

ORDINANCE NO. 2009- 003

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WIMBERLEY, TEXAS AMENDING TITLE V (PUBLIC WORKS) BY CREATING CHAPTER 51 (WATER CONSERVATION) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS TO CONSERVE WATER; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ORDINANCE; FINDINGS OF FACT; REPEALER, SEVERABILITY; EFFECTIVE DATE; AND PROPER NOTICE AND MEETING.

WHEREAS, the City of Wimberley ("City") is located in a region of the State of Texas where precipitation is frequently limited, and measures must be taken to conserve water; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has deemed it necessary to reduce the potential effect of a water shortage on those who live, work and visit Wimberley, Texas; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes it is necessary to minimize the potential for water shortage through the practice of water conservation and the enactment of these regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Wimberley finds there is a need to adopt provisions that will significantly reduce the inefficient consumption of water, thereby extending the available water resources necessary for the domestic sanitation and fire protection of the community to the greatest extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the following enactments are a valid exercise of the City's broad police powers and based upon the City's statutory regulatory authority, including but not limited to Texas Local Government Code Chapters 51 and 52; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the provisions of this Ordinance are the minimum requirements necessary to promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare, and are not in conflict with any state provisions.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WIMBERLEY, COUNTY OF HAYS, STATE OF TEXAS:

**SECTION 1. FINDINGS OF FACT**

All of the above premises are hereby found to be true and correct legislative and factual findings of Wimberley and are hereby approved and incorporated into the body of this Ordinance as if copied in their entirety.

**SECTION 2. AMENDMENT**

That Title V (Public Works) of the Code of Ordinances of Wimberley, is hereby amended to create Chapter 51 "Water Conservation", to read as follows:

**"Chapter 51 Water Conservation.**

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**§ 51.31. Administrative Action To Abate Violations.**

**§ 51.32. Abatement of Nuisance or Violation.**

**§ 51.33. Enforcement.**

**§ 51.34. Defenses.**

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**§ 51.01. Purpose.**

As the City is located in a region of the State of Texas where precipitation is frequently limited, the purpose of the regulations herein are to provide the minimum restrictions on the use and conservation of water within the City limits. The provisions are designed to significantly reduce the inefficient consumption of water, thereby extending the available water resources necessary for the domestic sanitation and fire protection of the community to the greatest extent possible; and further promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the citizens of Wimberley.

**§ 51.02. Jurisdiction.**

The provisions of this chapter shall apply within the City limits.

**§ 51.03. Definitions.**

Words and phrases used in this Chapter shall have the meanings set forth in this section. Words and phrases which are not defined in this Chapter but are defined in other provisions in the Code of Ordinances of Wimberley shall be given the meanings set forth in the Code. Other words and phrases shall be given their common, ordinary meaning unless the context clearly requires otherwise. Headings and captions are for reference purposes only, and shall not be used in the interpretation of this Chapter.

*Air conditioning system(s).* A mechanical system generally consisting of a compressor, thermostat and duct work permanently installed in a building for the purpose of controlling humidity and temperature. For the purposes of this chapter, an air conditioning system does not include window units.

*Agricultural irrigation.* Irrigation for the purpose of growing crops commercially for human consumption or to use as feed for livestock or poultry.

*Athletic field.* A sports playing field, the essential feature of which is turf grass, used primarily for organized sports for schools, professional sports, or organized league play.

*Automatic irrigation controller.* A device that automatically activates and deactivates an irrigation system at times selected by the operator.

*Beneficial use.* The amount of water that is economically necessary for a purpose not otherwise prohibited by the city, state or federal law or regulation, when reasonable intelligence and reasonable diligence is used in applying water for that purpose.

*Bucket.* Bucket or other container holding five gallons or less, used singly by one person.

*City Administrator.* The employee serving in the capacity of the City Administrator of this city, or his or her designee authorized to implement and enforce this chapter.

*Commercial dining facility.* A business that serves prepared food and beverages to be consumed on the premises.

*Computer controlled irrigation system (CCIS).* A system comprised of a computer controller (digital operating system), software, interface modules, satellite field controllers, soil sensors, weather station, or similar devices which is capable of achieving maximum efficiency and conservation in the application of water for irrigation. A CCIS, at a minimum, should be designed to (i) prevent over watering, flooding, pooling, evaporation and run-off; and, (ii) prohibit sprinkler heads from applying water at an intake rate exceeding the capability of the soil.

