



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

SEATTLE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM REGIONAL WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

JUNE 2016

Program Overview

Saving water benefits people, salmon, and wildlife

The Saving Water Partnership (SWP) is a collaboration of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and 18 water utility partners that purchase water from Seattle. The SWP's conservation program emphasizes long-term water use efficiency for residential and commercial customers.

2015 was a unique year for the SWP program. A major summer drought took place, the first in 10 years, and the SWP program provided key expertise to support the regional response. In addition to the special emphasis on drought response, the regular SWP program continued to serve customers. The SWP expanded its community and youth education services. Educational campaigns for efficient water use in the landscape continued. The SWP continued to cost-share customer replacement of old water-using equipment with new equipment that is more efficient than national and state appliance and fixture codes require.

Collectively, the SWP is working to achieve the region's adopted Water Use Efficiency Goal in compliance with the State of Washington Municipal Water Law (RCW 70.119A.180) and the resulting Water Use Efficiency Rule (Chapter 246-290-800 WAC). The SWP regional goal is set by the Seattle Regional Water Supply System Operating Board and adopted by each SWP member utility.

Conservation prepares the region for potential water supply challenges, helps customers use water wisely, and preserves the ethic of stewarding natural resources.



Saving Water Partnership
Seattle and Participating Local Water Utilities

Regional Water Use Efficiency Goal and 2015 Results

The Saving Water Partnership has adopted a six-year regional Water Use Efficiency Goal: reduce per capita use from current levels so that the Saving Water Partnership's total average annual retail water use is less than 105 million gallons per day (mgd) from 2013 through 2018, despite forecasted population growth.

In 2015, the Saving Water Partnership, with the support of residential and commercial customers, met the goal, using 96.9 mgd. The cost of implementing the SWP program in 2015 was \$1.6 million.

Achievement of the goal is accomplished by customers who change their behavior and/or install efficient equipment. Customers engage in these efficiency measures for a variety of reasons including concern for the environment, desire to save money, and codes and standards that require higher efficiency in new fixtures and appliances. Water savings fall into three categories:

- **Conservation Program:** Savings that result from the SWP program. With respect to equipment, the SWP program promotes equipment more efficient than federal and state codes and standards, as well as equipment not covered by codes or standards.
- **Codes and Standards:** Savings that occur as customers replace older, less-efficient fixtures with new, more-efficient models that meet federal and state codes and standards. These savings are also achieved as new buildings are built using efficient code-compliant equipment.
- **Independent:** Savings that result from customers who make efficient choices, independent of the SWP program or codes and standards.

2015 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- In July, Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett jointly activated their Water Shortage Response Plans, and in August asked customers to voluntarily reduce water use by 10 percent. The SWP conservation program supported the drought response until conditions returned to normal in November by:
 - Providing knowledgeable staff
 - Leveraging relationships with the landscape industry, major water users, and the media
 - Leveraging the SWP website into a regional hub used by customers and the media
 - Emphasizing the SWP programs as ways for customers to reduce their water use.



Kids make terrariums at Northshore Utility District's booth at Kenmore Music in the Park.

- The youth education program that launched in 2013 was expanded by nearly 100 programs, conducting 360 in-classroom presentations for nearly 9,200 K-12 grade students. Topics included water efficiency, the water cycle, the salmon life cycle, waterwise gardening, and the water supply system. A new class, "Fix That Leak!" was developed this year.
- Nine community festivals rolled out the Water Refilling Station, where customers refilled their water bottles and talked with utility staff about water quality, water conservation, and other utility topics of interest.
- The SWP provided materials for 12 community festivals in all, in Bothell, Duvall, Renton, Seattle, Water District 90, and Woodinville, attended by approximately 5,150 customers.



SWP sponsored Savvy Gardener classes by four utilities, including this one by Ladd Smith on resilient gardening.

- The Savvy Gardener program presented 15 gardening classes by four partner utilities in spring and fall to 385 residential customers. The classes were designed to inspire, create, and maintain healthy, sustainable, water-efficient landscapes.
- The SWP educated landscape professionals on water efficiency topics by co-sponsoring two Green Gardening Workshops.
- Site traffic on the regional website, www.savingwater.org, grew by nearly 40% in 2015 compared to 2014.
- The SWP launched a new annual survey to assess customer attitudes toward conservation. 94% of respondents said that using water wisely is important. 95% said they take steps to use water wisely at home, for three main reasons: protect the environment; save money, and waste less.



Direct mail and trade paper advertising promoted the toilet rebate program.

- The SWP continued to promote 1.1 gallons per flush (gpf) Premium toilets for residential and commercial customers. These toilets use at least 20% less water than WaterSense toilets. Lists of locally available models, and retailers that carry them, were maintained to help customers find these models.

