



CUWA Policy Principles

Water Use Efficiency: Water Conservation

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Water Use Efficiency, which includes water conservation, water recycling, and stormwater capture, is an expanding part of CUWA member agencies' long-term water supply reliability efforts for meeting future water demands. Water conservation has been a core element of Water Use Efficiency since the 1980s.

Policy Statements

- Water conservation is an essential component of CUWA agencies' long-term water supply portfolios.
- Compared with other water supplies, water conservation has the advantages of reducing some water utility costs, customer water and energy use, and wastewater generation. Conservation can also delay the need for new facilities to increase capacity and can help address climate change impacts.
- Water conservation is an important element of future water supply but is not in itself sufficient to manage all future water demands.
- Water conservation has the potential to create demand hardening (e.g., customers who already use water efficiently will have a more difficult time further reducing water use versus customers who have not yet conserved). Demand hardening can reduce the amount of water available for additional conservation during times of extreme shortages.
- CUWA agencies support compliance with the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SBx7-7) to help the State achieve a 20 percent statewide reduction in per capita water use.
- Per capita water use (in terms of gallons per capita per day [GPCD]) from one area to another or between utilities can vary significantly due to land use patterns, socioeconomic conditions, climate, commercial and industrial uses, and local regulations.
- CUWA agencies support establishing successful conservation programs while also achieving revenue stability.

Approaches

CUWA agencies are committed to continuing the following water conservation approaches.

- Encourage the development of urban water efficiency standards for commercial and industrial equipment and devices.
- Support development and expansion of agricultural water use efficiency programs, which may incorporate optimization of crop production.
- Support public education and outreach to encourage and maintain customer behavior changes and technology adoption.

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- Support the pursuit of innovative and cost-effective technologies, best practices, and new programs that improve water use efficiency.
- Support advancing water conservation in landscape water use, as it represents a significant demand and has a large potential for efficiency improvements.
- Promote scientific cost benefit analysis and verification of water conservation programs.
- Collaborate with other utility organizations, public stakeholders, and state and federal agencies involved in advancing water conservation programs.