*Cooling Tower.* An open water recirculation device that uses fans or natural draft to draw or force air to contact and cool water through the evaporative process.

*Day.* A twenty-four (24) hour period beginning at midnight.

*Drought Management Plan.* A plan for management of available water resources as prescribed by the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District, Wimberley Water Supply Corporation and/or other authorized water purveyors operating within the Wimberley city limits, and as may be amended from time to time.

*Essential use.* A use of water which is:

(1) Essential to the protection of public health, safety, or welfare, including but not limited to use for drinking, food preparation, personal hygiene, public sanitation, control or prevention of disease and firefighting; or

(2) Essential to an industrial use or agricultural or military activity which directly supports gainful employment, unless the use is specifically defined in this chapter as a discretionary use; or

(3) Essential to irrigation use; or

(4) Watering of livestock.

*Evapotranspiration rate (ET Rate).* The rate which the combination of evaporation from soil surface and transpiration from vegetation will occur for specific climatic conditions.

*Existing landscaping plant.* A landscaping plant existing after such period of time as to accomplish an establishment and maintenance of growth.

*Golf Course.* An irrigated and landscaped playing area made up of greens, tees, fairways and roughs and related areas used for the playing of golf.

*Gray Water.* Water after use in bath and utility sinks, tubs, showers and washing machines.

*Hand-held hose.* A hose attended by one person, fitted with a manual or automatic shutoff nozzle.

*Hose-end sprinkler.* A sprinkler that applies water to landscape plants that is piped through a flexible, movable hose.

*Household use.* The use of water, other than uses in the outdoor category, for personal needs or for household purposes, such as drinking, bathing, heating, cooking, sanitation or cleaning, whether the use occurs in a residence or in a commercial or industrial facility.

*Impervious surface area.* Any structure or any street, driveway, sidewalk, patio or other surface area covered with asphalt, concrete, brick, paving, tile or other material preventing water to penetrate the ground.

*Industrial use.* The use of water for or in connection with commercial or industrial activities, including manufacturing, bottling, brewing, food processing, scientific research and technology, recycling, production of concrete, asphalt, and cement, commercial uses of water for tourism, entertainment, and hotel or motel lodging, generation of power other than hydroelectric, and other business activities.

*Irrigation system.* Also referred to as an in-ground or permanent irrigation system, being a system with fixed pipes and emitters or heads that apply water to landscape plants or turf grass.

*Irrigation system analysis.* A zone-by-zone analysis of an irrigation system that, at a minimum, includes a review of the following elements:

- (1) design appropriateness for current landscape requirements;
- (2) irrigation spray heads and valves;
- (3) precipitation rates expressed in inches per hour; and
- (4) annual maintenance plan that includes irrigation system maintenance, landscape maintenance, and a basic summer and winter irrigation scheduling plan.

*Landscape renovation.* The removal and replacement of existing landscape plants with new landscape plants.

*Landscape watering.* The application of water to grow or maintain landscaping plants, such as flowers, ground covers, turf or grasses (other than golf courses or athletic fields), shrubs, and trees, but for purposes of this chapter does not include:

- (1) Essential use without waste of water by a commercial nursery to the extent the water is used for production rather than decorative landscaping;
- (2) Application of water without waste to a noncommercial family garden or orchard the produce of which is for household consumption only; and
- (3) Except when certain stages of a Drought Management Plan are in effect, application of water at any time on any day by means of a bucket, hand-held hose, soaker hose (but not one that sprays water in the air), or properly installed drip irrigation system.

*Landscaping plant.* Any member of the kingdom plantae, including any tree, shrub, vine, herb, flower, succulent, groundcover or grass species that grows or has been planted out-of-doors.

*Large property.* A land tract owned by a general customer that equals or exceeds five acres in size and has an irrigation system.

*Livestock.* Cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, poultry, horses, and game, domestic, exotic and other animals and birds, including zoo animals, used for commercial or personal purposes.

*Livestock use.* The use of water for drinking by or washing of livestock.

