

AGENDA NOTE – HRPDC QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

ITEM #14: FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A. **Commissioner Debbie Ritter’s request for information on media reports of EPA tracking hotel guest water use**

The EPA is not monitoring or tracking water use by hotel guests. The media reports are referring to a University of Tulsa student project funded by a grant from the EPA’s P3 program ([P3: People, Prosperity and the Planet Student Design Competition for Sustainability](#)). The P3 program has two phases, and the University of Tulsa team succeeded in getting a phase I award of a \$15K grant to research and develop a design project during the academic year. They are designing a low-cost device to attach to shower fixtures that will “provide hotel guests with the ability to monitor their daily water online or with a smartphone app and will assist hotel guests in modifying their behavior to help conserve water.” As part of the final project report for their phase I grant, they submit a project proposal for phase II grant funding up to \$75K to “further the project design, implement it in the field, and move it to the marketplace.”

The 10/15/2014 EPA news release about the grant award can be found at:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/3881d73f4d4aaa0b85257359003f5348/26ef800a85695fb285257d72006d7e24!opendocument>

Media coverage of this story prompted the following from EPA Deputy Press Secretary Laura Allen:

“Let us be very clear, EPA is not monitoring how much time hotel guests spend in the shower,” Allen said. “As part of the People, Prosperity and the Planet (P3), a student design competition for sustainability, students at the University of Tulsa are conducting research to develop a novel low-cost wireless device for monitoring water use from hotel guest room showers. The marketplace, not EPA, will decide if there is a demand for this type of technology. It’s ultimately up to hotels to use technology like the monitors being developed at the University of Tulsa. EPA is encouraging creativity with water conservation efforts.”