2015 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- 53 apartment and condominium buildings upgraded 355 toilets to 1.1 gpf Premium models and nearly 680 toilets to 1.28 gpf WaterSense models. The SWP continued surveying program participants in both the Premium and WaterSense rebate programs to learn more about customer satisfaction with the toilets and the program. Survey results for both single family and multifamily customers are very positive.



This hotel in Renton upgraded restroom fixtures and ice machines.

- Water efficiency projects were completed at 52 businesses. Real progress is being made in transforming the market from WaterSense toilet models to Premium 1.1 gpf models, with seven area hotels making the switch. A special effort was conducted to reach out to smaller ethnically-owned hotels.
- Based on groundwork done in 2014, eight regional partners have reached an agreement to form a new regional green business program which will help market commercial conservation programs. The program will be developed in 2016, with a soft launch in late 2016 and a full launch in 2017. The program will use the EnviroStars brand and feature a single web portal for businesses to find partners' programs.



The Landscape Working Group developed a new irrigation timer rebate that will launch in 2016.

- A new irrigation timer rebate was developed to serve customers with less than one acre of irrigated area. The program will launch in 2016.

PROGRAM	ACTIVITY LEVEL
Youth Education	
Classroom Presentations	360 presentations / 9,200 students
Community Outreach	
Festivals and Events	12 festivals / 5,150 festival attendees
Residential Landscape Education	
Savvy Gardener Classes	15 classes / 385 attendees
Garden Hotline	1,500 water efficiency questions 18,700 soil, lawn and plant questions (many relevant to water efficiency)
Natural Yard Care Guides and Fact Sheets	5,430 brochures distributed
Residential Toilets	
Multifamily WaterSense Toilets	37 buildings / 679 toilets
Multifamily Premium Toilets	16 buildings / 355 toilets
Single Family Premium Toilets	241 homes / 325 toilets
Commercial Equipment	
Kitchen Measures	8 projects
Restroom Measures	30 projects / 1,285 fixtures
Custom Projects	2 projects
Cooling / Refrigeration / Ice	6 projects
Clothes Washers	1 project
Cool Tunes (Cooling Tower Incentive)	5 projects completed / 6 ongoing participants
Irrigation Projects	
Landscape Irrigation	2 projects
Landscape Professionals Trainings	
Regional Collaboration (Local Hazardous Waste Management Green Gardening Program)	13 trainings / 554 attendees

SUPPORTING ELEMENTS

For Customers

- Technical assistance to residential and commercial customers on irrigation efficiency issues.
- Technical assistance to commercial customers on indoor efficiency issues.
- Regional website www.savingwater.org.
- Regional hotline (206) 684-SAVE.
- Regional Language Line, offering language interpretation by phone.
- Take-home items including toilet leak detection kits and hose washers.

For Partner Utilities

- Seasonal message repository for use in utility newsletters and other communications.
- Support for Water Use Efficiency Rule reporting.
- Saving Water Partnership annual report.
- Messaging on water conservation benefits for salmon, in fulfillment of resource agency and tribal agreements.



Everyone pitched in during the 2015 drought, when Seattle, Tacoma and Everett asked customers to curtail their water use until the fall rains returned.



Woodmoor Elementary students gathered to learn about the water cycle.



The SWP produced a PSA with the Mariners Moose that ran pre-game all season on the big screen at Safeco Field.



The SWP website, Savingwater.org, was the key information resource for customers and the media during the drought.



Ceradyne Inc., a 3M Company, participated in the Cooling Tower Incentive Pilot Program and in Water Smart Technology rebates.



Roxanne Heller of Water District 119 inspects the upgraded urinals at Stillwater Elementary. The school replaced 30 restroom fixtures.



A new water recycling system for Marmo e Granito, a natural stone product supplier and fabricator, is saving 1,800 gallons per day.

 **Saving Water Partnership**
Seattle and Participating Local Water Utilities
(206) 684-SAVE www.savingwater.org

SEATTLE REGIONAL WATER CONSERVATION SERVICE AREA



Saving Water Partnership:

- Cedar River Water & Sewer District
- City of Bothell
- City of Duval
- City of Mercer Island
- City of Renton
- Coal Creek Utility District
- Highline Water District
- North City Water District
- Northshore Utility District
- Olympic View Water & Sewer District
- Seattle Public Utilities
- Soos Creek Water & Sewer District
- Water District Number 20
- Water District Number 45
- Water District Number 49
- Water District Number 90
- Water District Number 119
- Water District Number 125
- Woodinville Water District

SWP administered by:
Seattle Public Utilities
Resource Conservation Office

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Cover art: "Silvers" by Shaun Peterson; 2013, Limited Edition Giclee Print, 12.75" x 19" Photo courtesy of Stonington Gallery