*Make-up Meter.* A meter that measures the amount of water entering a cooling tower system.

*Other outdoor use.* The use of water outdoors for the maintenance, cleaning and washing of structures and mobile equipment, including automobiles and boats, or the washing of streets, driveways, sidewalks, patios and other similar areas.

*Park.* A tract of land maintained by a city, private organization, or individual, as a place of beauty or of public recreation.

*Person.* Any individual, corporation (including a government corporation), organization, state or federal governmental subdivision or agency, political subdivision of a state, interstate agency or body, business, trust, partnership, limited partnership, association, firm, company, joint stock company, joint venture, commission or any other legal entity.

*Pervious surface.* Any ground surface which can absorb water or other liquids.

*Precipitation rate.* The speed at which a sprinkler or irrigation system applies water. Precipitation rates are measured in inches per hour or inches per minute.

*Property address.* The street address of a property, unless multiple street addresses are served by a single meter, in which case the billing address will be used.

*Public facilities.* Municipally-owned or operated facilities.

*Rain sensor.* A device designed to stop the flow of water to an automatic irrigation system when rainfall has been detected.

*Recycled or Reuse Water.* Domestic or municipal wastewater which has been treated to a quality suitable for a beneficial use in accordance with applicable law.

*Requestor.* A person who requests a variance under this chapter.

*Residential Customer.* A single or multi-family dwelling unit containing two (2) or fewer family units.

*Soil holding capacity.* The amount of moisture in the soil that can occur without becoming saturated.

*Sprinkler.* An emitter that applies water to the landscape plants in a stream that travels through the air. Sprinkler irrigation can be applied by an irrigation system or hose-end sprayer or a soaker hose that sprays water in the air.

*Swimming pool.* Any structure, basin, chamber, or tank, including hot tubs, containing an artificial body of water for swimming, diving, or recreational bathing, and having a depth of two (2) feet or more at any point.

*TCEQ.* Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and its successor agency.

*TDS.* Total dissolved solids.

*Turf.* A surface layer of earth containing mowed grass with roots.

*Turf grass.* Perennial ground cover plants and grasses that are adapted to regular mowing and traffic through management.

*Vacuum system.* A system, often consisting of a pump, chamber, and tubes, that is used to create a vacuum for any of a variety of purposes, including but not limited to medical, dental and industrial applications.

*Vegetable garden.* Any "non-commercial" vegetable garden planted primarily for household use; "noncommercial" includes incidental direct selling of produce from such a vegetable garden to the public.

*Vehicle wash facility.* A permanently-located business that washes vehicles with water or water-based product, including but not limited to self-service car washes, full-service car washes, roll-over/in-bay style car washes, and fleet maintenance wash facilities.

*Vehicle wash fundraiser.* Any special-purpose vehicle wash event for which a fee is charged or donation accepted.

*Water.* Includes, but is not limited to potable or recycled water supplied by the Wimberley Water Supply Corporation or other water purveyor, or potable water withdrawn from any groundwater well, surface water from any river, creek, natural watercourse, pond, lake or reservoir.

*Water Waste.* Use of water without obtaining maximum beneficial use thereof. Waste shall also include, but not be limited to, causing, suffering, or permitting a flow of water used for landscape watering to run into any river, creek or other natural water course or drain, superficial or underground channel, bayou, or unto any sanitary or storm sewer, any street, road or highway or other impervious surface area, or upon the lands of another person or upon public lands. Waste shall also include, but not be limited to, any discharge of water used for commercial, industrial, municipal or domestic purposes to any storm, sanitary sewer, or septic system without the user first having obtained maximum beneficial use thereof. Waste shall also include, but not be limited to, failure to repair any controllable leak on property.

*Water flow restrictor.* An orifice or other device through which water passes at a restricted rate.

*Water purveyor use.* Water used for withdrawal, treatment, remediation, transmission and distribution by a potable water purveyor.

*Xeriscape.* A landscape consisting of a maximum of 50% turf grass, with the remaining percentage of landscape incorporating low water use plants and/or pervious hardscape. The approved low water use plant list, as may be amended from time to time, shall be available from the City of Wimberley and located at the City or City web site.

