



# Best Practices for Implementing Water Conservation and Demand Management Through Land Use Planning Efforts

## Addendum to 2012 Guidance Document

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FOR LAND AND WATER POLICY



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## I. WHY INVOLVE WATER PROVIDERS IN LAND USE PLANNING?

Water providers in Colorado have been improving the efficiency of their use of water for many years. Enhancing water efficiency and conservation can bolster water supplies, enhance resilience, and contribute to quality of life for customers. Incorporating input from water providers into land use planning efforts can lead to the development of water efficiency strategies and provide a new suite of opportunities to achieve greater water savings, and is another tool in the toolkit for dealing with increased demand and potentially decreasing supplies.

Colorado’s Water Conservation Act was amended in 2015 to require an evaluation of best practices for implementing water conservation through land use measures. This legislation recognized that the designation of acceptable land uses by the planning authority in its long-range planning process and the subsequent approval of specific development proposals are significant factors in the water demand of new development. Configuring new development to reduce its water footprint will in turn provide enhanced ability to absorb new growth, meet community priorities, and contribute to better resiliency of existing supplies without sacrificing quality and desirability.

There are numerous ways in which a land use authority can influence water demand, such as requirements or incentives for low water use landscaping, efficient outdoor fixture requirements, turf limitations, incentivizing density, and requiring water conservation commitments or adherence to green building standards. Conversely, other land use decisions can result in unnecessary increased water demand, such as requirements for turf landscaping of open space or detention areas, preferences for large single-family lots, and inattention to water use in general.

Coordination between water providers and land use planners in the land use planning and development approval processes can ensure that planners and developers are aware of the water impacts of the proposed development and of the potential to reduce tap fees and ultimate costs to consumers through adjustments to the development proposal. This type of coordination requires more from the water provider than simply responding to a referral of a new or re-development proposal from the land use authority. True integration of the water supply and land use planning functions will help ensure that planned development does not exceed the water provider’s ability to adequately supply services, within the limits of its available water supplies, infrastructure, and finances. The need for and location of additional infrastructure to serve proposed development can entail a significant cost. Early discussion of these constraints and opportunities to reduce costs can significantly benefit the developer and the community.

After development is approved and occupancy occurs, it is the water provider’s rates, tap fees, and policies that primarily influence conservation and efficient use of water. For Colorado providers that already utilize inclining block rate structures, tap fees based on the amount of water the development will need, and other techniques that incentivize lower water use, **the greatest potential for future additional savings may lie with the initial land use approval.**

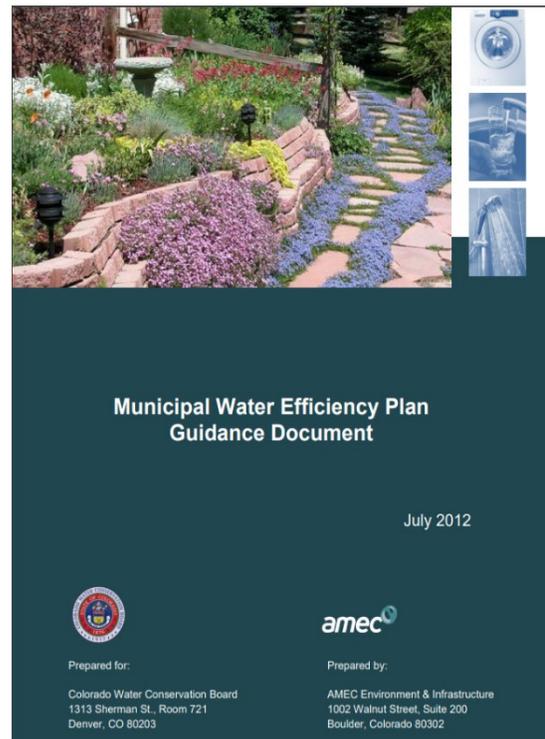
## II. USING THIS DOCUMENT

### A. About This Guidance Addendum

This guidance addendum addresses the State of Colorado Senate Bill 2015-008 requirement that a Water Efficiency Plan (WEP or Plan) evaluate “best management practices for water demand management, water efficiency, and water conservation that may be implemented through land use planning efforts.”<sup>1</sup> A measurable objective in [Colorado’s Water Plan](#) is that by 2025, 75 percent of Coloradans will live in communities that have incorporated water-saving actions into land use planning. This guidance addendum is intended to address both of these statewide goals.

#### 1. Organization and Applicability

In 2012, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) adopted detailed guidance for creating Water Efficiency plans, which has been closely adhered to by most providers submitting WEPs. This guidance addendum augments, and does not replace, the existing 2012 [Municipal Water Efficiency Plan Guidance Document of the Colorado Water Conservation Board](#) (2012 Guidance). The same organization of potential water conservation activities, originally from the 2010 [Statewide Water Supply Initiative Conservation Levels Framework](#), is used here as in the 2012 Guidance. The various types of water conservation activities in this framework are divided into: (1) Foundational; (2) Targeted Technical Assistance and Incentives; (3) Ordinances and Regulations; and (4) Education and Outreach. Foundational activities are intended to establish a platform for ongoing communication and collaboration between the water provider and the land use authorities that govern development within the provider’s service area. The next three categories can build on the foundational relationship established between the water and land use professionals.



2012 Guidance for Water Efficiency Plans

The techniques and activities identified in this guidance addendum include hyperlinks to descriptions, research, or implementation examples that further illustrate each concept.

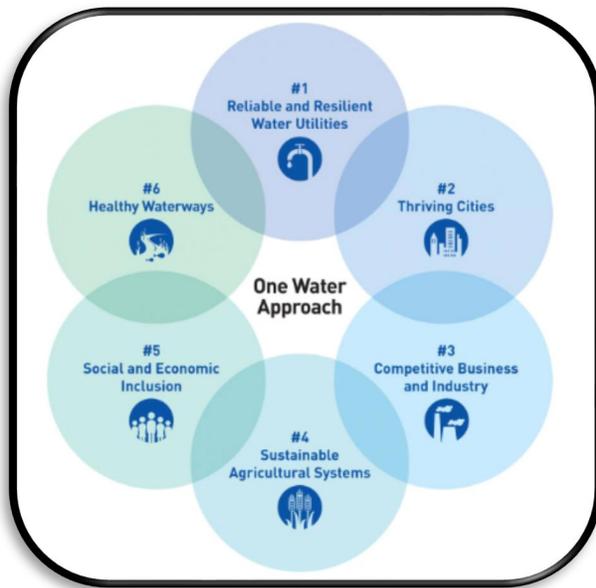
<sup>1</sup> Now codified at Colo. Rev. Stat. § 37-60-126(4)(f)(I).

**Not all best practices listed in this guidance addendum will be applicable to or suitable for every water provider.** The information presented here is intended for review by water providers to determine which techniques might be useful to them, based on their particular needs, size, geography, water availability and cost, development level and potential, and likely citizen and elected official interest and acceptance. More detailed information is provided on each technique so that water providers can delve into those that are of the most interest.

Some of the techniques described here, particularly those in the chapter on [Ordinances and Regulations](#), are already identified in the 2012 Guidance. The inclusion of such activities in this guidance addendum is intended to encourage consideration of whether cooperation between the water provider and land use authority creates additional potential for implementation of water conservation or demand management that would not be possible or practical by the water provider alone.

## 2. One Water Planning

Many of the techniques described in this guidance addendum on best practices for implementing water conservation through land use planning efforts are consistent with a “One Water” approach, also known as Integrated Water Resource Management. According to the [Blueprint for One Water](#) funded by The Water Research Foundation, One Water is “an integrated planning and implementation approach to managing finite water resources for long-term resilience and reliability, meeting both community and ecosystem needs.” This approach is intended to provide greater opportunities to optimize regional infrastructure, and increased coordination among agencies and departments, all within the context of economic growth.



Because the components of an integrated water system come under the responsibility of different agencies, collaborative planning and action is required to create a plan that will capitalize on the tools and resources available. Greater integration of the land use planning function and the water supply and conservation function is one element in the overall One Water framework. Amendments in 2018 to the [Colorado Water Quality Control Commission’s Regulation 84 on reclaimed water](#) provide greater flexibility in the use of reclaimed water for non-potable purposes and a potential tool in the One Water toolkit. Water providers and land use planners can benefit from a review of the *Blueprint for One Water* when collaborating on long range planning

documents and the water provider’s WEP.



### **3. Audience for This Guidance Addendum**

As with the 2012 Guidance, this guidance addendum is intended for water provider staff and contractors who have a moderate level of experience in water efficiency and water supply planning.

### **4. Note on Terminology**

Throughout this guidance addendum, the term “planning department” is used to refer to the entity within the relevant land use authority with responsibility for new or re-development approvals and drafting and modifying long-range planning documents like the comprehensive plan or zoning regulations. This term is used generically, recognizing that the applicable department in a local government may be referred to as Development Services, Community Planning, Planning and Building, or some similar name. In smaller jurisdictions, there may not be a separate department or dedicated staff person, but a designated official—such as a town clerk or public works staff—that provides planning services. All such entities or personnel are included in the term “planning department.” The term “land use authority” refers to the local governmental entity, a municipality or a county, that is authorized to plan for and regulate the use of land within its jurisdictional boundaries. For further understanding or a refresher of terminology used in this guidance addendum, see Appendix A, Water and Planning Glossary, of Water Research Foundation’s report, [Joining Up Urban Water Management with Urban Planning and Design](#).

### **5. Hyperlinks**

The links in this guidance addendum are current as of the date of publication. The Colorado Water Conservation Board will review this guidance addendum and its links annually to ensure that linked information is active and to provide appropriate examples and materials.



## B. Incorporating Land Use Planning Efforts into a Water Efficiency Plan

WEPs have been required for Covered Entities in Colorado since 1991 and over 80 water providers serving approximately three-quarters of the state’s population have filed these plans. The [2012 Guidance](#) provides a step-by-step framework for planning for water efficiency. To comply with the requirement added in 2015, the water provider’s evaluation of land use planning measures should also be addressed in the Plan.<sup>2</sup>

**Funding.** The Colorado Water Conservation Board can provide financial assistance for water efficiency planning and implementation of Water Efficiency Plans through its [Water Efficiency Grant Program](#).

Water providers should work with the land use authorities governing their service areas to determine which activities will best serve their current and future customers. The potential costs and benefits of selected strategies should be evaluated, and consideration given to non-quantifiable benefits using a triple bottom line approach: economic, social, environmental. Selected techniques may result in per capita water savings that can be made available to advance many different community objectives, such as serving future growth,

supporting more resilience in overall water supplies, preservation of adjacent agricultural land, or keeping more water in regional streams.

