



Water Efficiency and Conservation Update

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While also a regulatory requirement, the Municipal Utilities Department (MUD) Water Conservation Program ensures that water is used efficiently and responsibly to meet the needs of the community. This is accomplished primarily through targeted outreach, and effective communication and education of water-saving best practices. Despite an ongoing global pandemic, water conservation outreach and education continues through rebates, virtual water consultations and workshops. These water conservation efforts are an integral part of the City's overall drought resiliency strategy, as they may mitigate some of the water resources challenges Tempe could face in the future.

WaterSmart Registration Goal Achieved

Utilizing Advanced Metering Infrastructure, which digitally tracks water usage for each customer, and the Customer Portal *WaterSmart*, the City is able to provide residents and businesses powerful tools that promote water efficiency and conservation. Aside from providing a platform for targeted outreach, *WaterSmart* provides customers access to daily and hourly water usage data and high usage notifications, such as leak alerts. Over 18,700 automated leak alerts were sent in 2020, saving an estimated 41 million gallons of water.

MUD set a goal of 20 percent *WaterSmart* registration, citywide, by the end of 2020, to provide more effective and targeted water conservation efforts directly to customers. Through intense and consistent outreach, the City registered over 4,800 additional water utility customers on *WaterSmart* in 2020, achieving the 20 percent goal before the end of the year.

Large Volume Residential Customer Outreach

Any household that uses more than 40,000 gallons of water in at least one month of the year is considered a large volume residential customer (LVRC). In 2020, staff continued to execute successful outreach strategies developed in 2019, and added direct calls to all LVRCs with phone numbers associated with their water accounts, but had not yet registered for *WaterSmart*. In 2020, all LVRCs received at least one form of outreach regarding the City's water conservation programs, with many having been contacted by various means. Outreach efforts to LVRCs and other residents is ongoing and has included:

- 2,975 phone calls to LVRCs, resulting in 702 *WaterSmart* registrations and 265 new email addresses added to the system for leak alerts;
- 81 direct email blasts and newsletters to water utility customers, for a total of 181,801 individual emails, including monthly emails to LVRCs;
- 12 direct mailings, such as postcards and letters, to all water utility customers, for a total of 379,935 individual mailings, including four direct mailings that specifically targeted LVRCs.

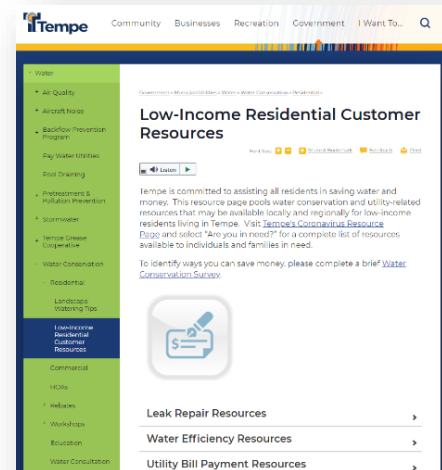
Low-Income Residential Customer Outreach

To ensure outreach efforts target all Tempe residents, the City is collaborating with numerous partners to better understand how to effectively reach Tempe's low-income residents. Geographic areas in Tempe with high percentages of low-income residents were cross-referenced with water meter data to develop a list of outreach candidates. In 2021, the City will survey residents who live in these areas to identify specific strategies to increase water efficiency and conservation and reduce utility bills as a result. In 2020, 56 Tempe residents completed the Water Conservation Survey; of the respondents, 38 indicated they have experienced hardships paying a utility bill in the last 12 months.

MUD collaborated with the Finance Division's Customer Services Section to promote utility resources, including water efficiency and conservation programs, to residents who were behind on paying their utility bills. Outreach efforts to low-income residents is ongoing and includes:

- Six direct email blasts, for a total of 4,093 individual emails sent;
- A "Utility Bill Assistance" themed article in the October issue of *Tempe Today*, which is sent to more than 40,000 utility customers;
- Development of a water conservation webpage specifically focused on resources available for low-income residents.

These initial efforts are being tracked and measured for effectiveness and, in 2021, will be supplemented with new and creative means of outreach and education targeted towards this specific audience.



Virtual Education and Water Consultations

The City's virtual library of water conservation digital education resources continues to expand. The Sustainable Living Landscape Series has been offered eight times, virtually, since May 2020; recordings of the workshops are available on the City's website. These workshops include topics such as care for desert trees, smart landscape watering, irrigation controller programming and backyard composting. The Water Conservation Resource Library and Landscape Watering Page assist residents with research-based articles, digital brochures and interactive tools offering best practices for landscape design, desert plants, leak detection and more. Water consultations continue to be offered through a variety of virtual means, including phone and video applications. Since March 2020, MUD has performed 349 virtual consultations.

Water Conservation Performance Measure Update

In 2014, the Tempe City Council approved Performance Measure 4.03, which established a goal of achieving a rate of less than or equal to 110 gallons of residential water use per capita per day (GPCD). The City achieved and exceeded this goal in 2018, and maintains a current residential water use average of 104 GPCD. MUD's new goal, which utilizes sector-based demand tracking goals including residential GPCD was approved by City Council in 2020.

Water Wise Landscape of the Year 2021

The Water Wise Landscape of the Year award honors Tempe residents and businesses that maintain water wise landscapes by demonstrating excellent horticulture maintenance and design standards, while highlighting the beauty of native and other desert plants. Many Tempe residents and businesses are eligible for the award. Please see tempe.gov/conservation for details of the nomination process. Nominations are accepted until February 17, 2021.



Water Utilities Division Drought Resiliency and Preparedness Communications Tool

MUD has developed and implemented the use of fact sheets to quickly and easily inform the community about ongoing efforts and investments in drought preparation and resiliency strategies. A fact sheet on the update to Tempe's Drought Resiliency and Preparedness Plan was published in November 2020; a fact sheet on Water Conservation activities and outreach results for 2020 will be published in January 2021. Visit the [Water Utilities webpage](#) to view the most current fact sheet.

Water Conservation Program Results and Overview

Participation in Tempe's water efficiency and conservation programs is tracked for both broad-based and targeted outreach efforts.



Many of the metrics in the chart above can be tied directly to estimated water savings through increases in efficiency. In 2020, conservation efforts saved an estimated 437 million gallons of water. The Municipal Utilities' Water Conservation Program remains committed to effective water-saving best practices, targeted outreach and measurable outcomes, when possible, to ensure that Tempe's water is used efficiently and responsibly.