*Zonal irrigation system.* An irrigation system that segregates by station areas of shrubs, ground cover, bedding plants, and turf to accommodate a diversity of watering requirements.

**§ 51.04. Activities to be Regulated.**

The following activities shall be regulated in the manner set out herein. A person affected by such regulations may request a variance in the manner set out in Section 51.28. A violation of this Chapter shall be subject to the enforcement provisions set out in Section 51.33. It shall be and is hereby declared unlawful for any person to violate, refuse or fail to implement the requirements of this Chapter.

**§ 51.05. Landscape watering.**

It is the policy of the City to promote the efficient use of water without waste at all times on a year round basis. It is unlawful for any person to perform or permit landscape watering on any property within the city between the hours of 10 o'clock a.m. and 6 o'clock p.m. on any day during Daylight Savings Time, and between the hours of 11 o'clock a.m. and 7 p.m. the remainder of the year, except as expressly provided herein. Landscape watering is also restricted further during the times the Drought Management Plan of the Hays Trinity Ground Water Conservation District, Wimberley Water Supply Corporation and/or any other authorized public water purveyor within the city limits is in effect, and the stricter provisions shall prevail and control. Irrigating any turf grass, tree, plant, or other vegetation, or otherwise utilizing the water supply system to permit or cause water to pond, or to flow, spray or otherwise move or be discharged from the premises of any person responsible for any property within the corporate limits of the city to or upon any street, alley, gutter or ditch, or other public right-of-way, or into a storm water drainage system or facility shall be prohibited.

**§ 51.06. Swimming pools.**

Draining water from a swimming pool onto an impervious surface shall be prohibited.

**§ 51.07. Vehicle Wash Fundraisers.**

Vehicle wash fundraisers shall be allowed except when prohibited by the provisions of a Drought Management Plan. Such fundraisers shall be operated in such a manner so as to limit water waste.

**§ 51.08. Washing of Impervious Surface Areas.**

Washing driveways, sidewalks, parking areas, or other impervious surface areas on a commercial property with an open hose, or a spray nozzle attached to an open hose, or under regular or system pressure, except when required to eliminate conditions that threaten public health, safety or welfare, shall be prohibited. This restriction does not apply to residential customers except when such activity is prohibited by the provisions of a Drought Management Plan.

**§ 51.09. Irrigation System Operations.**

It shall be unlawful to operate a permanently installed irrigation system with a broken head or emitter, or with a head that is spraying more than 10 percent of the spray onto the street, parking lot, or sidewalk. This prohibition does not apply unless the head or emitter was designed to deliver more than one gallon of water per hour during normal use.

**§ 51.10. Minimum irrigation area and flow direction.**

- (A) Effective April 1, 2009, newly installed irrigation systems using pop-up spray or rotor technology shall not be used in landscaped areas which have both:
  - (1) dimensions less than five feet in length and/or width; and
  - (2) impervious pedestrian or vehicular traffic surfaces along two (2) or more perimeters.
  
- (B) Where pop-up spray and rotor heads are allowed in newly installed irrigation systems, they:
  - (1) must direct flow away from any adjacent impervious surface; and
  - (2) shall not be placed within four (4) inches from an impervious surface.

**§ 51.11. Irrigation System Rain Sensors.**

Effective April 1, 2009, rain sensors shall be installed and maintained on all irrigation systems equipped with automatic irrigation controllers on irrigation systems installed after April 1, 2009.

**§ 51.12. Zonal Irrigation System.**

In-ground irrigation systems installed on and after April 1, 2009, shall be zonal irrigation systems.

**§ 51.13. Irrigation Tailwater.**

The escape of irrigation tailwater, as that term is commonly used in the agricultural community, shall be prohibited. In addition, water loss through percolation in transmission canals shall be prohibited.

**§ 51.14. Water Leaks.**

Failing to repair a controllable leak, including a broken sprinkler head, a leaking valve, or a leaking faucet shall be unlawful.

**§ 51.15. Golf Courses.**

No golf courses located within the city limits shall be allowed to irrigate the greens, tees, roughs or fairways with potable water. Use of potable water for landscape irrigation in and around the club house will be permitted but must conform to all other requirements for landscape irrigation.

