SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT

TO: Board of Directors **AGENDA NO. V-D**

FROM: Steve Mack, General Manager

Meeting Date : August 4, 2011

SUBJECT: REJECTION OF CLAIM BY RICHARD LOWELL

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Reject the Claim of $238 by Richard Lowell.

FISCAL IMPACT: not significant.

DISCUSSION:

Richard Lowell, a customer of the Sweetwater Springs Water District who lives at 20816 River Boulevard and receives water service there, has filed a claim against the District for half the cost of a new water heater ($238) which he stated needed to be replaced because of the poor water quality of the water delivered to his house. He stated that he has had to replace his water heater after five years of use instead of the normal life span of 10 years. The water quality complaint that he asserts is that District water plus his location on a dead end of the system resulted in continuing, intolerable smell from his water heater that required its replacement. He states that more frequent flushing by the District would have prevented the smell. He also states that the current water quality he is getting is much improved (his residence is in the CIP IV-B, Project 2 area).

Staff recommends that this claim be rejected. While there may have been odor problems with Mr. Lowell's hot water system there may be many reasons for the odors. There also may have been solutions other than replacing the hot water heater. District staff were not consulted prior to the replacement of the water heater; perhaps actions less expensive that water heater replacement may have solved or improved the odor situation. Unknown by staff is how regularly the old hot water heater was used – stagnant water in hot water systems encourage the bacteria growth that produce the odor.

The District has many dead ends and staff flush these dead ends on a regular basis. Replacing hot water heaters at these locations because of possible odors from the hot water heaters is not a practice the District should want to financially support.