

Johnson and Garside purchased water which SLC seeks to grab using legal artifice and misleading statements. SLC claimed in court pleadings it is a culinary water provider and does not compete with irrigation providers. This is incorrect. SLC has an ordinance 17.16.680 setting the rate for irrigation water. This is just one of many incorrect statements made by SLCDPU.

## Ads Target Salt Lake City Water Department

06.07.2010 by [Elizabeth Ziegler](#)

(KCPW News) Cottonwood Heights has been blanketed with 14,000 fliers a group calling itself Utahwater.net sent out last week in the community newspaper, Cottonwood/Holladay Journal. Its website describes Salt Lake City's water department as a cash cow and water hog. Jeff Niermeyer, Salt Lake City director of public utilities, says the flier is being circulated by two Utah County water brokers who've been fighting the city for its water rights for the past decade.

"They've sent it to legislators, they've sent it to just about anybody, but really what you do is you've got a choir of two people all trying to somehow, thinking that they can, discredit Salt Lake City to somehow help them in their quest to take over Salt Lake City's water rights," Niermeyer says.

The brokers, Evan Johnson and Jim Garside, own the majority of shares in an irrigation company, Big Ditch, which distributes water to some residents in Cottonwood Heights. They dispute Salt Lake City's claim that the city owns the rights for the water it has provided Big Ditch for more than a century, including water from Big Cottonwood Creek. Niermeyer says the city has been fighting this claim in court for the past three years.

"Since they haven't fared well in the courts, they've now just spread out all this kind of propaganda," Niermeyer says. "I get probably one or two of these type of emails a week, laced with 30, 40, to 90 pages of just information that I no longer even try to make sense of."

A district court ruled in favor of the city last July, but Johnson and Garside are appealing to the Utah Supreme Court. A hearing is expected this summer. In an e-mail to KCPW, Johnson claimed the city is not only hoarding water, but selling it at a great profit.

SLC employee-Jeff Niermeyer declines to debate Kevin Tolton on water issues.

Self-regulation, and self-oversight gave us the BP gulf disaster. What will the self-regulation and circular oversight of a Billion dollar utility bring SLC?

The brochure sent to Cottonwood Heights was provided to SLC Council and Jeff Niermeyer for comment and to check for errors.

SLC did not respond. The data came from SLC's controller, SL County's Treasurer, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, Jordan Valley, Provo City, Orem City.

SLC does not dispute the data in the Utahwater.net brochure. SLC simply attacks messengers who have been attacked by SLC for a decade.

Utahwater.net again challenges SLC to point out the errors in the Cottonwood Heights Journal insert.

Johnson and Garside have NO interest in taking over Salt Lake City's water rights. Johnson and Garside would simply like to use the water they buy without the chronic interference from SLC Public Utility Department which has for 10 years destroyed the transferability of water and competition. Director Niermeyer has authorized numerous protests, lawsuits, and phone calls in order to stop the water development projects of Johnson and Garside.

East Jordan Irrigation shares, Sandy Irrigation shares, Union & East Jordan shares, Brown Ditch shares, Lower Canal shares, Big Ditch shares, Holliday Water Company shares were all blocked from transfer by SLC Public Utilities. All these shares were purchased on the open market and owned by Johnson or Garside. This is not water owned by SLC nor shares owned by SLC.

When Johnson files water transfers, SLC Public Utilities chronically lights up the phone tree up to get non-interested water users to protest and block Johnson's water transfers.

SLC has spent millions on protests, lobbying, and lawsuits to stop the transferability of water and destroy competition not to decrease water costs to SLC residents, SL County residents, and Wasatch County residents, but to INCREASE water costs.