**§ 51.16. Annual irrigation system analysis for athletic fields, and large properties.**

- (A) An annual irrigation system analysis demonstrating no water waste shall be required for all athletic fields and large properties shall be submitted in writing to the City of Wimberley on or before May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, beginning on May 1, 2009; and
- (B) Municipal tenants and lessees of sports and athletic playing fields, and any other municipally owned properties, shall be responsible for compliance with this section. The City shall look directly to such tenants and lessees for compliance unless the municipality concedes by contractual agreement with the tenant/ lessee to assume the tenant / lessee's responsibility for compliance.

**§ 51.17. Commercial Dining Facilities.**

Effective April 1, 2009, commercial dining facilities shall:

- (a) Utilize positive shut-offs for hand-held dish-rinsing wands.
- (b) Utilize water flow restrictors for all garbage disposals.
- (c) Not operate a misting system in unoccupied areas.

**§ 51.18. Ice Machines.**

Effective April 1, 2009, newly installed ice machines shall not be single pass water-cooled.

**§ 51.19. Vehicle Wash Facilities.**

- (A) Vehicle wash facilities, commencing operation on or after April 1, 2009, using conveyORIZED, touchless, and / or rollover in-bay technology shall reuse a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of water from previous vehicle rinses in subsequent washes.
- (B) Vehicle wash facilities, commencing operation on or after April 1, 2009, using reverse osmosis to produce water rinse with a lower mineral content, shall incorporate the unused concentrate in subsequent vehicle washes.
- (C) Regardless of date of operation commencement, from and after April 1, 2009, self-service spray wands used shall emit no more than three gallons of water per minute.

**§ 51.20. Condensate Collection.**

- (A) Newly constructed commercial buildings installing air conditioning systems on and after April 1, 2009, shall have a single and independent condensate wastewater line to collect condensate wastewater to provide for future utilization as (i) process water and cooling tower make-up and/or (ii) landscape irrigation water.
- (B) Condensate wastewater shall not be allowed to drain into a storm sewer, roof drain overflow piping system public way or impervious surface.

**§ 51.21. Xeriscape Option.**

Effective April 1, 2009, homebuilders and/or developers subdividing lots and/or constructing new single family residential homes shall offer a xeriscape option in any series of landscaping options offered to prospective home buyers.

**§ 51.22. Model Home Xeriscape.**

Effective April 1, 2009, homebuilders and/or developers who construct one or more model homes for a designated subdivision shall have at least one (1) model home per subdivision landscaped according to a xeriscape design.

**§ 51.23. Rainwater Harvesting Option.**

Effective April 1, 2009, homebuilders and/or developers subdividing lots and/or constructing new single family residential homes shall offer a rainwater harvesting option in any series of design options offered to prospective home buyers.

**§ 51.24. Water Purveyors.**

Water purveyors operating within the city limits shall be required to implement programs, such as leak detection surveys and repair programs and stabilizing and equalizing system pressure to limit water waste.

**§ 51.25. Implementation of additional water use reduction measures, ("aquifer risk").**

- (A) Implementation of additional water use reduction measures may occur based on consideration of aquifer water quality or on other aquifer, seasonal or weather conditions.
- (B) Whenever the aquifer quality measures thirty percent (30%) TDS above the historical average and above the maximum TDS value for any public supply water well, the City Council, may declare additional measures to protect the aquifer as necessary.
- (C) Regardless of consideration of aquifer quality, in consultation with the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District, Wimberley Water Supply Corporation and/or other authorized water purveyor determine that other aquifer, seasonal, or weather conditions warrant, the City Council may also impose additional restrictions for all water uses.

**§ 51.26. Nuisance Declared.**

The violation of any part of this chapter is deemed a nuisance which may be abated and enjoined by the city. Any person creating a public nuisance shall be subject to the provisions of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Wimberley and other applicable law governing such nuisances, including reimbursing the City for any costs incurred in removing, abating or remedying such nuisance. The owner of any property where such nuisance has occurred shall be liable to the City for the cost of such abatement, removal or remediation, and shall pay such cost on demand, and the City acting for itself shall have the right to file a lien on the property to secure payment of the cost of such abatement, removal or remediation of the nuisance.

