

Long Beach **WATER**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners Announce Christopher Garner as New Water Department General Manager**

*Garner Director of City's Gas and Oil Department*

LONG BEACH, CA – The Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners announce Christopher Garner, the City's Director of Gas and Oil, as the new General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department, effective September 14<sup>th</sup>. The Commission conducted a nationwide search for the replacement of Kevin Wattier, who will retire next month.

“We were fortunate to have a very deep pool of applicants,” said Harry Saltzgaver, President of the Board of Water Commissioners. “That is, I think, a testament to the quality of the Long Beach Water Department. Chris Garner stood out from that field with his long and successful experience of managing a large utility department. The commission believes he is the perfect person to build on the tradition of excellence created by Kevin and the general managers before him.”

“Chris is going to be a great General Manager for the Long Beach Water Department. He has demonstrated strong leadership as the Director of Gas and Oil and Public Works Departments,” said Robert Garcia, Mayor of the City of Long Beach. “I know he will maintain our Water Department's place as a leader in conservation through application of new technologies, while also focusing on customer service. I commend the members of the Water Commission for finding a leader who will ensure a smooth transition and close working relationships with the rest of the City.”

“The Long Beach Water Department will continue to be in great hands,” said City Manager Pat West. “I want to personally thank Chris for all his hard work and dedication to the City, and I look forward to continue working with him in his new position as General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department.”

“It is truly a privilege to be selected by the Water Commission to lead the Water Department team in their continuing effort to provide reliable, reasonably priced water, as well as quality customer service to the residents and businesses of Long Beach,” said Christopher Garner, Director of Long Beach Gas and Oil. “Leaving my position as Director of the Long Beach Gas and Oil Department after 28 years of serving with its dedicated employees, I have full confidence in their ability to continue the provision of quality services to our community.”

“Garner will be a key player in the current statewide drought,” said Kevin Wattier, General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department. “I’m confident that he will continue to make Long Beach a leader in water conservation.”

Garner was born and raised in Long Beach and has been with the City of Long Beach for 31 years, beginning his City career in 1984 within the Tidelands Agency that included Oil Properties, Beaches and Marinas, and leaseholds for Tidelands properties such as the Convention Center. He transferred to the Gas Department in 1987 and has been a leader in the energy industry for the past twenty-eight years. Under Garner’s leadership, Long Beach and Signal Hill residents have received the lowest gas bills in California for the past three years. Garner is a board member of organizations such as the American Public Gas Association and the California Municipal Utilities Association. Garner holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Business Administration from Loyola Marymount University.

Long Beach Water Department’s General Manager Kevin Wattier announced his retirement in May after a 35-year career in the water industry, including 14 years with the Long Beach Water Department.

Long Beach Water is an urban, Southern California retail water supply agency, and the standard in water conservation and environmental stewardship.

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