



Green Industry Alliance

P.O. Box 681412

July 25, 2012

The Green Industry Alliance Board of Directors had a conference call with two senior members of Mayor Ballard's (Indianapolis) staff on Wednesday, including Ryan Vaughn, Chief of Staff, and Rick Powers, Director of Code and Enforcement in regards to the water ban.

Rick Haggard, GIA President, began the call by explaining who GIA represents and gave examples of GIA's diverse membership and explained how the drought has affected GIA's entire industry and how the water ban imposed jointly by Mayor Ballard and Citizens Water has been extremely detrimental to the livelihood of the industry and for businesses across the county.

Ryan Vaughn then discussed the process and the history behind the Executive Order for a water ban. He explained that the City of Indianapolis has not had to deal with this extreme of a water issue since 1988 and it is further complicated by the fact that the City of Indianapolis no longer owns their own water utility (Citizens Energy took over the water utility last year). Therefore, Indianapolis and Citizens have had to form a partnership in order to try to enforce this water ban. The Mayor's Action Center (MAC) receives anywhere from 240-280 calls a day regarding watering abuse. The MAC then takes that information and sends it to Citizens which has the data to review egregious watering consumption. Once that data is cross-matched, it is sent back to the Mayor's office to the Code Enforcement department and three staff members then go out across the city to confront the most egregious offenders based off of the citizen-directed complaints. Vaughn and Powers told us that most of the violations occur in residential areas. They told GIA that the ban is in fact working – water consumption has gone down, but is still at an emergency-level.

Caryl Auslander, lobbyist that represents the Green Industry Alliance, then discussed the ambiguous language that was used in the Mayor's Executive Order (<http://image.exct.net/lib/fef51c757c6400/m/3/EXECUTIVE+ORDER+NO+4+2012.pdf>) and the Citizens Water FAQs (<http://www.citizenswater.com/education/dfaqs.aspx>) in regards to "new landscaping." **Vaughn explained that as the Mayor's office enforces this ban, they are NOT looking to hurt existing investments that have already been made.** The only new plants that could be planted and not considered as a part of the ban would be consumable products, i.e. vegetables. The example that he gave was that if a pool were already empty, it should not be filled. But if a pool had already been filled with water, and it needs to be "topped-off" in order to prevent the pool liner from becoming damaged – that would be a reason to fill it. This is also true with regards to an individual's home landscaping, it is still OK to water the existing plants with a hand held apparatus, but new plants are still currently prohibited. The Mayor's office, from a public-policy standpoint would like to enforce and protect existing infrastructure, however installation of new infrastructure is still banned at this time.



Green Industry Alliance

P.O. Box 681412

Caryl Auslander then inquired the issue affecting irrigation systems and the testing of the systems to ensure that the system does not leak. Vaughn and Powers agreed that testing the system already in place would fall under the category of “protecting current infrastructure” however installing new irrigation systems would fall under the category of “installing new infrastructure that would add to the consumption of water” and is therefore still banned as they would add to the load on the system. When pushed, the Mayor’s staff said that they would be willing to revisit the issue of installation of new irrigation systems as long as they were installed, tested, but not run in the future.

In regards to golf courses (who are currently exempted) it was discussed that greens, tees, and fairways need to stay exempted as they do not lie “dormant” like other parts of the golf course and cannot be revived and must be reseeded and resodded which is a huge expense to the golf courses.

Mayor Ballard is testifying today in Washington, DC before the U.S. House Committee on Science, Space and Technology on drought issues. GIA informed the Mayor’s staff that farmers have insurance and have access to relief through government assistance, but GIA’s members do not and are seriously hurting. A board member also sought direction on consideration of increasing capacity of the water supply now that this issue is present and could happen again – and the Mayor’s office directed this question to Citizens, as it no longer owns a water utility.

The line has been drawn in the sand – and the Mayor’s office was very consistent in their message. **Leeway may be given in protecting existing infrastructure, but installing new infrastructure that would add to the load of the water system is currently prohibited at this time.**

While this news is potentially crushing to the industry, it should be noted that I believe that the Mayor’s office did hear our plea and should the water emergency be increased (which is very likely), it is GIA’s hope that no more restrictions would be placed on our industry.

Rick Haggard  
President  
Green Industry Alliance

Caryl Auslander  
Senior Associate  
The Corydon Group