**§ 51.27. Presumption and Exception.**

For purposes of this chapter, it shall be presumed that the person owning the property on which the violation occurred or in whose name a water meter connection is registered with the water purveyor servicing the property, is the responsible party who has made, caused, allowed or permitted a violation of the provisions of this chapter. Proof that the particular premises had a water meter connection registered in the name of the defendant cited in a criminal or civil complaint filed pursuant to this chapter shall constitute a *prima facie* presumption that the defendant is a person who made, caused, allowed or permitted a violation pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

**§ 51.28. Variance.**

- (A) Owners of newly seeded or sodded turf grass and landscaping and new residential and commercial developments may receive a landscape watering permit upon application and approval by the City Administrator allowing for daily watering of the same until the turf grass and landscaping are established, which shall not exceed thirty days.
- (B) A person who is affected by these provisions may seek a variance in the manner set out herein. A person shall request a variance within thirty (30) days of the date a provision becomes apparently applicable to that person's activities and/or properties. For example, a person will have standing to seek a variance within thirty

- (30) days following receipt of a formal (citation) or informal notice of violation; prior to a notice of violation; or at the discretion of the City Administrator or his designee when, in the City Administrator's judgment, to deny standing to pursue a variance would clearly deny the applicant an opportunity to have justice and equity done for the applicant's case.
- (C) Time, date, place. A person seeking a variance under these provisions shall make such request in writing to the City Administrator. Such request shall be reviewed by the City Administrator. If the application, on its face, warrants a variance, the City Administrator may grant the request without hearing. Otherwise, the City Administrator shall review such request within thirty (30) days of receipt and shall inform the requestor in writing of the time, date and place for variance hearing if necessary.
- (D) Representation and notice of City's response; First Hearing. The requestor may be represented by a duly authorized representative and may introduce such evidence as the requestor believes to be relevant. The City Administrator shall hear the request. The requestor shall receive written notification by the City Administrator within thirty (30) days of the date of the hearing whether such variance is granted or denied.
- (E) Appeal. In the event the variance is granted, the decision of the City Administrator shall be final. Should the variance be denied, however, the requestor shall have ten (10) days from receipt of the denial of the variance to seek an appeal in writing. Within thirty (30) days of the written request for an appeal from the denial of a variance, the City Council shall hear the appeal. The requestor shall be informed in writing of the time, date and place where such appeal shall be heard. The requestor and/or his authorized representatives may present evidence to the City Council about why such appeal should be granted. The City Council shall make a determination and inform the requestor within ten (10) days of the date of the hearing of the appeal whether the appeal has been granted or denied. The determination of the City Council shall be final and shall be in writing.
- (F) Variance Qualifications. Variances to the regulated activities in this chapter may be issued by the City Administrator provided that the general intent of the provisions of this chapter have been met, and strict compliance with this chapter is proven to be impracticable to accomplish and to cause unnecessary hardship. The criteria to determine hardship shall include, but not be limited to, a showing of level of capital outlay and technical complexity in relation to conservation benefit to be derived, and time and effort required to accomplish compliance with this chapter.
- (G) Variance Criteria. The City Administrator shall also develop specific criteria to be used for the granting of variances from the provisions of this chapter which are appropriate to the provision for which a variance is being sought. Such criteria shall be applied equally to each request for variance under a particular provision. A requestor shall be furnished with the criteria to be utilized by the City Administrator prior to his/her variance application and/or appeal being heard.

**§ 51.29. Access to Premises.**

The City and its employees shall make every effort to contact the property owner or authorized occupant prior to entering the premises. Authorized persons or agents employed by the City, at all reasonable hours, have access to properties to ascertain if water is being wasted and whether provisions of this chapter have been and are being complied with in all aspects, however, this section does not authorize entry into a residence without consent of the owner or occupant.

**§ 51.30. Authorization to Enforce.**

The City Administrator is authorized and directed to commence any action, in law or in equity, including the filing of criminal charges deemed necessary for the purpose of enforcing this chapter. The City Administrator may seek civil penalties or impose surcharges as may be allowed by statute and this ordinance and any other legal or equitable relief available under common law or this ordinance, under Chapter 54 of the Texas Local Government Code as it may be amended to address the subject matter of this chapter, or any other applicable city, state or federal code, ordinance, statute, rule or regulation.