### 1. Addressing Barriers to Collaboration with Land Use Authorities

Water providers and planning department personnel identify a lack of time as the biggest barrier to meaningful collaboration. While time and human resources are often limited, the increasing stress on water from population growth and demand on supplies suggests that it is critical to allocate the time required to influence water demand through land use measures. A 2018 report sponsored by The Water Research Foundation, [Joining up Urban Water Management with Urban Planning and Design](#), discusses this and other perceived barriers, and suggests strategies for overcoming barriers to achieve better integration of land and water planning. A [webtool](#) is provided to help identify priorities for collaboration and strategies to overcome any barriers that may arise.

### 2. Choosing Among the Best Management Practices

The breadth and diversity of water providers in Colorado necessitates an expansive list of best practices in the integration of water and land use planning for consideration. Differences in

<sup>2</sup> Initially called Water Use Efficiency Plans, the terms “water conservation plan,” “water efficiency plan,” “water use efficiency plan,” and simply “plan” are now used interchangeably and made equivalent in the statutory definition. A “Covered Entity” is a municipality, agency, or utility, with a legal obligation to supply, distribute, or otherwise provide water at retail to domestic, commercial, industrial, or public facility customers, and that has a total demand for such customers of 2,000 acre-feet or more. See [Colo. Rev. Stat. § 37-60-126 \(1\)\(b\) and \(1\)\(h\)](#).



geographic location, size, water supply sources and constraints, and financial resources mean that land use strategies appropriate for one provider may not work for others. In addition, some water providers are components of local governments with land use authority over their service areas, whereas others, such as special water districts, have no internal land use authority and provide water to areas for which land use decisions are made by other entities. This guidance addendum is intended to be useful by any Colorado water provider filing a WEP and, therefore, includes a comprehensive list of best practices that must be considered, winnowed, and adapted to best suit the provider and the land use authorities with jurisdiction over the provider’s service area.

The Foundational Activities section of this guidance addendum is applicable to all water providers. The strategies outlined there are fundamental to building the relationship between the water provider and land use authority that will allow implementation of appropriate water conservation techniques.

The 2012 Guidance describes an approach for screening and selecting water efficiency activities to be pursued (pages 42–44) and includes worksheets for evaluating and selecting among best practices. The same techniques can be employed for selecting land use-related strategies and the modified worksheets included in Appendix B of this guidance addendum can assist the selection process. [Section II.B.3.](#) below addresses the unique issues in selecting screening and evaluation criteria for land use measures.

There are, however, several general principles to guide the selection of appropriate best management practices for a particular provider and land use authority. A non-exclusive list is provided on the next page. The process of closer coordination between the water provider and the planning department will likely result in a deeper understanding of the land use mechanisms that are viable within a particular jurisdiction, and the water provider should adopt a “learning by doing” approach.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

### Community Challenges

The major challenges faced in a service area inform which practices will be most effective. For example, if water supplies are limited or decreasing, reducing overall water use will be critical. To address this, requirements or incentives for both retrofits and conservation in new development could be appropriate.

### Community Goals

The particular goals of the community should guide the selection process. For example, if the community wants to reduce "buy and dry" of agricultural lands, infill or density incentives could help. If preservation of stream flows is an objective, reducing outdoor uses will have more impact than reducing indoor sewered uses.

### Anticipated Growth

If development is proceeding rapidly in the water provider's service area or much buildout area remains, measures that address new development, such as water budgets, a water efficient landscape code, and incentives for increased density and smaller irrigated areas will be important to consider.

### Outdoor Use

Measures addressing outdoor water use generally provide a greater volume of water savings than those focused on indoor uses.

### Customer Demographics

Communities should choose strategies impacting their biggest water users or sectors. Resort communities may want to focus on measures that decrease commercial water use in hotels and restaurants. Monetary incentives may be less effective for providers with a more affluent customer base.

### Self-Assessments

Water providers that have not previously performed a self-assessment may find it a useful tool for identifying areas in which water conservation could be meaningfully enhanced through collaboration with land use authorities. [Section III.A.1.b.](#) provides further information and examples.

### Cost/Benefit Analysis

A preliminary cost/benefit analysis, tailored to the community, can assist in selecting the best management practices that appear to have merit. Estimating the costs and benefits of strategies is addressed in [Section II.B.4.](#)

### 3. Developing Evaluation Criteria to Screen and Select Best Practices

The 2012 Guidance (pages 42–44) recommends a four-phase approach for screening and evaluating the water efficiency activities the water provider will pursue. The four phases include:



The 2012 Guidance provided worksheets D through G to assist in the evaluation and selection process. Modified versions of these worksheets that include land use planning efforts are included here in [Appendix B: Worksheets to Guide Selection Process](#).

Examples are provided in the 2012 Guidance (pages 43–44) of screening and evaluation criteria that can be used to winnow down and assess various water efficiency strategies. They include cost/benefit, likelihood of success, public acceptance, and a variety of other factors.

Because, the inclusion of land use measures is a relatively new addition to the suite of potential water efficiency activities, there may be supplementary evaluation factors that should be considered for this purpose. Implementation of land use controls necessarily requires cooperation and collaboration between the water provider and the land use authority. **The interest of the land use authority and its willingness to engage in this type of joint endeavor for the purpose of reducing water demand is a critical factor in determining the likelihood of success.** In addition, the market and developer support for adoption of requirements targeting new development should be considered. Finally, best management practices that expand existing code or regulatory provisions, as opposed to being completely new, will likely be easier to adopt.

Other criteria that have been used in the past to screen and evaluate water efficiency practices may take on increased importance in the land use context. These include:

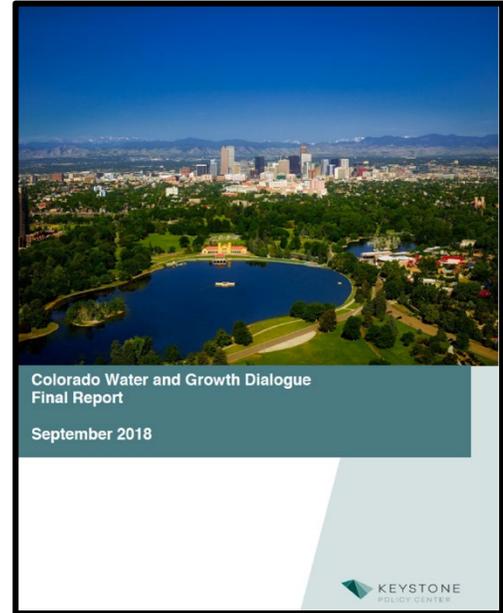
- External conditions, for instance drought, that create public interest in water efficiency
- Political leadership’s support for water efficiency goals
- Incentives preferred over mandatory enactments

### 4. Evaluating the Costs and Benefits of Best Management Practices

The impact of land use decisions on water consumption, while viewed as significant, has not yet been extensively measured and objectively documented. Although some information on the cost and benefit of specific practices is available and described below, it must be recognized that experiences and outcomes may be site specific. As the practice of integrating water supply planning with land use planning becomes more widespread, more analyses and evidence will be developed. This guidance addendum provides examples of adoption of the various best management practices described and identifies objective analysis to the extent it is available. Each water provider, in conjunction with the applicable land use authority, must analyze the potential costs and benefits of proposed practices in the context of their own circumstances.

Available information on estimating costs and savings from integration with land use planning activities can be found in the following documents:

- a. Keystone Policy Center’s 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), pages 9–20, describes methodologies for estimating water savings from increased density of development and associated landscaped area. This work is based on data from 2014 in the Denver Water and Aurora service areas. While not necessarily applicable to all Colorado climate zones, it is useful in demonstrating the direction and general magnitude of water demand change from increased density.
- b. Water Research Foundation’s [Coordinated Planning Guide – A How-To Resource for Integrating Alternative Water Supply and Land Use Planning](#), pages 17–25, contains estimates of water savings from a variety of land use techniques and provides examples and links to reference information.
- c. [Colorado WaterWise Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado](#), Chapter 4, pages 32–188, discusses a variety of water conservation strategies and how to estimate costs, water savings, and other benefits.
- d. Calculation tools are available for estimating water savings that result from proposed new and re-development and comparing demand for different configurations of development. See Section [III.A.2.b.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.



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## 5. Specific Sections of Water Efficiency Plan Affected

Specific land use planning efforts that are being considered or have been adopted should be incorporated into several of the WEP sections recommended by the 2012 Guidance, including:

**Demand forecasting.** Population projections and land use categories, along with their descriptions, should be determined through a collaborative process with the land use authority. See 2012 Guidance pages 33–35. Designated land use categories can significantly impact water usage and should be considered in addition to population estimates in projecting demand. This guidance addendum provides information on several tools that can be used to assist in projecting water demand based on different land use types. See [Section III.A.2.b.](#) and [Section III.C.3.c.](#)



**Forecast modified water demands reflecting estimated water efficiency savings.**

Estimated savings should reflect savings gained through collaboration with the land use authority. See 2012 Guidance pages 36–39. While it is often difficult to project estimated water savings, those resulting from land use techniques may prove particularly challenging. Savings from strategies such as incentives for low water use landscaping, turf limits, or cluster development may be estimated using conventional techniques involving estimated uptake rates, average savings per lot, and development projections. Techniques directed at better collaboration between water provider and land use authority personnel may be evaluated through the same type of analysis currently used for education and outreach activities. Information on estimating costs and benefits, including water savings, is provided in [Section II.B.4.](#) above. The various tools described therein can be used to project savings from anticipated changes in land use types. Both Colorado State University’s [Integrated Urban Water Model](#) and Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue’s [Residential Land Use and Water Demand Tool](#) allow the user to calculate and compare water demand from different densities of residential development.

**Evaluation and selection of water efficiency activities.** Land use techniques should be included in this evaluation and selection process. A checklist of the various best management practices described in this guidance addendum is provided below. The refinement of criteria for the purpose of screening and selecting land use practices is discussed in [Section II.B.3.](#) above. A summary of the land use efforts being implemented to achieve water conservation will also be included.

**Implementation and monitoring.** Providers should work with the land use authority on implementation and monitoring of the land use activities selected in the Plan. As with any water efficiency activity, a plan for implementation is essential, together with ongoing monitoring to ensure that anticipated results are being achieved or to allow adjustment. These steps are also required by statute. The monitoring techniques adopted will facilitate ongoing evaluation of effectiveness for all water efficiency activities and will inform future Water Efficiency Plans. See 2012 Guidance pages 56–60.

**Colo. Rev. Stat. § 37-60-126(4)(c)**

A Plan must include the steps the covered entity used to develop, and will use to implement, monitor, review, and revise its water conservation plan.

