Mayor's Budget Questions From 04/17/2012
FY 2012-13 Water Bureau Requested Budget

1. The Mayor wants to know more about all bureaus that take non-emergency phone calls for the city. Please provide the following:

   The Water Bureau has six primary sections that answer non-emergency phone calls, the six sections are: Call Center, Water Service Dispatch, Water Line, Public Involvement (PIO), Downtown Water Bureau Front Desk and Interstate Water Bureau Front Desk.

   - The annual volume of calls for the last three years?

     Call Center –

Call volume 2009 to 1st quarter 2012
Group: Water Bureau Customer Service

Year	Total Call Volume	Total Calls Answered
2009	255,750	231,955
2010	262,593	246,142
2011	267,741	250,935
2012 1st Qtr	65,747	57,369

Service Dispatch – We have one year worth of stats and based on that information the average calls per year is approximately 22,000. The majority of the calls are non-emergency and we define emergency as life, limb or property damage. The percentages are approximately seventy five percent non-emergencies and twenty five percent emergencies.

Water Line – A database is used to track the types of calls and the area of town.

FY 2010-11 – includes the number of calls and nature of customer comments.

Area	N	NE	NW	SE	SW	S	E	W	Total
Informational	51	157	30	174	136				**548**
Water Quality									
Color	31	137	30	127	101			1	**427**
Odor	8	37	9	24	14			2	**94**
Taste	6	17	8	27	16		1		**75**
Dirty Water	31	92	19	106	85		2	1	**336**
Pressure									
High	2	8	11	7	11				**39**
Low	14	43	8	42	22				**129**
Fluctuating	3	8	8	7	4				**30**
Total									
Water Quality	87	323	78	325	244		3	4	**1,064**
Pressure	22	64	33	65	45				**229**

Resolution Rate:

By phone	2,239	89%
In the field	163	11%
Total	**2,402**	

FY 2009-10 – includes the number of calls and nature of customer comments.

Area	N	NE	NW	SE	SW	S	E	W	Total
Informational	44	171	36	188	154			1	**594**
Water Quality									
Color	25	127	21	140	106			1	**420**
Odor	10	47	5	26	11			3	**102**
Taste	4	10	5	12	3		1		**35**
Dirty Water	18	80	11	123	75			1	**308**
Pressure									
High	2	7	5	9	10				**33**
Low	12	41	11	41	14				**121**
Fluctuating	1	6	6	9	4				**26**
Total									
Water Quality	57	262	42	301	195		1	5	**865**
Pressure	18	58	27	67	34		1		**204**

Resolution Rate:

By phone	2,121	87%
In the field	315	13%
Total	**2,439**	

FY 2008-09 – includes the number of calls and nature of customer comments.

Area	N	NE	NW	SE	SW	S	E	W	Total
Informational	38	129	36	157	130	1	1		**492**
Water Quality									
Color	50	166	36	210	104	1	2		**569**
Odor	11	21	6	23	12				**73**
Taste	4	17	3	3	7				**34**
Dirty Water	27	128	17	134	47		2		**355**
Pressure									
High	5	7	5	11	16				**44**
Low	20	50	9	81	38				**198**
Fluctuating	2		2	6	7		1		**18**
Total									
Water Quality	92	326	62	370	168	1	4		**1,023**
Pressure	33	70	18	111	64		1		**297**

Resolution Rate:

By phone	2,235	86%
In the field	364	14%
Total	**2,599**	

PIO - Generally for the public information section the calls averages roughly 50 calls per month or 600 annually for the past three years. An accurate count is not available as each call is not tagged and logged.

Downtown Water Bureau Front Desk - The Water Bureau Business Office line 823-7404 is not tracked but the average number of daily calls is about 75. The call volume will change based on fluctuating media issues that will temporarily increase calls by a small margin. Based on that average the annual call volume for the past three years is approximately 18,825.

Water Bureau Interstate Front Desk - The Water Bureau Business Office line 823-1514 is not tracked but the average number of daily calls is about 10. The call volume will change based on fluctuating construction issues that will temporarily increase calls by a small margin. Based on that average the annual call volume for the past three years is approximately 2,400

- The type of calls handled by the bureau?

