

IBCC's WATER CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Purpose:

Review Water Conservation Best Practices Guidebook and Conservation Strategy to create broad policy statements based on the results of the BMP Guidebook. If the task group feels it is appropriate and can make progress, they will also discuss options for better quantitative measure of conservation. In its June meeting the IBCC concluded that the task group will focus on the ability of utilities to adopt and implement best management practices rather than percent reductions.

Members:

- Wayne Vanderschuere (Organizer)
 - Jeff Devere
 - Steve Harris
 - Mike Shimmin
 - Heather Bergman, assisting
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| Jay Winner |
| Taylor Hawes |
| Steve Vandiver |

Activities:

Following up from the August 30 IBCC meeting, the sub-committee was asked to incorporate input from IBCC, refine the recommendations, and prepare for presentation at the October 14 IBCC meeting. Three new members of the sub-committee were added.

On September 13 several sub-committee members conducted a conference call to establish direction and begin preparing ideas and materials. Since then, the sub-committee continued regular discussions. The approach is to sharpen and enhance recommendations and classify them into immediate implementation opportunities (0-1 year or 2011) and longer range (1+ years) implementation and/or study opportunities.

Approach:

Water conservation should be pursued and integrated with a Statewide multi-faceted strategy that will contribute to closing the State's projected water gap. Water conservation should be pursued to a reasonable degree within the context of a water providers obligations to provide surety under severe drought and water shortage conditions, as well as providers obligation to provide water for economic vitality and growth.

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Recommendations for consideration:

Immediate implementation (2011)

1. The State should educate and promote stewardship of water resources that recognizes water's critical role in supporting the quality of life and economic prosperity of all Coloradans. Develop a unified statewide messaging about water and water conservation that is consistent, sustained, and simple.
2. The State should adopt and require water efficiency standards which meet or exceed EPA's WaterSense fixture and appliance specifications in all indoor building codes; and periodically updates such codes to include new product specifications adopted by WaterSense.
 - a. All new residential and commercial construction and renovation that requires building permits or certificate of occupancy should be required to install water efficiency fixtures and appliances that meet or exceed WaterSense specifications.
 - b. Compliance should be approved by an appropriate authority.
3. Issue an Executive Order for all State agencies to prepare and implement a water use reduction and conservation plan to reduce water demand by X% by (date) and annually report on Agency's success in meeting its plan to the Governor's Office along with annual budget requests. This Order is similar in intent and in parallel with Executive Order D0012 07 "Greening of State Government: Detailed Implementation concerning reducing energy use." Such order should outline that State agencies implement landscape plans that replace turf and higher water requiring landscapes with xeriscaping keeping in mind the need for tree canopies to reduce urban heat sink.
4. Update HB1051 to require all "covered entities" to report on all "foundational" water conservation practices (customer tracking, water loss, rate structures).
 - a. Decrease size of "covered entities" to include more (smaller) water entities.
 - b. Water entities will develop and implement rate structures that encourage water conservation.
 - c. Water entities will pursue best available technologies and practices to minimize water loss in conveyance, storage, treatment, and distribution.
 - d. Mandate Statewide commercial and residential landscaping codes are applicable to new construction, customized to local economy and climate, and that such codes include provisions to prevent developers from having the option to buy out of the requirements.
 - e. The State should require water entities to report on consumers water bills water consumption, water rates, and water cost in uniform and consistent format.
5. For planning purposes at this time, a reasonable estimate of the total amount that conservation measures can predictably play in meeting the projected 2050 water supply gap, when considering the economic impacts and other practical considerations that are involved with implementing future conservation measures, is _____ acre feet per year.

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Recommendations for consideration:

Longer term implementation (2012+)

1. To increase achievable projections, and accelerate realization of water conservation potential, the Subcommittee suggests that real estate point of sale legislation be adopted and that it be applicable to all commercial and residential sales. The legislations should include requirements for the installation of high efficiency dishwashers, clothes washers, and toilets (to be defined as readily available in the year of sale) as a condition of sale. Compliance will be approved by an appropriate authority.
2. The State requires the adoption of water efficiency standards which meet or exceed EPA's WaterSense product and certification specifications in all landscaping plans and projects requiring supplemental irrigation; and periodically updates such codes to include new product and professional certification specifications adopted by WaterSense.
 - a. All new landscape construction and renovation , excluding those performed by a homeowner, is required to adhere to WaterSense specifications, inclusive of installed technology and shall be certified by auditing professionals as compliant in design of irrigation and installation.
 - b. Compliance should be approved by an appropriate authority.
3. Investigate and discuss whether acceptable revisions to Colorado water law can be made to allow storage and reuse of waters saved from municipal, agricultural and/or non-consumptive water conservation activities, without requiring additional court adjudication of the rights to such conserved water and without injuring other water users or affecting State's compact obligations.
4. Recognizing that agriculture is the largest segment of water consumption, the State and water organizations should continue to investigate and discuss potential improvements in agricultural water use efficiency and whether such conserved water can redirected towards other beneficial uses while benefiting the water rights holders and without injuring other water users or the State's compact obligations.

Unresolved issues. Sub-committee consensus was not reached.

1. The State and water organizations should investigate non-consumptive water efficiency (demand/flow reductions) in times of hydrological shortage and analyze whether such conserved water can be redirected towards other beneficial uses, while maintaining minimum flows to support environmental purposes and without injuring other water users or the State's compact obligations.