

## ● Ethics Officer's January Monthly Report

### Summary

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This report provides a general update on the progress and activities for the Ethics Office for January 2006.

### Attachments

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None

### Detailed Report

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#### Activities

1. The Ethics Officer is working with the Legal Department to create methods for Metropolitan Directors and designated employees to meet AB 1234 requirements.
2. The Ethics Officer consulted on MWD position on Senate Bill 740 and participated in response to Senate Bill 520.
3. The Ethics Office hosted the Southern California Business Ethics Roundtable (SCBER) on January 17 with 25 participants.
4. The Ethics Officer submitted written and oral reports for the Ethics Officer's semi annual evaluation.
5. The second of three Ethics Manuals, *Partnering: Ethics and Contracts, Grants and Sponsored Programs at The Metropolitan Water District*, is complete.
6. The Ethics Officer and Educator met with 110 participants at the WSO Managers' Meeting on January 18.
7. The Ethics Educator and Assistant conducted five new employee orientations to introduce them to the Ethics Office. A more in-depth "Day 2" orientation was provided for 40 new employees.
8. The Ethics Office worked with CEO and Group Managers to clarify policy of accepting donations, discounts and gifts from vendors and contractors.
9. The Ethics Office is working with the MWD Library to create a multi-media Ethics collection including books, periodicals, videos and other materials for employee and Director use.
10. The Ethics Office will write a monthly column for People Interactive beginning March 2006.
11. The Ethics Office Web site logged 557 visitors from December 16, 2005 – January 15, 2006.

#### Logged Questions and Matters of Concern

1. **December 22, 2005 – Issue: Gifts**  
An employee was given a \$50 gift certificate from a contractor. His supervisor requested advice. The supervisor was notified that our Administrative Code disallows receiving gifts for work performed for MWD. The appropriate thing to do is to return it to the vendor with a note of thanks and explanation. (140)  
Disposition: Closed
2. **January 5, 2006 - Issue: Misuse of MWD Resources**  
An employee delivered an anonymous letter to a group manager regarding another employee who had been caught stealing from MWD. The employee expressing concern believed that the employee who had committed the violation was not appropriately disciplined for the infraction. Investigation showed that

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the employee was suspended without pay for 80 hours and that the response was consistent with disciplinary actions for like offenses. Case is closed barring further evidence of a problem. (141)  
Disposition: Closed

3. **January 5, 2006 - Issue: Misuse of Position**

A Director asked if it is acceptable to invite MWD Directors to a fundraiser. As the names of Directors are public record, there is no misuse of position in sending invitations to them. However, the Director was reminded that campaign solicitations on MWD property were not allowed and that MWD identifying materials could not be used in the invitation or solicitation. As a question was also raised regarding vendors or contractors, the Director was reminded that it was not allowed to "accept, solicit, or direct a political contribution of \$250 or more from any person or entity which has a financial interest in a contract or other matter while that contract or other matter is pending before Metropolitan and for three months after Metropolitan renders a final decision on that contract or other matter." (142)  
Disposition: Closed

4. **January 17, 2006 – Issue: Gifts**

An employee reported that a vendor had provided a \$100 Home Depot gift card in exchange for listening to a pitch regarding data management hardware/software. Gift cards were given to all companies that participated. The gift card would be used for Metropolitan purposes. As the card had been received and Metropolitan was one of many companies who received gift cards, the employee was told to use the \$100 for MWD, but to decline such offers in the future. (143)  
Disposition: Closed

5. **January 19, 2006 - Issue: Misuse of Position**

An employee worked with a contractor to develop a data management solution to a Metropolitan need. The employee and contractor co-authored a paper describing the problem and solution. The employee wanted to know if it was acceptable for a paper to be presented in a professional context that used Metropolitan data and described how the contracted software met Metropolitan's need. It was determined to be okay to use Metropolitan data in that context. (144)  
Disposition: Closed

6. **January 19, 2006 - Issue: Gifts**

An employee called regarding tool companies that donate tools for MWD's apprentice program, demo tools for Metropolitan employees and replace tools that break or wear out. As it has been the practice of Metropolitan to accept the donations, and as the option of trying out tools and tool replacement are services offered other companies, the practice is allowed to continue. However, this question, and other similar recent questions, has led to the need for policy review. Such policies will be discussed at an upcoming Group Managers' meeting. (145)  
Disposition: Closed