Call Center –

Account Management
- Collect person information
- Protect person information
- Update contact information
- Add/end relationship on account
- Update ownership

Auto Pay
- Send out application
- Update credit card information
- Returned auto payments
- Expired Credit Cards

Begin/End Service
- Open/close account
- Determine billing responsibility
- Landlord/tenant dispute
- Shut-off per customer request

Clean River Rewards
- Send applications to customers
- Advise residential customers what it is and how to apply
- Refer commercial/multi-family customers to Clean River Rewards program coordinator

Collections
- Late fees
- Shut-off for non-payment
- Illegal usage
- Crimp service
- Assessment of sewer charges to property tax
- Shut off of multi-family property
- Collection Agency
- Bankruptcy
- Write-offs
- Balance transfer

Explanation of bill/rates
- Increased usage
- Rate increases
- Base charge
- Billing periods

- Budget Billing
- Prorated usage
- Winter Average
- Sewer Only account
- Well account
- Stormwater onsite/offsite
- Clean River Rewards
- Portland Harbor Superfund
- Estimated bills
- Fireline usage
- Convert CCFs to gallons
- Commercial Submeters

Foreclosed properties
- Determine billing responsibility
- Review documents to determine possession/control by bank
- Lock meter for vacant property in foreclosure

Leaks
- Consumption history
- Service Orders to check for leaks
- Verify repairs
- Leak adjustment policy
- Unexplained increased usage

Low Income Assistance Program
- Pre-qualify based on income level
- Refer to agencies
- Crisis assistance
- Safety Net program

Meters
- Meter location
- Meter maintenance
- Meter exchange
- Automatic Meter Reading
- Meter Obstruction
- Grounds keeping notice
- Meter test request
- New service or meter upsize
- Kill service
- What does this meter serve
- Cross meters

Payments
- Payment over phone
- Misapplied payment
- Refund
- Payment transfer
- Unauthorized transaction

Payment arrangements
- Explain policy
- Long term arrangements

Police inquiries
- Assist police with water usage inquiries
- Who is living at the property

Portland Online assistance
- Pay/View bill on bureau website
- Create Portland Online account
- Forgot username/password
- Set up auto pay
- Sign up for e-bill
- Apply for Clean River Rewards

Public Information Requests
- Research and provide information

Referral
- Rockwood PUD
- Gatekeepers
- 211 information line
- Code Enforcement
- Renter's Rights
- Call Before you Dig
- Garbage Hotline

Rights and Appeals
- Provide information on appeal process
- Administrative Review Committee (ARC)

Water Conservation
- Send water conservation kits
- Refer residential customer to Water Conservation Group
- Refer Commercial customers to BIG program

Water Quality

- Refer to Water Quality line
- Seasonal water quality issues
- Water Quality credits

Service Dispatch -The calls are oriented mainly toward concerns, questions and water emergency. We receive a large variety of calls from the public and our crews. A sample of the types of calls we receive from the public are listed below.

Emergency calls

- No water
- Leaks **potential property damage causing service leaks, main breaks, etc.**
- Emergency Shut offs

Non-Emergency calls

- Dirty water
- Requests for disconnection or reconnection of water service
- Hydrants hit, leaking or out of service
- Meter box requests, for new or repairs
- Barricade request to pick them up
- Questions regarding work being scheduled or completed
- Driver complaints or issues
- Locates requests, questions and concerns
- Pipe identification information for contractors
- Hit or damaged Water Bureau facilities and or services
- Fire line shutdown and reconnect requests
- General customer complaints banging pipes
- High consumption
- Pressure-flow issue concerns and complaints
- Paving – concrete issues concerns complaints
- Sink holes, sunken cuts
- Reports of stolen Water Bureau property
- Damage claims related to Risk Management
- Illegal Water usage reports
- Reports of broken fountains
- Reports of grounds maintenance needed at PWB facilities
- Request for access to facilities

Calls from crews:

- Meter numbers
- Mapping information
- Consumption history
- Work order information
- Service requests
- No parking and barricade requests
- Damage reports referral to other utilities
- Locate information and requests
- Notifications of flushing/requests
- Shutdown information for water mains repair or maintenance
- Work status information for mobile units, availability etc
- Requests for phone numbers and update information
- Requests for parts
- Accidents reports
- Referral information for customers for other city services
- Medical emergency assistance
- Bacteria Sample reports from Lab
- Request for assistance, supervisor, traffic, police