**6. Using the Model Template**

The Model Template in the 2012 Guidance pages 70–86, is a framework that water providers can use to develop WEPs. Additions to the Model Template that promote land use planning efforts are:

**Introduction.** This section describes the general approach used to develop the WEP and describes the entities involved with the Plan development. The Introduction should include a description of the land use authority or authorities with jurisdiction over the



service area of the water provider and their water-related policies. See 2012 Guidance page 70.

**Section 2.3.** Past and Current Demand Management Activities and Impact to Demands summarizes demand management activities, goals, and projected savings, and discusses how these activities and other factors have impacted historical water use. The demand management activities described should include any previously adopted land use measures, such as implementation of a planning team, participation in development review meetings for development proposals, coordinated adoption of water conservation ordinances, regulations, incentive or assistance programs, or educational activities. The impact on demands of these activities should be included in the overall analysis. See 2012 Guidance page 74.

**Section 3.1.** Water Efficiency and Water Supply Planning describes how modifications to water acquisitions and/or planned capital improvements may result from demand reductions through enhanced water efficiency activities. Water providers should include a separate subsection here on how land use planning efforts affecting water conservation could modify planned acquisitions or improvements. See 2012 Guidance pages 75–76.

**New Section 3.3.** Section 3 of the WEP describes the Integrated Planning and Water Efficiency Benefits and Goals. A summary of all of the water and land use integration efforts, and the expected benefits and goals of those efforts, should be provided in a new Section 3.3. The various land use measures undertaken and anticipated may be scattered throughout the WEP, and this summary will allow all of them to be viewed together.

**Section 4.** Describes the Selection of Water Efficiency Activities. This section will include any land use planning efforts evaluated. The selected best practices for integrating land use planning efforts into water conservation should be included with the lists of Foundational Activities (Section 4.2.1), Targeted Technical Assistance and Incentives (Section 4.2.2), Ordinances and Regulations (Section 4.2.3), and Education Activities (Section 4.2.4) to be undertaken by the water provider. Revised Worksheets D through G, provided in [Appendix B](#) of this guidance addendum, can help guide the Summary of Selection Process described by Section 4.1 of the Model Template. See 2012 Guidance pages 77–84. Some may find it helpful to go through the checklist below of best management practices first, determine which practices are of most interest, and then delve more deeply into the relevant sections of this guidance addendum for more information and examples on any of the practices.

**Section 5.** Addresses the Implementation and Monitoring Plan. This section should describe how any selected land use planning efforts will be implemented and monitored. See 2012 Guidance pages 84–86.

An Addendum to the CWCB’s [Municipal Water Efficiency Sample Plan](#) provides examples of the additions to the sections described above.



## C. Checklist of Best Management Practices

Each of the practices in this checklist is addressed in further detail in this guidance addendum. While the Foundational Activities should be pursued by all water providers in some form, the subsequent sections contain a wide variety of strategies that can be narrowed down to those most appropriate to community needs. Water providers may wish to examine this checklist first to determine which of the many techniques described might be most useful given their particular circumstances, and then review the detail provided for the techniques selected.

Best Management Practices	Consider	In Place
<b>Foundational Activities</b>		
1. Establish Regular Contact and Information Sharing	✓	
A. Initiate discussions between the water provider and planning department		
B. Do a self-assessment		
C. Establish a procedure for regular meetings		
D. Convene joint meetings among elected decision-makers		
E. Participate in training or educational programs		
F. Coordinate with other water providers and land use authorities in the region		
2. Align Data and Information Used	✓	
A. Align population and growth projections		
B. Estimate water demand for new development		
C. Measure, utilize, and communicate data on water use and savings		
3. Establish Coordinated Procedures for Post-Occupancy Monitoring and Enforcement	✓	
A. Allocate responsibility for monitoring for compliance		
B. Allocate responsibility for pre- and post-occupancy inspections		
C. Track and coordinate pre-occupancy estimates		
D. Require post-occupancy documentation		
E. Determine consequences of exceeding post-occupancy estimates		
F. Coordinate enforcement of water use violations		
4. Integrate Water Considerations into the Development Approval Process	✓	
A. Water provider participates in pre-application meetings with developers		
B. Water use is consistent with the final approved development plan		
C. Development agreements impose water conservation requirements		
5. Integrate Long Term Land Use and Water Planning	✓	
A. Include water in the comprehensive or master plan		
B. Adequate water supply demonstration		
C. Water dedication requirements		
D. Integrate planning efforts		



<b>Best Management Practices</b>	<b>Consider</b>	<b>In Place</b>
<b>Targeted Technical Assistance and Incentives</b>		
1. Developer Incentives to Reduce Water Demand		
2. Conservation-Oriented Tap Fees		
3. Water Efficient Land Development Patterns		
A. Encourage compact development through developer incentives		
B. Encourage cluster unit development		
C. Development offsets for water efficiency measures		
4. Model Landscape Plans		
5. Incentives for Reduced Irrigation		
A. Turf replacement programs		
B. Low water use vegetation list		
C. Outdoor fixture rebates		
D. Relief from otherwise applicable regulations		
6. Water-Smart Home Options		
7. Become a WaterSense Partner		
8. Low Water Use Demonstration Homes		
9. Water Audits		
10. Rainwater Reuse		
<b>Ordinances and Regulations</b>		
1. Examine Existing Land Use Regulations for Barriers and Conflicts		
2. Adopt or Strengthen Water-Related Ordinances or Regulations		
A. Ordinance prohibiting water waste		
B. Watering or irrigation restrictions		
3. Water Conservation in New Development, Re-Development, and Annexation		
A. Require water conservation for new development or re-development		
B. Annexation includes water demand and conservation		
4. Incorporate Water Efficiency into Zoning Codes and Rezoning Procedures		
A. Condition rezonings or discretionary reviews on low water use commitments		
B. Zone for more varieties of multi-family and attached housing		
C. Designate zoning categories to reflect water use		
D. Adopt an overlay zone		
5. Subdivision or Site Plan Regulations that Include Water Conservation		
6. Implement Requirements that Contribute to Water Efficiency and Compact Infrastructure		
A. Water demand offset requirement		
B. Prioritize infill development		
C. Adopt stormwater management policies		
D. Enable use of graywater		



<b>Best Management Practices</b>	<b>Consider</b>	<b>In Place</b>
<b>7. Water Efficient Landscape Code</b>		
A. Landscape code provisions		
B. Require certification or registration of landscape professionals		
C. Adopt a model landscape ordinance		
<b>8. Building and Plumbing Codes</b>		
A. Codify water efficiency standards in green building codes		
B. Establish sustainable development bonuses		
<b>9. Ordinances Promoting Efficient Fixtures in Existing Buildings</b>		
A. Retrofit on resale		
B. Retrofit requirements for new building permits		
<b>10. Regional Coordination of Water Policy and Procedures</b>		
A. Water conservation requirements are consistent		
B. Uniform landscape codes		
C. Uniform landscape and irrigation contractor certification		
D. Coordinate education and outreach		
E. Collaborate to adopt or promote green building standards		
F. Designate a growth management area		
<b>Education Activities</b>		
<b>1. Consistent Online Information</b>		
<b>2. Water Provider and Planning Department Work Together to Educate the Public</b>		
A. Provide public information on water conservation		
B. Develop water budgets and information		
C. Provide landscape efficiency evaluations		
D. Hold public meetings		
E. Conduct a public survey		
F. Provide information on water conservation to developers		
G. Communicate benefits of water conservation		
<b>3. Lead by Example</b>		
A. Water efficiency in buildings owned by the provider or land use authority		
B. Build demonstration gardens		
<b>4. Jointly Engage with the Development Community and HOAs</b>		
<b>5. Share Success Stories and Case Studies with Other Communities and the Public</b>		
<b>6. Coordinate Education and Outreach Across the Region</b>		



### III. BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPLEMENTING WATER EFFICIENCY THROUGH LAND USE PLANNING EFFORTS

#### A. Foundational Activities

- 1. [Establish Regular Contact and Sharing of Information Between Water Provider and Planning Department](#) .....19
- 2. [Align Data and Information Used](#) .....23
- 3. [Establish Coordinated Procedures for Post-Occupancy Monitoring and Enforcement.](#) ...24
- 4. [Integrate Water Considerations into the Development Approval Process](#) .....25
- 5. [Integrate Long Term Land Use and Water Planning](#).....26

These activities address the establishment of a working relationship between the water provider and the land use authority. This connection will form the basis for regular interaction on the use of water in the community, collaboration on specific development proposals, and informed positions on water in the community’s long-range planning documents. The best practices listed in this section are fundamental for collaborative implementation of land use measures that further water conservation or efficiency and should be addressed before the best practices in the three subsequent sections.

Each water provider should review the techniques suggested here and determine how to implement them in a manner appropriate for its specific circumstances. The Water Research Foundation’s report [Joining Up Urban Water Management with Urban Planning and Design](#) includes a thorough discussion of the barriers to collaboration between the planning department and the water provider, together with concrete strategies for collaboration (see particularly Chapters 4 and 5 and Appendix B, C, and D).

#### 1. Establish Regular Contact and Sharing of Information Between Water Provider and Planning Department

This is the basic building block of better integration of water planning and land use planning to improve water conservation. Land use planners and water provider personnel must establish personal relationships that support a basic understanding of the goals and challenges of each group and allow for free exchange of ideas and information. Training on this initial integration is available: see [Breaking Down Silos: Integrating Water Efficiency Into Land Use Planning: A Guide for Colorado Communities](#), and associated [webinar](#).

- a. **Initiate discussions** between the water provider and the planning department of the land use authority. The appropriate leader of such discussions will vary according to the circumstances, but the water provider should ensure that this dialogue is taking place and instigate it if necessary. A good tool on the initiation of discussions can be found in Western Resource Advocates’ [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use](#)

[Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 3.d., “When Water Providers Take the Lead.” Explanatory materials and suggestions for the initial discussions between the water provider and the land use planners are included in [Breaking Down Silos](#) pages 31–33.

- i. Form a Water and Land Use Planning Team with members of both the water provider and the land use planning department.
- ii. Alternatively, include land use and water integration in the responsibilities of an existing cross-department coordinating agency and ensure that the agency organizes regular meetings.



**Example:** The City and County of Denver has an [Office of Sustainability](#) whose goals include water conservation. This Office serves as a conduit for connecting multiple departments within the city, including connecting Denver Water to the City’s planning processes.

