

Dear GEAA members,

Yesterday the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce announced that it opposes including commercial users in the proposed revisions to the water rate structure that would raise fees on those who use the most water. This indicates that San Antonio's business leadership still intends to rely on cheap water from the Edwards Aquifer as a strategy for attracting new business. It also means that they support golf courses and other non essential users over an equitable rate structure aimed at conserving water and spring flows. You can read more [here](#). Below is GEAA's statement.

It wouldn't hurt for those of you outside the San Antonio area to weigh in on this issue. **SAWS customers, please take this opportunity to support SAWS when they are trying to do the right thing.**

We encourage you to voice your opinions at any or all of these meetings, or to send comments to [Mayor Castro and City Council](#).

- June 10th (Thursday), 2:00 pm - City Council Public Hearing - Rate Structure (you do not have to sign up by 9:am to speak on June 10th)
- June 16th (Wednesday) 2:00 pm - City Council “B” Session – Rate Structure and Rate Increase
- June 17th (Thursday) 9:00 am - City Council action - Rate Structure and 2011 Rate Increase

We hope to see you there!

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June 10, 2010

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Press Release

Re: Change in rate structure proposed by SAWS

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance is delighted to wholeheartedly endorse changes to the water rate structure proposed by the San Antonio Water System (SAWS).

Our local member groups have long advocated changes to the rate structure such as these submitted by SAWS, and we thank the SAWS Board and staff for devising such an elegant and common sense method of encouraging additional water conservation. We believe the changes proposed will serve as the basis of an equitable system whereby those putting the most strain on our water resources will be charged accordingly, while those who conserve will be rewarded for their efforts. It is our hope that this rate structure will be adopted as proposed, and that it will result in a reduction of water use and the adoption of additional conservation measures where they are warranted.

Given that only 3% of the water on earth is fresh water, and only 1% of that freshwater is available for human use, we applaud SAWS extensive efforts to conserve water. Given that the Edwards Aquifer provides us with extremely high quality water, and that it is the basis of an ecosystem that we all rely upon, we are especially grateful for actions that prevent this precious resource from being squandered.

We find it outrageous that the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce is opposed to putting the burden of developing new water resources upon the largest consumers of those resources, and we question their motives for doing so. Especially as this body has consistently opposed proven measures to protect the quality of San Antonio's main source of water and other improvements that have earned our city recognition as a leader in water conservation.

At this time, when stakeholders from throughout the Edwards region are working hard to devise a plan to protect this precious resource, failure to adopt the proposed rate structure sends a strong message to others that San Antonio is unwilling to do our part to protect spring flows at Comal and San Marcos. We urge Mayor Castro and members of City Council to approve the rate structure as proposed by SAWS.

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The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance unites forty-eight member organizations behind a comprehensive plan to protect regional karst aquifers, their springs and watersheds, and the Texas Hill Country.

For more information, visit www.AquiferAlliance.org.