

THE VALLEY VOICE

Porterville City Council Supports the County Of Tulare and Self-Help Enterprises to Use City Water for Emergency Response

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By: Valley Voice Contributor



At its meeting on January 17, 2023, the Porterville City Council unanimously approved to support the County of Tulare's request to provisionally use City water to serve homes across Tulare County on temporary household tanks. Due to a road closure caused by flooding on Avenue 368 in Visalia, contract water haulers for Self-Help Enterprises were unable to access the Bob Wiley Detention Facility well, which provides source water for 389 homes each week. With no other available water resources and the inability to access the well, the City Council agreed to support the access to its water on an emergency provisional basis until the road is repaired and the well can again be accessed.

The water provided to the 389 homes is part of Self-Help Enterprise's Emergency Tank Program, which has been taking place across Tulare County for residents whose water wells have run dry. The program is funded through the State of California, which funds the delivery of water on a weekly basis from the Bob Wiley Detention Facility well to residents in need. Without access to that well, there is no other water source for those residents, which prompted the Tulare County Office of Emergency Services to respond to Self-Help's request.

To support the County and residents across the county, the City Council agreed to the provisional access to City water from a previous agreement as part of the East Porterville Water Supply Project. The City Council agreed on the condition that the water is carefully tracked and recorded to the standards of the Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency. The amount of water requested was 1.3 million gallons a month, which will be billed at the same rate as City residents. Tammi McVay, Director of Emergency Services for Self-Help spoke at the meeting and advised that there were no other water resources for these homes. The City Council directed that an update of road repair and additional information be provided at its next meeting on February 7 in the determination as to whether the request for water needed to be continued.