- iii. The members of the planning team **educate each other** about the goals, opportunities, challenges, and anticipated projects of the water provider and the planning department.
- iv. **Water provider facts** of which the planning team should be made aware:
  - Procedures used to determine tap size and fees
  - Landscape and irrigation plan requirements
  - Indoor and outdoor fixture standards
  - Procedures for inspections prior to setting a new water meter
  - Water use restrictions and triggers for such restrictions
  - Monitoring of compliance with regulations
  - Revenue stability issues associated with water conservation
  - Infrastructure needs and plans
  - The impact of development on such needs
  - The water provider’s ability to serve future growth and associated costs
- v. **Planning department facts** of which the water provider should be made aware:
  - Procedures used to approve new or re-development
  - Procedures used to encourage growth in particular areas
  - Landscape and irrigation plan requirements
  - Water dedication requirements for new development. See [Section III.A.5.c.](#) below.
  - Indoor and outdoor fixture standards and other water-related building code requirements



- Procedures used to determine compliance with the local government’s [water adequacy requirements](#). See [Section III.A.5.b](#), below.
  - Provisions addressing water in the comprehensive or master plan
  - Growth projections in the water provider’s service area
  - The department’s general development goals
- vi. **Stormwater and wastewater.** Foster a better understanding between the water provider, the planning department, and the personnel involved in stormwater and wastewater planning to allow exploration of efficiencies gained through the use of low impact design.
- b. **Do a self-assessment** to understand where your community currently stands on water and land use integration.
- i. The Sonoran Institute has a [self-assessment tool](#) to help water providers and local governments start linking land use planning with water resource management. A [video presentation](#) provides an overview of the tool and shares examples of the tool in use.
  - ii. The Water Research Foundation’s report, [Joining Up Urban Water Management with Urban Planning and Design](#), also includes a description of a self-assessment process for selecting the most effective strategies for collaboration between water and land use planning professionals (Chapter 6).
- c. Establish a procedure for **regular meetings** of the planning team and update all relevant information on a consistent basis. Formalize this procedure through a memorandum or directive to ensure that it continues when the

### Case Study: City of Monte Vista

Even small municipalities can thoroughly integrate their water and land use planning activities. In Monte Vista, population 4,500, the senior management team, including the heads of the Public Works and Community Development Departments, meets once or twice a month to discuss new developments and think through “what if” scenarios including water impacts. When an annexation is proposed, the implications for water supply are at the top of the list of concerns.

Water conservation is a paramount consideration for assisting the City in reducing the amount of water needed for augmentation that could require drying up surrounding agricultural land – an outcome the City is committed to avoiding. The two departments jointly compile the Water Efficiency Plan and are working together on a xeriscape demonstration garden. The City Council recently adopted outdoor watering restrictions that apply to all city residents, which will be enforced by a designated officer in the Police Department. City leaders intend to formalize the currently informal interaction to ensure that it continues beyond the tenure of the existing leadership.

- original participants are no longer in the same positions. The frequency of the meetings will likely be dependent on the number and pace of applications for new development approvals and whether the comprehensive plan is under review or revision.
- d. Convene **joint meetings among elected decision-makers** of the land use authority and the water provider (City Council, County Commissioners, water district board of directors, water provider board). See [Breaking Down Silos](#), page 34; [Coordinated Planning Guide: A How-To Resource for Integrating Alternative Water Supply and Land Use Planning](#), page 8. Such meetings could be suggested and facilitated by the planning team.
- i. Conduct initial discussions or provide briefings to inform decision-makers about actions proposed or taken to increase the integration of water conservation into land use planning.
  - ii. Obtain feedback and direction from decision-makers on actions proposed; adjust if needed and provide appropriate direction to staff.
  - iii. Convene a standing committee of elected decision-makers for briefings and joint decision-making when appropriate.
- e. Participate in **training or educational programs** on incorporating water-saving actions into land use planning efforts. Technical assistance resources may also be available to participants in these programs.



**Example:** The [Growing Water Smart: Integrating Water and Land Use Planning Workshops](#), sponsored by the Sonoran Institute and the Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, introduces communities to the full range of communications, public engagement, planning, and policy implementation tools to better integrate land use and water planning and realize their watershed health and community resilience goals. Many of the Colorado water suppliers and communities that have participated in this training credit it with helping to improved procedures between water and land use professionals. At the time of writing, the Growing Water Smart training is funded through 2020.



**Example:** [Breaking Down Silos](#) is an online educational and training module created by Pace University's Land Use Law Center in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. It includes webinars and training materials on several land use and water integration topics and can prepare individuals to train others in their community on this topic.

- f. **Coordinate with other water providers and land use authorities in the region** or within the same river basin. See [Section III.C.10.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.

## 2. Align Data and Information Used

Data used by both the water provider and planning department should be consistent and jointly developed where appropriate. Water providers can benefit from the population projections made by the land use authority and the projected development categories embodied in the comprehensive plan. The land use authority should understand the water demand implications of the comprehensive plan. Use of different growth or demand estimates by the water provider and the land use authority can lead to confusion, over- or under-development of water-related infrastructure, and, in extreme cases, to thwarted planning or litigation. See [Coordinated Planning Guide: A How-To Resource for Integrating Alternative Water Supply and Land Use Planning](#), page 8; [Integrating Land Use and Water Resources: Planning to Support Water Supply Diversification](#), pages 25–26.

- a. **Align the population and growth projections** of the water provider, the planning department, and other relevant authorities (special districts, counties, etc.). Align commercial development and other projections with water use implications. Address and resolve any inconsistencies. The Sonoran Institute’s [self-assessment tool](#) can help entities determine where data aligns, and where data-sharing needs to occur.
- b. **Estimate water demand for new development.** The water provider and planning department work together to utilize available tools for estimating water demand for proposed new development and comparing demand for different configurations of development. Refinement of zoning categories may be useful to support the development of more accurate water demand estimates. See [Section III.C.4.c.](#) of this guidance addendum for additional discussion.



**Examples:** Several tools have been developed to assist in the analysis of water demand based on land use type. See Colorado State University’s [Integrated Urban Water Model](#) and Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue’s [Residential Land Use and Water Demand Tool](#).

- c. **Measure, utilize, and communicate data on water use and savings.** Cooperate to determine and develop data that will help both the water provider and the planning department. Required data can be input for new development as it comes online, with older records updated as time allows. Metrics can be established for the water use of different types of development upon which water budgets can be based. See Keystone Policy Center’s 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), page 28.

**Examples:**

- Water provider's accounts designate the applicable land use authority, class of customer (single family, multi-family, commercial, etc., using the same designations as the land use authority), year account created, and property identifier. Account usage is tracked over time. If applicable, water budgets are attached to each account.
- Planning department attaches water supplier information to parcel designations. Population projections are broken down into water provider service areas.
- Sorting capability is enabled for this type of information.

See the [2012 Guidance](#), pages 58–60, for more information on collecting and monitoring water savings data. Worksheets K and L provide a template for collecting demand data to track the effectiveness of water efficiency activities.

**3. Establish Coordinated Procedures for Post-Occupancy Monitoring and Enforcement.**

Water regulations, incentives supporting reduced use, water budgets, and landscape codes can be undermined by an absence of tracking and enforcement. The efforts devoted to integration of land and water planning will be less effective if there is no plan for compliance. This section addresses allocation of the responsibilities for various aspects of post-occupancy monitoring and enforcement and identifies the various components to be considered. Detailed information on post-occupancy is provided in Western Resource Advocates' [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 15.

- a. Allocate responsibility for **monitoring** for compliance with water use regulations and water-related development approval requirements, and enforcement of such requirements.
- b. Allocate responsibility for pre- and post-occupancy **inspections** as appropriate. Include inspections and enforcement of compliance with landscape plans, landscape maintenance standards, and water use regulations.
- c. Water provider tracks actual water use and coordinates with the land use authority to compare to pre-occupancy estimates. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), Automatic Meter Reading (AMR), or similar technologies makes this type of compliance monitoring and forecast checking much easier and more feasible.
- d. Require post-occupancy **documentation** to demonstrate that a project is operating as planned, not just constructed as planned.



**Example:** As part of the approval of the Sterling Ranch development southwest of Denver, **Douglas County** required recording and delivery of water use data from new development for the purpose of evaluating the appropriateness of its water demand estimates. See [Douglas County Commissioners Resolution No. R-13-080](#), pages 16–19.

- e. Determine **consequences** of exceeding pre-occupancy estimates, water-related development approval conditions, or applicable water budgets, and allocate responsibility for follow-up. See [Douglas County Commissioners Resolution No. R-13-080](#), pages 15–16.
- f. Coordinate observations of water use violations with action by an enforcement authority. This may include allocating responsibility for enforcement between the water provider and land use authority. Enforcement actions will vary depending on how water use is regulated. For example, a water use regulation that has been adopted into the land use code or development approval conditions may be enforced as a code violation, whereas a water use regulation adopted by the water provider may be enforced by fees on a water bill or other techniques available to the provider.

#### 4. Integrate Water Considerations into the Development Approval Process

Include a water provider representative in the development approval process and include water considerations throughout the development process, from pre-application meetings to final plans. Water providers should be involved at an early stage of the development approval process, at a time and in a manner that enables them to make recommendations related to water conservation or efficiency that can influence the configuration of the proposed development as it impacts water use. This includes more than the statutorily required referral process, in which the water provider is sent a copy of the development proposal and invited to comment.<sup>3</sup>

- a. Provide and formalize a means for meaningful participation by the water provider in **pre-application meetings with developers** and/or at specific points in the development review process, and in rezoning applications for land within the provider’s service area, to provide information about anticipated water use of the proposed development and means of reducing usage and cost (landscaping, lot size, fixtures, etc.). The type and configuration of water utility infrastructure necessary to serve a proposed development should be specifically addressed. Required infrastructure improvements and upgrades may be necessary miles away from the development due to constraints in pipes and treatment facilities. Developers should be made aware of these requirements at an early stage as costs can be significant and alternatives may be available.

<sup>3</sup> See Colo. Rev. Stat. §§ 29-20-301 to -305; 30-28-133(3)(d); 30-28-136.

- b. Ensure that the configuration of proposed development for which a water service commitment has been made by the water provider is **consistent with the final approved development plan** (for example, provide for an update of the water provider’s service commitment before final approval of the development proposal by the governing body).



**Example: Eagle County and Eagle River Water & Sanitation District (ERWSD)** have a procedure in which the County requires a final Ability to Serve letter from ERWSD prior to final plat. Previously, ERWSD would provide a conditional capacity to serve letter to the developer at an early stage in the development approval process, and no further commitment was obtained even if the development proposal was changed. Now, the County requires developers to obtain a service commitment from ERWSD for the final development configuration prior to final plat approval.

- c. Use **development agreements** to impose water conservation and verification requirements. See [Section III.C.5.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.