**§ 51.31 Administrative Action To Abate Violations.**

- (A) The City Administrator may proceed administratively to remove an alleged violation of this Chapter by giving notice to the owner of the property where the alleged violation occurred, in accordance with the following procedures:
  - (1) The notice shall inform the property owner of the alleged violation and state that the owner has seven (7) days from receipt of the notice to comply with this Chapter, and if such action is not taken, the City Administrator may, but is not obligated to:
    - (a) authorize that the necessary work be done or improvements made;
    - (b) pay for the expenses incurred in having the work done or improvements made; and
    - (c) charge the expenses to the property owner.
  - (2) Notice must be given personally to the property owner in writing or by certified mail return receipt requested addressed to the owner at the owner's address as recorded in the records of the Hays County Central Appraisal District.
  - (3) If notice by personal service cannot be obtained, the City Administrator may give notice by:
    - (a) publication of the notice, at least once, in a newspaper of general circulation, as defined by Subchapter C, Chapter 2051, Texas Government Code;
    - (b) posting the notice on or near the front door of each building on the property to which the violation relates; or
    - (c) posting the notice on a placard attached to a stake driven into the ground on the property to which the violation relates, if the property contains no buildings.

- (4) If notice by letter is mailed to the owner and the U.S. Postal Service returns the notice as "refused" or "unclaimed," the validity of the notice is not affected and the notice is considered as delivered.
- (B) If the City incurs expenses for the work done or improvements made, the Council may assess the expenses and create a lien, including possible foreclosure, against the property as follows and in the manner provided by law:
- (1) The City Administrator shall send a statement of expenses to the owner, requesting that payment be made to the City Secretary within twenty (20) days after receipt of the statement. The expenses to be charged to the owner of the property shall include:
    - (a) the amount paid by the City for the work done or improvements made;
    - (b) the costs of inspection;
    - (c) the costs of providing notice;
    - (d) the costs of identifying and notifying the owner of the property; and
    - (e) any incidental expenses.
  - (2) If the violator does not pay the expenses within twenty (20) days of receipt of the statement, the City Secretary shall file a statement of expenses with the Hays County Clerk, including the owner's name, if known, and the legal description of the property. A lien attaches upon the filing of the expense statement with the Hays County Clerk.
  - (3) The lien is security for the expenses incurred by the City and interest accruing at the rate of ten (10) percent per year on the amount due from the date of payment by the City.
  - (4) The lien is inferior only to tax liens and liens for street improvements.
  - (5) The Council may bring a suit for foreclosure in the name of the City to recover the expenses and interest due.
  - (6) The Council may foreclose the lien in a proceeding brought under the Tax Code, Chapter 33, Subchapter E.
  - (7) The statement of expenses or a certified copy of the statement is prima facie proof of the expenses incurred by the City in doing the work or making the improvements.
- (C) The City, in the notice of violation, may inform the owner by regular mail and a posting on the property that if the owner commits another violation of the same kind or nature that poses a danger to the public health and safety on or before the first anniversary of the date of the notice, the City without further notice may correct the violation at the owner's expense and assess the expense against the property. If a violation covered by a notice occurs within the one-year period, and the City has not been informed in writing by the owner of an ownership change, then the City without notice may take any action permitted by this Section.

§ 51.32 **Abatement of Nuisance or Violation.**

- (A) The City Administrator may, without notice, abate the waste of water or other violation of this chapter on any lot parcel, or tract of land, or part thereof, within the City in accordance with the procedures in this Section.
- (B) If the City pays the cost of abating the nuisance or violation, the Council shall assess the expenses and, if necessary, create a lien against the lot or parcel of land, including foreclosure on the property, in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as that described in Section 51.31 of this Chapter.
- (C) Not later than the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day after the date the Council or its designee has abated the nuisance or violation, the City Secretary shall give written notice to the owner of the lot or parcel of land in the manner required by Section 51.31 this Chapter. The notice shall contain:
  - (1) an identification, which is not required to be a legal description, of the property;
  - (2) a description of the violations that occurred on the property;
  - (3) a statement that the City has abated the nuisance or violation; and
  - (4) an explanation of the property owner's right to request an administrative hearing regarding the abatement.
- (D) If, not later than the thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) day after the date of the abatement of the nuisance or violation, the property owner files with the City Administrator a written request for an administrative hearing, the Council shall hold and conduct the hearing.
  - (1) The hearing shall be held no later than the twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) day after the filing of the written request for a hearing.
  - (2) At the administrative hearing:
    - (a) parties are not required to follow formal rules of evidence;
    - (b) the owner may testify or present any witnesses or written information relating to the abatement of the nuisance or violation; and
    - (c) the City may call the City Administrator or other individuals deemed appropriate to testify.

