

CA city OKs softener buyback program

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FILLMORE, CA — This city soon will begin an \$80,000 water softener buyback program and a related public outreach campaign, according to an April 12 [Ventura County Star](#) article.

The program and outreach campaign are designed to help the city avoid heavy fines from the state for exceeding chloride discharge limits in its wastewater.

Public Works Director Bert Rapp urged the City Council at its April 8 meeting to adopt the water softener buyback program. He told council members, who adopted the program in a 3-2 vote that every liter of the city's wastewater contains 50 milligrams more chloride than the state allows due to the large salt discharge from about 500 residential water softeners in use throughout the city.

The program, which will kick off with a public outreach campaign, will employ local plumbers to remove brine-discharging softeners from homes. Homeowners will receive about \$400 from the city's program to help offset the cost, the article said.

Mary Farkas, spokeswoman for Fillmore's Chloride Control Committee, said in the article that the state, which has not yet fined the city, has warned Fillmore it must have a solution in place by September. Otherwise, the city faces a \$3,000 fine per day.

It is illegal in Fillmore to install brine-discharging water softeners, which are subject to a \$1,000 fine. The ban affects softeners installed after June 11, 2004, the article said.