## 5. Integrate Long Term Land Use and Water Planning

- a. **Include water in the comprehensive or master plan.** Integrate water conservation or demand management into the land use authority’s comprehensive or master planning processes. Extensive information on this subject is available in the CWCB and DOLA-sponsored training program on [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan](#) and associated [webinar](#). See also [Clarion Associate's Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Research Report](#), pages 25–27; and the Sonoran Institute’s [Growing Water Smart Workbook](#), Section 1, pages 10–14.
  - i. Create a formal mechanism for **cross-fertilization in the long-range planning processes**, both for water provider input during comprehensive or master planning conducted by the planning department and for planning department input during water resources planning lead by the water provider. The water provider can contribute information and data to the land use authority on the water supply and demand impacts of various development types being considered during the long-range planning processes.
  - ii. Incorporate a **water element** into the comprehensive or master plan or strengthen the existing water element. Review the comprehensive plan to identify other areas where water conservation, demand management, or water efficiency concepts could be incorporated and add as appropriate.
    - Evaluate the extent to which the comprehensive plan already addresses water. See Pace University’s Land Use Leadership Alliance [Questions](#)

[to Guide Water and Land Use Planning Integration](#) to help determine the level of water incorporation into an existing comprehensive plans.

- Draft a **water element** for the comprehensive plan addressing conservation (complete with an introduction, goals, objectives, strategies, and implementation techniques). See [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 5, Section b, on drafting water elements.
- b. **Adequate water supply demonstration.** Make water conservation part of the demonstration of adequate water supply. Agree on the process and standards to be used by the land use authority for determining compliance with the [adequate water supply requirements in the Colorado statutes](#).<sup>4</sup> Counties and municipalities must determine that the proposed water supply for any new development of 50 units or more will be adequate before the development permit can be approved. These local governments have significant discretion in determining water adequacy for new development and can utilize this discretion to emphasize conservation and water supply sustainability. The land use authority is encouraged to require the incorporation of water conservation or demand management measures as part of the demonstration of water adequacy to ensure sustainability and resilience of the water supply, the ability to serve future growth, and address other community goals. See the Sonoran Institute’s [Growing Water Smart Workbook](#), Section 2, pages 14–19. The land use authority has discretion to apply the water adequacy requirements to developments of less than 50 units. The water provider and the planning department should discuss whether the 50-unit minimum appropriately reflects the constraints on the water provider’s supplies. Any modification of the minimum number of single-family equivalent units would need to be adopted by the land use authority.
- c. **Examine water dedication requirements.** While it is incumbent on water providers and land use authorities to ensure that adequate water is available for new development, overly rigid or conservative water dedication requirements can reduce motivation for conservation and force unnecessary dry-up of agricultural land. The amount of water required for dedication (or the amount of the cash-in-lieu fee) should be based on realistic water use data and provide a means for developers to reduce the amount required through the adoption of significant or extraordinary water conservation measures or through the initial configuration of the development.

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<sup>4</sup> Local governments, including counties, cities, and towns, are required to determine that an adequate water supply exists before approving any application for a new development permit for 50 single-family equivalent units or more. Colo. Rev. Stat. §§ 29-20-303, 103(1)(b). Counties are subject to additional rules that prohibit approval of any preliminary plan or final plat unless evidence has been provided that a water supply sufficient in quantity, dependability, and quality will be available. Colo. Rev. Stat. § 30-28-133(6)(a). This requirement applies to subdivisions of two or more parcels. Colo. Rev. Stat. § 30-28-101(10).



**Example:** The **Little Thompson Water District** revised its [water dedication and tap fee structure](#) to better correlate the requirements to the actual water use trends of its customers. It now has a smaller water dedication requirement (or alternatively, cash-in-lieu fee) for “urban” taps with smaller lot sizes. The urban tap has an associated water budget, with a significant monthly surcharge if the budgeted amount is exceeded. The lower dedication requirement and associated tap fee provides options and a powerful incentive for developers. The motivation for this change and the overall structure are described in [A Guide to Designing Conservation-Oriented System Development Charges](#), pages 69–73.

- d. **Integrate other planning efforts** between the water provider and the planning department, such as Integrated Water Management Plans, Neighborhood Plans, Drought Mitigation Plans, Regional Watershed Plans, Stream Management Plans, Energy Plans, Sustainability Plans, etc. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 6, on incorporating water into sustainability plans.
  - i. Discuss the impact on water use and cost to customers of land use patterns such as increased density or infill development in appropriate areas compared to large lot, single-family suburban development.
  - ii. Discuss opportunities for constraining costs to customers and reducing additional infrastructure expansion by concentrating development within existing water service areas.
  - iii. **Calculate a per unit water use for different zoning categories** to facilitate the projection of future water use. This could be water use per acre, per 1,000 square feet, or some other appropriate unit.
  - iv. Incorporate a **One Water** approach into planning, recognizing the interconnectedness of water supply, stormwater, and wastewater. See Keystone Policy Center’s 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), page 26 and the American Planning Association’s [Planners and Water](#) Report.



## B. Targeted Technical Assistance and Incentives

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The [2012 Guidance](#), pages 49–52, discusses incentives and assistance that may be offered by the water provider. This section of the addendum addresses incentives and assistance programs that can be considered and operated jointly by the land use authority and the water provider.

Local governments, water providers, property owners, and developers generally prefer incentives to mandates. The technical assistance and incentive programs described herein can be used instead of regulations to encourage practices or to help developers and others comply with ordinances or regulations. Alternatively, many of the techniques described here could: be adopted by ordinance or regulation; work in concert with or support ordinances or regulations; or be imposed as a requirement rather than as an encouraged practice. It is important to note that incentives may be unnecessary if ordinances or regulations require one or more of the techniques described below. The most appropriate means of implementing these programs will vary by community.

### 1. Developer Incentives to Reduce Water Demand

Work with the land use authority to provide developer incentives to reduce water demand in new development. Examples include:

- Fee guarantee for future building permits in the development
- Immediate credit in water development fees
- Payment of fee at issuance of certificate of occupancy as opposed to at time of construction permit
- Density bonuses
- Infill incentives
- Tap fee reduction program
- Priority inspections

The [Verde Land and Water Planning Toolbox](#) provides a menu of water-conserving development incentives. Western Resource Advocates’ [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapters 7 and 14,

has extensive information and specific examples on different types of incentives for property owners and developers.

## 2. Conservation-Oriented Tap Fees

Incentivizing conservation through the prospect of reduced tap fees or system development charges is an effective method for influencing customer behavior and reducing water use. The water provider and planning department can work together to determine a tap fee incentive structure that furthers the land use goals of the community as well as water conservation. The 2012 Guidance includes a discussion of tap fee incentives. In-depth information and examples are provided in Western Resource Advocates' [Water Connection Charges: A Tool for Encouraging Water-Efficient Growth](#) and [Guide to Designing Conservation-Oriented Water System Development Charges](#).



**Example:** The City of Fountain [reduces its tap fee](#) for residential lots that have limited the irrigated area to less than 50 percent of the total pervious area, with an even greater reduction if the irrigated area is less than 30 percent. The City has developed landscape plan templates to help builders and contractors meet the requirements for the reduced fees.

## 3. Water Efficient Land Development Patterns

Encourage land development patterns that contribute to water efficiency and compact infrastructure. While increased density can lower per capita water demand, it may increase total water demand for the project if more units are allowed. There may be limits to the per capita water savings that can be achieved with very high-density development. The Keystone Policy Center's 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#) presents research from Arizona State University on how residential development and re-development at higher densities can reduce water demand, based on data from the Denver Metro area, page 9. See also Clarion Associate's [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Research Report](#) for data from other Western states on reducing water demand with increased density, pages 2–13.

- a. Encourage increased residential density or compact, mixed-use development through **developer incentives**, such as density bonuses or infill incentives. See the Verde Land and Water Planning Toolbox section on [developer incentives](#).



**Example:** The Town of Castle Rock [Code 4.04.120](#) provides that if a developer prepares and uses a water efficiency plan meeting certain minimum standards, the Town may reduce its presumptive water use standards for tap connections.

- b. Encourage **cluster unit** development. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Zoning Code](#), pages 4–9, for further explanation and examples.

- c. Offer **development offsets**, reduced fees or requirements, increased credits, or preference in water allocation, for example, in return for implementation of water efficiency measures. See the Verde Land and Water Planning Toolbox section on [development offsets](#).

#### 4. Model Landscape Plans

Cooperate with the land use authority to develop and provide model landscape plans for new residential and large landscape developments. Such a plan could include any of the techniques listed as potential components of a landscape code in [Section III.C.7.](#) of this guidance addendum. Incentives or technical assistance could be provided to encourage adoption of the techniques in the model plan.



**Example: The Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District** provides [information, fact sheets, and case studies](#) on water-saving lawns and gardens for use by its customers.

#### 5. Incentives for Reduced Irrigation

Because irrigation water usage normally represents the greatest share of overall municipal use, reducing irrigation through incentive or technical assistance programs provides the best opportunities for water savings. Residential, commercial, public space irrigation, or all the above, could be targeted. Specific types of incentives for reduction of outdoor use are described below, and more information can be found in the [Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 14, also referenced in [Section III.B.1.](#) Limiting turf can also contribute to reduced irrigation. See Clarion Associate's [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Research Report](#), pages 13–23.

- a. **Turf replacement payments.** Many communities in Colorado and throughout the West have adopted programs that pay homeowners for removing turf and replacing it with landscapes that require less water use. California offers a [statewide rebate program](#).

#### Case Study: South Metro Water Authority Model Landscape Code

The thirteen members of the Authority, all water providers in the southern Denver Metro area, expressed a desire for regional collaboration on water conservation. An identified obstacle to the implementation of regional partnering on water efficiency efforts was lack of land use authority. The Authority produced a [Model Regional Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Ordinance](#) that is intended to support, not supersede, other existing landscape and irrigation water conservation programs. It contains a comprehensive menu of best management practices, but is not intended as a required set of regulations.

Local land use authorities are encouraged to seek input from local water and land use officials in determining which components can be implemented and enforced in their own local regulations or ordinances. An associated checklist provides the minimum recommended components of the model ordinance, based on the experience of local water efficiency experts, to provide consistency and clarity in best management practices.

These programs may provide a payment per square foot of turf removed or reimburse the homeowner for the cost of installation of the new landscape. They typically have an overall cap and require post-removal inspection. Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) also has a [Water Smart Landscape Rebate](#), offering a rebate for conversion of grass to desert landscaping. The program has saved SNWA billions of gallons of water.

**Examples:**

**[City of Lafayette](#)** – Homeowners in the city may replace landscape turf with functional hardscape and receive a credit on their utility bill in the amount of \$1 per square foot (cap of 1,000 sq. ft.) upon verification. Support (but no rebate) is also available for replacement of turf with xeric plants.

