, dedication, integrity,

understanding, openness, consistency, productiveness, enthusiasm, professionalism, and accountability; and promotes fair, objective, participative and inclusive recruitment processes using a diverse and non-biased interview panel to hire and promote individuals who represent the Department's and City's mission and values. In addition, the Department:

- Requires all supervisors and encourages all non-supervisory employees to participate in the City's Mandatory Skills Training series (now called the Leadership Development Program), which focuses on the City's promotional and recruitment practices;
- Uses a variety of individuals (including employees outside of the Department and City) to serve on the Department's interview panels;
- Ensures that the Department's Administrator serves as a point of contact for recruitments and other human resources topics to provide consistency across work teams department wide;
- Advocates internal promotions for qualified candidates;
- Uses employee forums as a tool to give employees working directly with the applicant an opportunity to ask questions and provide anonymous feedback;
- Promotes participation in the Department's Workforce Flexibility/Skill-based Pay Program as a mechanism to cross train employees;
- Identifies and encourages participation in formal and informal training and development programs;
- Ensures Department supervisors keep abreast of current recruitment policies, procedures, and employment laws;
- Ensures that Department interview panelists are kept abreast of fair employment practices (e.g., interview questions, non-verbal communication, etc.);
- Oversees , develops, and improves the Department's recruitment, selection, and employment practices to ensure that all processes (including promotional) are administered fairly and consistently;
- Informs Department employees of Department new hires. In addition, the Water Utilities Department manager, deputy manager, and administrator meet one-on-one with all new employees within

the first month of employment to meet and greet, and review the City's personnel rules and regulations.

- Ensures that newly hired employees attend the Department's and Human Resources' new employee orientation programs, and have the tools they need to do their jobs;
- Expands the Department's recruitment outreach efforts to reach a more diverse pool of applicants for positions posted outside the City; and
- Solicits input from appropriate Department employees before positions become open for recruitment.

E. What is the Water Utilities Department (WUD) doing to help its employees manage conflict in the workplace?

The Department promotes an environment in which healthy conflict resolution techniques are communicated and demonstrated.

The Department ensures that employees know of the various conflict resolution tools that are available to them and how to use them. For example, all employees receive a laminated wallet-size card with the 'SOLVE' conflict resolution strategy on it. SOLVE promotes the following:

S: Situation/Self-inventory. What is the conflict? What are three possible solutions to resolving the conflict? What will the situation look like once it improves? What can the employee do to resolve the situation?

O: Openness. Speak to person directly about concerns and recommendations for resolving issue. Let person know you are willing to work together toward a resolution.

L: Levels. If the issue persists, speak to the next person in the chain of command.

V: Volley Ideas. Bounce ideas back and forth and/or utilize the City's mediation program.

E: Employee Safe Haven. If the conflict is unresolved after working through SOL and V, contact the Human Resources Manager or Diversity Manager for assistance.

In addition, Department employees learn of their rights and the City's philosophy regarding diversity (per Personnel Rules and Regulations, Sections 407 and 410), and are encouraged to attend various Conflict Management training programs.