



November 18, 2025

Mayor Daniel Lurie
Paul Yep, Chief for Public Safety
Han Zou, Communication Director
Dean Crispen, Chief of Fire Department
Garreth Miller, Assistant Deputy Chief, ESER Project Manager
Carla Short, Director of Department of Public Works
Scott Anderson, Deputy Director for Project Delivery
Stephen Robinson, Assistant General Manager for Infrastructure
Carmen Chu, City Administrator
Brian Strong, Director for Office of Resilience and Capital Planning

CSFN Resolution Advocating for the Transfer of the Auxiliary Water Supply System

WHEREAS, As a result of the 1906 earthquake, San Francisco voters approved a General Obligation Bond to build a firefighting system of water pipes, hydrants and pumps which are independent of the City's drinking water system.

WHEREAS, This system was completed in 1913 and was designated as the Auxiliary Water Supply System (AWSS).

WHEREAS, In 1913 AWSS coverage was primarily in the northeast quadrant of the City.

WHEREAS, Even though AWSS has been expanded since 1913, large areas in both the Westside and Southeast currently have no AWSS protection.

WHEREAS, Since 1913 AWSS and its assets have been under the jurisdiction of the SF Fire Department (SFFD) with design and engineering under the auspices of the SF Department of Public Works (SFDPW).

WHEREAS, In 2010, despite an ESER Bond being on the ballot, then Mayor Gavin Newsom balanced the City's Great Recession budget by transferring AWSS jurisdiction and assets from the SFFD to the SFPUC.

WHEREAS, Since 2010 the SFPUC has implemented a number of AWSS policies which have had significantly negative impacts on the system.

WHEREAS, Instead of expanding AWSS, the SFPUC installed a system of cisterns on the Westside.

WHEREAS, Even though SFFD has only 44 fire apparatus, a single cistern requires two fire apparatus to extinguish fires; one to pump water out of the cistern and one to extinguish the fires.

WHEREAS, Once the fires are extinguished, a cistern does not automatically refill but must be refilled manually.

WHEREAS, The SFPUC then attempted to implement the Flexible Water Supply System (FWSS) which uses 350 lb hoses but was forced to abandon this approach as infeasible.

WHEREAS, The SFPUC is now attempting to implement a potable (drinking) water AWSS system which theoretically has the co-benefits of using a single water pipe for both drinking water and emergency firefighting.

WHEREAS, Although the SFPUC has stated that this concept comes from Japan, no fire departments in Japan seem to use it.

WHEREAS, Despite its naming convention, potable water AWSS does not primarily use drinking water but primarily uses "raw" water from Lake Merced.

WHEREAS, Once raw water enters drinking water pipes, the SF Department of Public Health would be required to issue a "boil water" alert.

WHEREAS, Once the catastrophic fires have been completely extinguished, water pipes which have been contaminated with raw water would need to be flushed out over a period of weeks even months.

THEREFORE, be it resolved, Based on the SFPUC's numerous policy missteps regarding AWSS, CSFN insists that the current mayor initiate a process to transfer the AWSS jurisdiction and assets from the SFPUC back to the SFFD including current unencumbered and encumbered AWSS funds in the Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) Bond program, as well as, any future AWSS funds from the proposed June 2026 ESER Bond.

Deborah Murphy
President CSFN
president@csfn.net