§ 51.33. **Enforcement.**

- (A) Violations. It shall be a violation of this chapter for any person in the corporate limits of the city that receives water service from a water purveyor authorized to supply water within the city limits, to intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or criminally negligently to allow or cause water waste, to allow landscape watering outside the prescribed hours for sprinkling, or to allow or cause any violation of any provision of this chapter.

(B) Penalties; surcharges.

(1) *Criminal.* Any person violating any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon citation and conviction, shall be punished by a fine not less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) and not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the first offense; a fine not less than two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the second offense; a fine of not less than four hundred dollars (\$400.00) and not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the third and additional offenses. If the court determines the offense relates to public health or sanitation, the maximum fine is \$2,000.00, regardless of the number of offenses. Each violation of a particular section of this chapter shall constitute a separate offense, and each day an offense continues shall be considered a new violation for purposes of enforcing this chapter. All fines collected under this section shall be remitted to the City of Wimberley and used by the City for the furtherance of water conservation programs and to help defray the cost of enforcement of this chapter.

(2) *Civil.* Civil penalties, imposed by courts of competent jurisdiction in civil actions for violations of this chapter, may also be assessed as may be allowed by applicable state law in any amount to be authorized by the State of Texas. Under Chapter 54 of the Texas Local Government Code, the City Council may direct the City Attorney to pursue civil enforcement for injunctive relief and the imposition of up to \$1,000.00 per day civil penalties appropriately imposed by the Court. This statutory remedy is in addition to the City's common law right to bring civil actions for injunctive relief to stop harmful acts, independent of authority found in the Texas Local Government Code.

**§ 51.34. Defenses.**

- (A) It shall be a defense to prosecution or imposition of fines that landscape watering was performed on any plant or seed planted in or transplanted to an area within such period of time as to accomplish a reasonable establishment and maintenance of growth, generally three weeks.
- (B) It shall be a defense to prosecution or imposition of fines that landscape watering was performed by a commercial enterprise in the business of growing or maintaining plants for sale, such as plant nurseries; provided, however, that such landscape watering shall be performed solely for the establishment, growth, and maintenance of such plants and not wasted.
- (C) It shall be a defense to prosecution or imposition of fines that landscape watering was performed by a residential or commercial water customer utilizing water from an on-site rain water harvesting system.
- (D) Use of gray water, treated wastewater or reuse water is a defense to prosecution.

Except as expressly amended herein, the Wimberley Code of Ordinances shall remain in full force and effect.

**SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately from and after its passage and publication as may be required by governing law.

**SECTION 4. NO VESTED INTEREST**

No person shall acquire any vested interest in this Ordinance or any specific regulations contained herein. This Ordinance and any regulation enacted hereby may be amended or repealed by the City Council in the manner provided by law.

**SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY**

It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance be severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of this Ordinance, and the remainder of this Ordinance shall be enforced as written.

**SECTION 6. PROPER NOTICE AND MEETING**

It is hereby officially found and determined that the meeting at which this Ordinance was passed was open to the public as required and that public notice of the time, place and purpose of said meeting was given as required by the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Notice was also provided as required by Chapter 52 of the Texas Local Government Code.

FIRST READING PASSED AND APPROVED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2009, by a 5 to 0 vote of the City Council of Wimberley, Texas.

SECOND READING PASSED AND APPROVED this 5<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009, by a 5 to 0 vote of the City Council of Wimberley, Texas.

WIMBERLEY, TEXAS

By: Tom Haley  
Tom Haley  
Mayor

ATTEST:

Cara McPartland  
Cara McPartland, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Carolyn J. Crosby  
Carolyn J. Crosby, Assistant City Attorney