**[Centennial Water and Sanitation District](#)** – A pilot program adopted in 2018 encourages residential customers to replace water-thirsty plant materials with xeric or drought tolerant vegetation by providing a rebate of \$1 per square foot (\$1,000 maximum).

**[City of Aurora](#)** – The Water Wise Landscape Rebate program incentivizes conversion to lower water use yards by rebating (with different caps for residential and commercial properties) the cost of materials, partially dependent upon verification of water savings.

- b. **Low water use vegetation list.** Water providers or land use authorities can provide a recommended list of low-water use plants. This information allows homeowners and developers to select options from a trusted source. The Colorado Native Plant Society has [gardening guides](#) applicable to five regions in Colorado: Plains/Prairie, Front Range/Foothills, Southeastern Colorado, Mountains above 7,500 feet, and Lower Elevation Western Slope. The model landscape plans described in [Section III.B.4.](#) above frequently include recommended vegetation lists.

**Examples:**

**The Town of Castle Rock** provides a [Recommended Plant List](#). **The Town of Silver City, New Mexico** offers a [bonus to applicants for development permits](#) as an incentive to use only low-water use trees and vegetation contained on a pre-approved list. The bonus allows applicants to reduce their overall landscaping area requirements by 10 percent.

- c. **Outdoor fixture rebates.** Incentives can be offered to encourage the installation of water-efficient fixtures such as rain sensors or high efficiency nozzles.



**Example:** [Centennial Water and Sanitation District](#) provides a rebate for the addition of rain sensors that will interrupt the normal watering schedule when it rains and for the replacement of traditional fixed spray nozzles with more efficient rotary nozzles.

- d. **Relief from otherwise applicable regulations.** Reductions of irrigation water use can be incentivized through the waiver or modification of other requirements, such as watering restrictions, stormwater fees, or even property tax abatements.



**Example:** [The City of La Junta](#) allows applicants to request relief from otherwise applicable water use restrictions if they implement an approved alternative water management plan that includes water reduction measures.

## 6. Water-Smart Home Options

Cooperate with the land use authority to define and encourage adoption of water-smart home options. Colorado requires developers to offer a water-smart home option and [provides detailed criteria for qualification as water-smart](#). Visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [WaterSense Labeled Homes](#) for more information and criteria for water-smart homes. Water-smart options are frequently paired with energy efficient features, for example [KB Homes eDifference program](#).

### **Colo. Rev. Stat. § 38-35.7-107(1)(a)**

Builders of new single-family detached residences must offer the buyer the opportunity to select a water-smart home option.

## 7. Become a WaterSense Partner

[WaterSense](#) is a voluntary program sponsored by the EPA. It provides specifications and certifications for water efficient products and partners with multiple types of organizations, including water utilities and local governments, to promote water efficiency. [WaterSense partners](#) have access to promotional materials and messaging to educate consumers on the importance of saving water for future generations.

## 8. Low Water Use Demonstration Homes

Encourage developers to provide demonstration homes with low water use outdoor fixtures and landscapes.

## 9. Water Audits

Many water providers offer indoor or outdoor audits to customers to assess water conservation potential and provide information on efficiency measures. Such audits can also be offered through the land use authority to applicants for development permits, for either new or existing structures.

**Examples:**

**Fort Collins Utilities** offers [free sprinkler system audits](#) that include a system evaluation, watering schedule, and information on how to find leaks and keep vegetation healthy all summer long.

**The City of Greeley** makes [free audits available to residences and businesses within the community](#). Both indoor and irrigation use are examined.

**10. Rainwater Reuse**

Encourage rainwater capture and use or incentivize through water dedication requirements. Colorado has [specific rules related to rainwater capture and water harvesting](#). See Colorado State University's [fact sheet](#) explaining the 2016 legislative changes to allow rainwater collection. See also CWC's [precipitation harvesting pilot program for new developments](#).



## C. ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS

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This section addresses municipal or county code provisions for adoption by the land use authority. The water provider should evaluate whether the ordinances and regulations presented would be helpful in achieving further water conservation and appropriate for the community. Therefore, consideration of the ordinances and regulations requires discussion between the water provider and the land use authority. Some of the ordinances and regulations described in this section may also be within the sole purview of the water provider and may have already been considered in the WEP. Because individual water providers vary greatly in terms of their legal authority to adopt regulations, multiple potential regulations are listed for consideration and evaluation. The Alliance for Water Efficiency’s Net Blue Project includes a [template for a model ordinance](#) addressing water conservation that can be tailored to address the specific challenges and goals of the local government.

Some of the techniques described could alternatively be implemented as incentive or technical assistance programs, if deemed appropriate by the water provider and land use authority. Water providers and land use authorities may want to consider providing incentives or technical assistance as a pilot program prior to passing a regulation or as an accompaniment to a regulation in order to determine suitability and boost compliance. Please see [Section III.B.](#) of this guidance addendum, for more discussion of these strategies.

Follow-up and enforcement are critical to the success of ordinances and regulations. Please see [Section III.A.3.](#) for an overview of monitoring and enforcement. Western Resource Advocates’ [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 15, offers further information about post-occupancy enforcement.

### 1. Examine Existing Land Use Regulations for Barriers and Conflicts

Evaluate the zoning, subdivision, and development regulations of the land use authority to determine whether there are unintentional barriers to the adoption of water conservation or efficiency measures. If so, discuss appropriate modifications. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapters 4 and 10.a., for discussions of how to identify barriers to water conservation. Once

identified, the water provider and planning department should work together to eliminate barriers or harmonize conflicting provisions.

## 2. Adopt or Strengthen Water-Related Ordinances and Regulations

Discuss the adoption or strengthening of the following ordinances and regulations, and partner with the land use authority to educate the public.

### a. Ordinance prohibiting **water waste**.



**Example:** The City of Aurora is one of many land use authorities that has a [specific ordinance prohibiting water waste](#).

### b. **Watering or Irrigation Restrictions.** Some restrictions may have already been adopted by the water provider; these options can also be considered by the land use authority.

#### i. Time of day watering restrictions, for example, no outside watering between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.



**Example:** The City of Cortez has adopted an [ordinance establishing water use restrictions due to severe drought conditions](#). Exemptions can be obtained for new lawns.

#### ii. Day of week watering restrictions, for example, odd house numbers irrigate Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, even house numbers irrigate Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday; or limit to watering three days per week.



**Example:** The City of Monte Vista passed a [resolution](#) requiring odd numbered addresses to water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and even numbered addresses to water on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday.

## 3. Water Conservation in New Development, Re-Development, and Annexation

See Clarion Associate's [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Research Report](#) for research from across the West on reducing water demand in new development.

### a. Require water conservation for **new development or re-development**. Adopt criteria for water conservation against which new or re-development proposals are assessed.

**Examples:**

Any amendment to the **City of Westminster**'s land use plan must, among other requirements, not negatively impact water infrastructure or water supply ([Westminster Municipal Code 11-5-21](#)).

Prior to permitting, new construction and remodeling in the **City of Santa Fe, New Mexico** are required to receive a certificate of compliance before permitting stating that all plumbing fixtures meet water conservation restrictions ([Santa Fe Ordinance No. 1997-17](#)).

- b. Include water demand and conservation among the considerations for **annexation**.



**Example: The City of Colorado Springs** coordinates its annexation policies with Colorado Springs Utilities to ensure there is projected available water surplus both at the time of the annexation request and into the foreseeable future ([Conditions for Annexation Code 7.6.203](#)).

#### 4. Incorporate Water Efficiency into Zoning Codes and Rezoning Procedures

Extensive information on this subject is available in the CWCB and DOLA-sponsored training program on [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Zoning Code](#) and associated [webinar](#). See [Integrating Water Efficiency Into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners](#), Chapter 7, for a full overview of incorporating water into zoning codes and rezonings.

#### Case Studies: PUDs in Westminster and Eagle County

**Westminster** uses a PUD process for all sites two acres or greater and thus almost all development approvals are the result of negotiation. Water conservation is a key consideration with the PUD approval process, particularly in regard to site design and landscaping. See Westminster's PUD code ([11-4-7](#)) and comprehensive plan amendment code ([11-5-21](#)).

**Eagle County** and Eagle River Water and Sanitation District (ERWSD) work together to incorporate water-saving measures into new developments in the PUD process. Three developments have incorporated water efficiency measures as a result: [Fox Hollow](#); [6 West](#); and [Stillwater](#). Measures included outdoor irrigation budgets and planting limited to those on the [Colorado State University recommended plant list](#).

Additionally, ERWSD included language in the PUDs to allow for future adjustments: "These requirements may be adjusted with approval of the Eagle River Water and Sanitation District if such adjustments maintain the water efficiency goals as outlined in these requirements."

- a. Condition **rezoning or discretionary reviews** like planned unit developments (PUDs) on low water use commitments. Note that individual agreements or conditions may be unnecessary if ordinances or regulations require water conservation.
- b. Change current zoning definitions, or rezone land, to allow for **more varieties of multi-family and attached housing** that decrease per capita water use. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan](#), pages 49–50.
- c. Designate zoning categories that narrow the range of water use within the category, to allow for more accurate **forecasts of actual water use based on zoning**. Coordinate with the planning department to develop water demands for different types of zoning and/or land use categories, that is, how much water per household, per capita, or per acre would be consumed for varying development patterns, such as large-lot or small-lot single-family residential, multifamily residential, mixed-use, retail categories, etc. See Pace University’s Land Use Leadership Alliance [Questions to Guide Water and Land Use Planning Integration](#).



**Example:** The **City of Westminster** is working to refine some of its zoning categories to better reflect anticipated water use. Zoning designations with a broad range of potential uses with very different water demands, such as retail stores and restaurants, make it difficult to accurately project water demand.

- d. Adopt an **overlay zone** or jurisdiction-wide development standard addressing water demand and conservation.



**Example:** **Douglas County** has a [water supply overlay district](#) encompassing the entire county, tailored to the supplies available in specific areas. The district was designed to “ensure that development in all areas of Douglas County provides for a water supply that is sufficient in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability.”

## 5. Subdivision or Site Plan Regulations that Include Water Conservation

Subdivision regulations are commonly used to impose requirements applicable to all new development. Require the inclusion of water conservation and water demand management measures in the water supply report provided as part of a development permit application. Structure

### **Colo. Rev. Stat. § 29-20-304**

“An applicant for a development permit shall submit estimated water supply requirements for the proposed development.” The statute does not mandate water conservation, but it could be required through ordinance or regulation.

**development or subdivision improvement agreements** to include water conservation commitments.

## 6. Implement Requirements that Contribute to Water Efficiency and Compact Infrastructure

- a. Implement a **water demand offset** requirement, in which the projected water demand of new development is offset with water efficiency measures to create a neutral impact on overall service area demands and water use.



