



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 16, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry 
County Administrator

Re: **Pima County Sewer Outreach Subsidy Program**

The Pima County Sewer Outreach Subsidy (SOS) Program was established in July 2007 to assist low-income customers with their sewer user fees. The SOS program has a tiered rate structure based on federal poverty guidelines. Depending on income and household size, customers may qualify for a 25 percent, 50 percent, or 75 percent discount on their monthly sewer fees, including the flat monthly service fee of \$13.00. This program is offered to all sewer user customers regardless of water company provider (i.e., City of Tucson, Metro Water, Oro Valley, Marana or private water companies). Currently, sewer user customers on a fixed income (e.g., social security, disability income, etc.) are required to recertify every three years, while all other SOS customers are required to recertify their eligibility annually.

The Pima County Community Action Agency (PCCAA) determines eligibility for the SOS program and the City of Tucson's Low Income Assistance program, which includes water and environmental services. The intent is to provide low-income individuals with assistance paying utility bills and accessing other programs from a single location. Individuals seeking assistance are required to schedule an appointment with PCCAA for eligibility certification. Due to the pandemic, recertification did not occur from March of 2020 through March of 2021, extending the qualification period for one year.

It should be noted that PCCAA administers the assistance program for not only Pima County and the City of Tucson but for other agencies and utilities. The advantage to customers is when they go in for an appointment for our low-income programs, they are also screened for other assistance programs administered by PCCAA.

In early March of 2021, the City of Tucson informed Pima County that they would begin the recertification process for their Low Income Assistance water and environmental services customers. At the end of March, they will begin sending out recertification reminders for those customers whose eligibility for the Low Income Assistance program will expire beginning in April 2021.

In order to stay consistent with the City of Tucson, Pima County will also begin the recertification process for SOS customers whose eligibility will expire starting in April 2021. This will benefit our low-income customers, as they will be able to recertify all three utilities

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Re: **Pima County Sewer Outreach Subsidy Program**
March 16, 2021
Page 2

with one appointment at PCCAA. In addition, we are currently reviewing the American Rescue Grant Act to determine if any delinquent balances that occurred since March 1, 2020 can be covered by these funds.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

CHH/mp

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Yves Khawam, PhD, Assistant County Administrator for Public Works
Jackson Jenkins, Director, Regional Wastewater Reclamation
Michelle Campagne, Director, Finance and Risk Management