

League of Monterey Peninsula Water Study & Privatization 2007  
[via email correspondence with Leaguer Janet Brennan]

The League studied ownership of water systems in 2007. Study materials are no longer available, but the position derived from the study is as follows:

Ownership of Water Distribution Systems

1. Water is a necessary resource for human life. As such, any entity responsible for the management, safety, and distribution of water should fulfill these criteria.
  - a. Maintain the viability of the resource. This includes meeting or exceeding water quality and environmental standards mandated by regulatory agencies and maintaining a sustainable water supply.
  - b. Maintain the physical assets including the water distribution and storage systems. This includes having comprehensive and long-range plans for such maintenance and improvements.
  - c. Set fair and responsible rates. This includes addressing low-income users, encouraging conservation, addressing only local and immediate needs. It should not include costs that address unapproved future projects. Rate setting should also be conducted in an open and transparent manner, with information to support the rate setting easily available to the public.
  - d. Maintain an efficient and well-run local office. This includes responding quickly to complaints, having a well trained staff and a responsive management team, having an open and transparent decision-making process.
2. Purchasing a privately owned water system with public funds could be considered if:
  - a. a significant number of the criteria in 1) are not met
  - b. sufficient funding is available.
3. The processes for purchasing a privately owned water system are in this preferred order:
  - a. Willing buyer and seller
  - b. Eminent domain via a local public agency
  - c. Eminent domain via the PUC
4. Assets of a water provider that should not be purchased would be sewers internal or external to the local watershed and wells and separate water systems that are external to the Monterey Peninsula Water system.
5. Any public agency overseeing the Monterey Peninsula water system should have a publicly elected governing board and be as local as possible and co-located with the water source and service area.
6. Water is a resource and not a commodity. Ownership of a water system by an international corporation is not supported.