**Example:** The Alliance for Water Efficiency’s [Net Blue Ordinance Toolkit](#) describes water demand offset requirements that have been adopted by communities across the country, together with various methodologies for calculating offsets, a model ordinance, and suggestions for community outreach.

- b. Prioritize **infill development**. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan](#), pages 44–49, for further explanation and examples.
- c. Adopt **stormwater management** policies to mitigate increased density or impervious surface area. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan](#), pages 50–53, for further explanation and examples.
- d. Enable use of **graywater** and/or municipally supplied reclaimed water for nonpotable purposes, to the extent consistent with Colorado and local law. See [Pitkin County](#) and [City and County of Denver](#) enabling ordinances for graywater reuse. The Colorado Division of Water Resources provides additional [information on the legal constraints on the use of graywater](#).



**Example:** The [Verde Land and Water Toolbox](#) explains how conditional zoning can include water conservation and provides an example from the Civano master planned community in Tucson, Arizona.

## 7. Water Efficient Landscape Code

Discuss the adoption, revision, or implementation of a water efficient landscape code, landscape design, or installation rules and regulations. See [Green Industry Best Management Practices \(BMPs\) for the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources in Colorado](#). Outdoor water use generally provides the biggest return in terms of water savings, particularly for communities with newer developments, which tend to have higher efficiency indoor fixtures, and communities with large single-family lots. However, with any of these

strategies effectiveness should be determined by the water provider according to their local conditions.

**Examples:**

**Sterling Ranch** adopted water demand management rules and regulations as a framework for “water-smart” development. See [Amended Sterling Ranch Water Demand Initiatives](#), Section 3, pages 4–20, and Attachments C and D.

Any or all of the techniques listed below could alternatively be included in a model landscape plan with incentives and/or technical assistance as described in Section [III.B.4.](#) of this guidance addendum.

a. **Landscape code** provisions could include:

- i. Xeriscape requirements.
- ii. Turf limitations or minimums for low-water use vegetation for new development. See the Keystone Policy Center’s 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), page 20, for research from the City of Aurora about landscape regulations generally; and Aurora’s [Landscape Reference Manual](#), page 52, for the city’s turf regulations, or the city’s [Z-Zone policy](#) incentivizing irrigation only during plant establishment.



**Example:** The **Town of Buena Vista** limits the amount of high water use vegetation and turf grass for any new development. See [Buena Vista Municipal Code, Section 16-255](#).

- iii. Soil amendment requirements.



**Example:** **Denver Water** provides [extensive information](#) for compliance with its soil amendment requirements.

- iv. Rain/weather/soil moisture sensors requirements. See [Douglas County’s Comprehensive Plan](#) Policy 4-1 W.3, pages 4 –10.
- v. Efficient outdoor fixture requirements that meet Green Building standards. See [Section III.C.8.a.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- vi. Require low water use vegetation in open space or for areas used for stormwater or runoff control purposes.

- vii. Require use of plants from a native/drought-resistant plant list. Prohibit invasive, non-native, or high-water use trees and shrubs. See [Section III.B.5.b.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.



**Example:** Commerce City maintains a list of prohibited trees and invasive species, together with its designation of approved species. See [Approved Plant List](#) pages 3–4.

- b. Require **certification or registration** of landscape professionals. Potential types of certifications include:
  - i. [Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper certification](#). Individual landscapers can become certified through this program, and retail water agencies, non-government organizations, and educational institutions [can adopt](#) this program as a standard or requirement for landscapers in a region or service area. The [City of Aspen](#) offers certification for this program.
  - ii. [WaterSense certification](#) in irrigation system design, irrigation system installation and maintenance, or irrigation system audits.



**Example:** Northern Water provides WaterSense-approved training and then refers customers to find qualified contractors through [WaterSense’s “Find a Pro” portal](#).

- iii. [Certified Irrigation Designer Certificate from the Irrigation Association](#).
- iv. [Landscape industry certified technician through the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado](#).



**Example:** The **Town of Castle Rock** requires [landscape professionals](#), including designers, installers, and maintenance contractors performing commercial landscape and/or irrigation work within the Town Limits, to be registered and have one or more specified certifications.

- v. [Complete Green Industries of Colorado \(GreenCo\) best management practices program](#).
- c. Model landscape ordinances for consideration.

- i. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs has developed a [model landscape ordinance](#) utilizing a water conservation oriented planning approach.
- ii. The South Metro Water Supply Authority has produced a [Model Regional Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Ordinance](#) for consideration and use by its thirteen water provider members. See Section [III.B.4.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- iii. The State of California has a [Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance](#) that local agencies are required to adopt.

## 8. Building and Plumbing Codes

Adopt or strengthen building and plumbing codes that promote water efficiency, low water use, fixture improvements, or water benchmarking.

- a. Codify water efficiency standards set forth by **green building codes**, for example [LEED guidelines for water conservation](#), [national green building standards](#), [Green Industries of Colorado \(GreenCo\) standards](#), [Water Efficiency Rating Score \(WERS\)](#), and [WaterSense labeled homes](#). The Alliance for Water Efficiency provides [background on green building standards and guidelines](#) with examples and comparisons of programs.

**Colo. Rev. Stat. § 6-7.5-102**  
As of September 1, 2016, manufacturers are required to sell only WaterSense labeled indoor fixtures within the State of Colorado.

 **Example:** The City of [Fort Collins](#) and the City and County of [Denver](#) require green building certification from LEED, [Energy Star](#), or other applicable programs, for new city-owned buildings over 5,000 square feet. These programs include water efficiency measures for certification.

- b. Establish **sustainable development bonuses** for development that is green building certified.

 **Example:** The City of [Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania](#), provides [Sustainable Development Bonuses](#) for LEED-certified buildings, specifically mentioning the benefits that green buildings have for water quality and conservation in the ordinance.

## 9. Ordinances Promoting Efficient Fixtures in Existing Buildings

- a. Require **retrofit on resale properties** to include low water use fixtures.



**Example: Colorado WaterWise** includes a section on retrofit ordinances in its [Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado](#), pages 162–164, and includes a California ordinance as an example in Appendix B, pages 224–226.

- b. **Require retrofit** to include low water use fixtures when new building permits are required. Set a reasonable value threshold for triggering retrofit requirements.

## 10. Regional Coordination of Water Policy and Procedures

Implement regional coordination among water providers for consistent policy and procedures, and to de-escalate competition among jurisdictions for new development. Any of the following techniques can be enacted by a water provider and/or local government and, through collaboration with the appropriate entities, scaled up to the county or region. Water providers in each county are listed in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s [My Waters Fluoride database](#).



**Example:** The **City of Fort Collins** and surrounding water districts have formed a [Regional Water Collaboration Steering Committee](#) to identify and pursue regional water collaboration opportunities in and around the City’s Growth Management Area.

### Case Study: Fort Collins-Loveland Water District

The District is one of many in the state serving more and more suburban customers on formerly rural land in quickly developing areas. New supplies from the Colorado-Big Thompson project, the District’s primary existing source, are becoming more expensive and harder to obtain. Conservation is seen as an effective method of stretching supplies for increased growth and development, driving down demand and saving existing customers money, but the District hesitates to impose water restrictions on its own.

Because the District serves customers in two cities, two towns, and rural areas of Larimer County, regional cooperation is key to creating more uniform expectations among customers and developers and strengthening overall water management. The District is helping to draft water elements for the comprehensive plan updates of the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County. Regular meetings are beginning with other water providers in the region, and the District and City of Fort Collins cooperate to perform residential irrigation audits.

- a. Make water conservation requirements consistent among land use authorities in the region.
- b. Adopt uniform landscape code or irrigation regulations for the region. See [Section III.C.7.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- c. Adopt uniform landscape and irrigation contractor certifications in the region. See [Section III.C.7.b.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- d. Coordinate education and outreach across the region. See [Section III.D.6.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- e. Collaborate on promotion, incentives, or requirements for green building techniques. See [Section III.C.8.a.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.
- f. Designate a **growth management area** outside municipal boundaries that addresses water use. See [Integrating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan](#), pages 37–41.



**Example:** The **City of Boulder** has established growth boundaries and limited water service for development outside of these boundaries—see [City of Boulder Charter](#), Article VIII, Section 128A.

## D. EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

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The activities described in this chapter are intended to be carried out collaboratively by the water provider and the land use authority to educate constituents about the water policies and regulations described throughout this guidance addendum. Coordination of education and outreach enables a unified message to water customers and developers about water use, preventing confusion and contradiction.

### 1. Consistent Online Information

Ensure that information concerning water and water conservation on the respective websites of the water provider and the planning department is consistent and cross-linked. This helps water customers and users easily find the same information about water conservation and relevant policies and regulations as well as eliminates confusion.



**Example:** The **Town of Eagle** links to Eagle River Water and Sanitation District’s policies and services on its [water conservation page](#).

### 2. Water Provider and Planning Department Work Together to Educate the Public

- a. Provide **public information** and education on water conservation. This can be led by the water provider in creating materials such as brochures that can easily be distributed to the land use authority for coordinated dissemination.



**Examples:**  
 The [City of Cortez](#) and [City of Glenwood Springs](#) have water conservation brochures.  
**American Water Works Association** has a [Water Conservation Communications Guide](#).  
 The **City of Santa Fe, New Mexico**, requires that all persons applying for a building permit or installing new landscaping receive water conservation literature ([Santa Fe Ordinance No. 1997-17](#)).

- b. Develop and disseminate landscape **water budgets** and information.



**Example:** The [City of Greeley](#) uses a water budget rate structure, as do Centennial Water and Sanitation District, City of Boulder, and Town of Castle Rock (as described in the [Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado](#), pages 105–107).

- c. Develop and provide landscape **efficiency evaluations**, irrigation audits, and green building codes. See [Section III.B.9.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information on irrigation audits, and [Section III.C.8.a.](#) of this guidance addendum for more information on green building codes.



**Example:** The [City of Fort Collins](#) supplies free sprinkler audits and self-audit kits to water customers in the area, including for Fort Collins-Loveland Water District and East Larimer County Water District customers.

- d. The water provider and planning department work together to **communicate the benefits** of water conservation to the community. Different communities will have unique values based on their particular circumstances. Colorado communities cite numerous benefits from water conservation:
- i. Allows service to additional growth if water supplies are limited.
  - ii. Services more customers without increasing costs.
  - iii. Reduces the need to “buy and dry” agricultural land and retains more agricultural land to preserve historic heritage, scenic qualities, and food production.
  - iv. Mitigates drought impacts and increases drought resilience.
  - v. Eliminates or delays need for additional water infrastructure and associated costs.
  - vi. Eliminates or reduces the need to acquire additional water rights.
  - vii. Increases water system reliability, stability, and resiliency.
  - viii. Reduces costs to customers.
  - ix. Reduces water and wastewater treatment needs and effluent discharge.
  - x. Reduces surface water runoff during irrigation season.
  - xi. Maintains instream flows by reducing the amount of water diverted from rivers and streams.
  - xii. Reduces energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions through reduced water demand.
  - xiii. Demonstrates a commitment to the sustainability of the community and leadership in improved stewardship of a public resource.

