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Docket Number:	17-AAER-08
Project Title:	Sprinkler Spray Bodies
TN #:	222998
Document Title:	CCWD Comments Low Water Pressure
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	CCWD/Chris Dundon
Submitter Role:	Public Agency
Submission Date:	3/19/2018 3:37:56 PM
Docketed Date:	3/19/2018

Comment Received From: Chris Dundon

Submitted On: 3/19/2018

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Low Water Pressure

CCWD endorses the goal of making Sprinkler Spray Bodies more efficient. Water wasted from sprinklers that are misting or fogging is very common. We do however recommend that analysis be done to ensure that properties that have low pressure are not adversely affected. While at the CEC hearing on March 14th, there was some discussion about areas that have low pressure. The following is some information I gathered from my water district, Contra Costa Water District (CCWD).

CCWD has a policy of delivering water between 40 – 79 psi. Our goal is to have the top of any pressure zone to have a minimum of 40 psi. However, sometimes areas have pressure that is higher or lower than that. In areas with water pressure that is lower than 40 psi, CCWD requires that a builder sign a Modified Pressure Agreement with CCWD stating that they acknowledge the pressure is less than 40 psi and that the home will be built with a booster pump. This agreement stays with the property forever. We have less than 50 homes out of 52,000.

I learned that there is a FIRE Hydrant code that requires all fire hydrants to have a minimum of 20 psi.

Fire Sprinkler Problem: A law passed a few years ago that now requires all homes built in CA to have fire sprinklers installed in ceilings. This has an unintended consequence. CCWD requires that that house now have a backflow preventer because we want to protect our water from the stagnant water in the fire sprinkler lines from getting back siphoned into our mainlines. By installing a backflow preventer we have lowered the operating pressure even more. Now, we have several thousand homes that would not have 40 psi, if that property had a backflow preventer installed. IE, they are just above 40 psi. If those homes are ever torn down and replaced, they would be required to have sprinklers installed and therefore a backflow preventer and therefore have pressure less than 40 psi.

I am not sure how or if this impacts your work, but hopefully it helps inform it.

Regards,

Chris Dundon

CCWD Water Efficiency Supervisor