

Coalgate to buy Oklahoma City water

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The Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust and Coalgate have reached an agreement allowing Coalgate to buy untreated water from the Atoka Pipeline.

Coalgate will likely need the water while the dam at Coalgate City Lake is repaired, City Manager Roger Cospers said. The five-year agreement also allows Coalgate to buy water even after the dam is repaired, and the agreement can be renewed after it expires.

Cospers said Coalgate, which provides water for about 80 percent of Coal County residents and businesses, will also likely need the water if there's more drought in 2012 and if the area's population rises.

“If we went through another summer like we did last year, we'll definitely need it,” Cospers said.

Coalgate can buy up to 160 million gallons each year at a price of \$1.57 per thousand gallons, plus a service charge of about \$180 per month, according to the contract. Coalgate has to pay for infrastructure to tap into the pipeline, and that's funded by a city bond issue.

The Atoka Pipeline takes water from Lake Atoka to Lake Stanley Draper, one of the Oklahoma City's three major water reservoirs.

The pipeline and other water rights owned by Oklahoma City are currently the subject of litigation initiated by the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations. The matter is in mediation, and involved parties have agreed not to discuss it publicly until the mediation is finished.

There's no language in the contract regarding the lawsuit, but a clause allows Oklahoma City and Coalgate to get out of the deal if a new or amended law “substantially adversely affects” them.

Oklahoma City sells untreated water from the pipeline to seven other customers, including Shawnee, businesses and an Oklahoma Gas and Electric Co. power plant, utilities spokeswoman Debbie Ragan said.

Another OG&E plant buys untreated water from Lake Overholser, and the city sells

treated water on a wholesale basis to 13 customers, including Edmond, Norman and other suburbs.



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