25% of calls are emergency related and 75% of calls are non-emergency related

Water Line – The Water Line handles routine to complex questions on water quality. Questions range from technical issues such as the hardness of the water for dishwasher settings, discolored water complaints, low water pressure and concerns about public health when drinking the water. The Water Line is a single point of contact for customers who are experiencing water quality or water pressure issues or backflow questions. By providing a single point of contact for these specialized inquiries we enhance customer service through timely and accurate responses. In addition, call volume is reduced to the Call Center, which helps alleviate hold times for customers calling about billing issues. The goal of the Water Line is to respond to all calls on the same business day. Water Line staff work to educate customers on common water quality and pressure problems and how to resolve them. Simple suggestions, such as rinsing off an aerator to alleviate restricted flow or flushing pipes to improve water quality, often go a long way to resolving customer problems. But the more complex calls made to Water Line required a field visit Staff are a vital partner in the Lead Hazard Reduction program. They answer customer requests for lead test kits and, when they are returned, process them for analysis by the Lab.

PIO - The calls are varies, it can be oriented toward basic water consumption concerns and questions or to address questions on a specific capital project. The questions tend to spike when an issue is presented via the local media such as newspaper or television and with some focus on water quality issues. Additionally, calls are received seeking information on Water Bureau public features such as large public fountains and the Benson Bubblers, capital improvement projects, with a focus on neighborhood traffic impact. Within the PIO section the budget for "call-taking" is not separated from the Public Involvement subprogram, "call-taking" is part of the job responsibilities for staff.

Downtown Water Bureau Front Desk – The calls that the front desk receives can be placed in 5 categories.

a. External calls routed to Water Bureau Customer Services Call Center account for **61%** of the call volume. These are calls specifically related to the water and sewer bills.
b. External calls routed to other Water Bureau destinations, excluding Water Bureau Customer Services, account for **15%** of the call volume. These are calls that are routed to requested employees; to dispatch, to water permits office, to water quality office (Water Line), to administrator's office; or are project-related, media, or general inquiry.
a. External calls routed to other City services account for **5%** of the call volume. These are calls requesting government or utility services other than that of the Water Bureau. Standard practice is to route the call to the City Information and Referral Line 503-823-4000.
b. Internal calls from Water Bureau and other City staff account for **18%** of the call volume. The reception desk fields calls from internal and other City staff regarding Water Bureau resources and equipment such as conference rooms, pool vehicles, pool laptops; facilities needs; clerical assistance; other City support services; staff whereabouts; and many miscellaneous topics.
c. Hang-up calls account for **1%** of the call volume.

Interstate Water Bureau Front Desk – The calls that the front desk receives can be placed in 3 categories.

a. Internal calls from Water Bureau and other City staff account for **70%** of the call volume. The reception desk receives calls from internal and other City staff regarding Water Bureau resources and equipment such as pool vehicles, facilities needs; clerical assistance; phone numbers and other City support services; staff whereabouts; and many miscellaneous topics.
b. External calls routed to Water Bureau Employees and other areas account for 25**%** of the call volume.
c. External calls related to complaints or general inquiry account for 5**%** of the call volume.

- The budget amount dedicated to call-taking?

Sections	FY 2012-13 Requested Budget
Call Center	2,290,853
Service Dispatch *	72,000
Water Line *	87,000
Public Involvement *	27,000
Downtown WB Front Desk*	80,000
Interstate WB Front Desk*	20,000

The budget provided represents the portion of the sections budget that is associated to answering non-emergency calls.

- What union(s) the call-takers belong to? / What classifications are the call-takers?

Sections	Class Description	Total	Union
Call Center	Customer Accounts Specialist I	26.70	DCTU
	Customer Accounts Specialist II	3.60	DCTU
Call Center Total		**30.30**	
Service Dispatch	**Service Dispatcher**	**1.00**	DCTU
Water Line	Sr. Administrative Specialist	0.50	Non-Rep
	Office Support Specialist II	0.50	DCTU
Water Line Total		**1.00**	
Public Involvement	**Public Information Officer**	**0.25**	**Non-Rep**
Downtown WB Front Desk	**Office Support Specialist II**	**1.00**	**DCTU**
Interstate WB Front Desk	**Office Support Specialist II**	**.25**	**DCTU**