More benefits that can result from coordinated planning are described on page 3 of the [Coordinated Planning Guide](#).

- e. Hold **public meetings** for input on water policy in the comprehensive or master plan. Public meetings are a staple of the comprehensive or master planning process; thus, if water is included within the comprehensive or master plan, feedback will naturally be collected on water policy. Representatives from the water provider should attend these meetings to hear feedback and adjust accordingly.
- f. Conduct a **public survey** or survey of developers on which land use mechanisms for water conservation respondents would most like to see implemented. See [Development Community Perspectives on Water Efficiency in New Construction](#).
- g. **Provide information** on which approaches most effectively conserve water so that developers and planners can make informed decisions. See [Section III.A.2](#) of this guidance addendum for more information.

### 3. Lead by Example

- a. Target buildings and facilities owned by the water provider and land use authority for water efficiency improvements to provide education and lead by example. See Keystone Policy Center’s 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), page 29; LEED [credits for water efficiency](#); and EPA’s WaterSense [Best Management Practices for Commercial and Institutional Facilities](#).

- i. Measure and communicate water savings of the building.



**Example:** EPA’s Energy Star program includes water benchmarking in buildings. An Energy Star [communications toolkit](#) presents strategies for sharing energy and water efficiency gains with the public.

- ii. Give tours and/or provide educational materials for interested customers and citizens.
- b. **Build demonstration gardens** following the landscape standards, regulations, or encouraged practices of the jurisdiction. If no such programs exist, plant native and drought-tolerant plants.

#### 4. **Jointly Engage with the Development Community and Homeowners' Associations (HOAs).**

The planning department and water provider can provide information to potential developers about water rates and fees, development incentives, potential for cost savings, water conservation techniques, incentives, and requirements, and ensure that any concerns are understood and addressed. This can be done as part of a community's pre-application meeting, as described in [Section III.A.3.](#) of this guidance addendum.

After new residential development is complete, the planning department and water provider should continue to collaborate with any HOAs that manage the property, in order to provide information about water conservation. This may include information about proper irrigation techniques for open space or parks, how to encourage household water conservation, and recommended plant lists.

#### 5. **Share Success Stories and Case Studies with Other Communities and the Public**

See Keystone Policy Center's 2018 [Colorado Water and Growth Dialogue Report](#), page 28.

#### 6. **Coordinate Education and Outreach Across the Region**

Implement regional coordination among water providers for consistency in education and outreach. This can be helpful among providers that depend upon the same watersheds or water sources, face the same challenges, or are implementing similar conservation activities across their service areas.



**Example:** One of the goals of the **Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Water Quality/Quantity Committee** is to educate its member communities about water issues facing the region in order to promote regional solutions and sound water management. [This effort](#) has included tours of watersheds and data sharing.

#### Case Study: Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District Demonstration Garden and Pilot Projects

Northern Water hosts [Conservation Gardens](#) at its headquarters in Berthoud, CO, with over 700 plants and 60 turf grasses that use less water and are adapted to the region's semiarid climate. These gardens are free and open to the public year-round, and contain different areas showcasing different plant types and combinations—including eight different Xeriscape examples. This project is currently undergoing renovations to include additional examples, such as a street strip demonstration.

In 2018, Northern Water also initiated a Collaborative Water-Efficient Landscape Grant in order to promote water efficiency within its service area. The program was open to a variety of water users, including public facilities, open spaces, businesses, schools, multi-family complexes, and HOAs. Landscapes were to be designed to use substantially less turf and include 50 percent plant cover at maturity. Grant amounts were ranged from \$5,000 to \$15,000.



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## APPENDIX B: WORKSHEETS TO GUIDE SELECTION PROCESS

### WORKSHEET D - IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Water Efficiency Activities for Screening [1]	State Statute Requirement [2]	Identification		Qualitative Screening [5]					Carry to Evaluation [6]	Reason for Elimination [7]
		Existing/Potential Activity [3]	Targeted Customer Category [4]	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Add additional screening criteria	Notes on Additional Pros/Cons to Consider		
<b>Metering (BP1)</b>		V, VII								
Automatic Meter Reading Installation and Operations										
Submetering for Large Users (Indoor and Outdoor)										
Meter Testing and Replacement										
Meter Upgrades										
Identify Unmetered/Unbilled Treated Water Uses										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>Data Collection - Monitoring and Verification (BP2)</b>										
Frequency of Meter Reading										
Tracking Water Use by Customer Type										
Upgrade Billing System to Track Use by Sufficient Customer Types										
Tracking Water Use for Large Customers										
Area of Irrigated Lands in Service Area (e.g. acres)										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>Water Use Efficiency Oriented Rates and Tap Fees (BP1)</b>		VII, VIII								
Volumetric Billing										
Water Rate Adjustments										
Frequency of Billing										
Inclining/Tiered Rates										
Water Budgets										
Tap Fees with Water Use Efficiency Incentives										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>System Water Loss Management and Control (BP3)</b>		V								
System Wide Water Audits										
Control of Apparent Losses (with Metering)										
Leak Detection and Repair										
Water Line Replacement Program										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>Planning (BP2)</b>										
Integrated Water Resources Plans										
Master Plans/Water Supply Plans										
Capital Improvement Plans										
Feasibility Studies										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>Staff (BP4)</b>										
Water Conservation Coordinator										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										
<b>Integration of Land Use Efforts</b>		IV(f)(i)								
Establish Regular Contact and Information Sharing										
Align Data and Information Used										
Establish Coordinated Procedures for Post-Occupancy Monitoring and Enforcement										
Integrate Water Considerations into the Development Approval Process										
Integrate Long Term Land Use and Water Planning										
<i>Add additional activities</i>										

#### Instructions:

[1] This column provides a list of possible activities & identifies the Best Practice activity as defined in the Colorado WaterWise Guidebook of Best Practices (BP) for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado. List additional activities identified through the planning process.

[2] This column identifies, by roman numeral, the elements that correspond with the best practices and that shall be fully considered in the planning process per Colorado State Statute 37-60-126.

[3] Specify whether the activity is "Existing" or a "Potential" activity to carry through screening by entering an "E" or "P", respectively.

[4] As applicable, specify which customer category (residential, commercial, etc.) is/would be impacted by the activity.

[5] Enter screening criteria based on qualitative goals developed in Step 3 and insert an "X" for activities that meet the listed screening criteria.

[6] Based on the screening process, indicate which activities will be carried onto the the evaluation phase with an "X".

[7] If eliminated via screening, comment on why.

## WORKSHEET E - IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & INCENTIVES

Water Efficiency Activities for Screening [1]	State Statute Requirement [2]	Identification				Existing/ Potential Activity [3]	Targeted Customer Category [5]	Qualitative Screening [6]					Notes on Additional Pros/Cons to Consider	Carry to Evaluation [7]	Reason for Elimination [8]
		SWSI Framework Levels [4]			Level 3 Customer Type(s) in Service Area			Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Add additional screening criteria				
		Level 1 Municipal Uses	Level 2 Customers with the Largest Water Use	Level 3 Customer Type(s) in Service Area											
<b>Installation of Water Efficient Fixtures and Appliances</b>															
I															
Indoor Audits															
Toilet Retrofits															
Urinal Retrofits															
Showerhead Retrofits															
Faucet Retrofits (e.g. aerator installation)															
Water Efficient Washing Machines															
Water Efficient Dishwashers															
Efficient Swamp Cooler and Air Conditioning Use															
<i>Add additional activities</i>															
<b>Low Water Use Landscapes</b>															
II															
Drought Resistant Vegetation															
Removal of Phreatophytes															
Irrigation Efficiency Evaluations/Outdoor Water Audits															
Outdoor Irrigation Controllers															
Irrigation Scheduling/Timing															
Rain Sensors															
Residential Outdoor Meter Installations															
Xeriscape															
Other Low Water Use Landscapes															
Irrigation Equipment Retrofits															
<i>Add additional activities</i>															
<b>Water- Efficient Industrial and Commercial Water-Using Processes</b>															
III															
Specialized Nonresidential Surveys, Audits and Equipment Efficiency Improvements															
Commercial Indoor Fixture and Appliance Rebates/Retrofits															
Cooling Equipment Efficiency															
Restaurant equipment															
<i>Add additional activities</i>															
<b>Incentives</b>															
X															
Toilet Rebates															
Urinal Rebates															
Showerhead Rebates															
Water Efficient Faucet or Aerator Rebates															
Water Efficient Washing Machine Rebates															
Water Efficient Dishwasher Rebates															
Efficient Irrigation Equipment Rebates															
Landscape Water Budgets Information and Customer Feedback															
Turf Replacement Programs/Xeriscape Incentives															
Give-aways															
<i>Add additional activities</i>															
<b>Integration of Land Use Efforts</b>															
IV(f)(i)															
Developer Incentives to Reduce Water Demand															
Conservation-Oriented Tap Fees															
Water Efficient Land Development Patterns															
Model Landscape Plans															
Incentives for Reduced Irrigation															
Water-Smart Home Options															
Become a WaterSense Partner															
Low Water Use Demonstration Homes															
Water Audits															
Rainwater Reuse															
<i>Add additional activities</i>															

**Instructions:**

[1] This column provides a list of activities & if applicable, identifies the Best Practice activity as defined under *Colorado WaterWise Guidebook of Best Practices (BP) for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado*. List additional activities identified through the planning process.

[2] This column identifies, by roman numeral, the elements that correspond with the best practices and that shall be fully considered in the planning process per Colorado State Statute 37-60-126.

[3] Specify whether the activity is an "Existing" or "Potential" activity to carry through screening by entering an "E" or "P", respectively.

[4] Specify which level the historical/potential activities fall under by entering an "X" in the appropriate column.

[5] As applicable, specify which customer category (residential, commercial, etc.) is/would be impacted by the activity.

[6] Enter screening criteria based on qualitative goals developed in Step 3 and insert an "X" for activities that meet the listed screening criteria.

[7] Based on the screening process, indicate which activities will be carried on the the evaluation phase with an "X".

[8] If eliminated via screening, comment on why.

## WORKSHEET F - IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS

Water Efficiency Activities for Screening [1]	State Statute Requirement [2]	Identification					Targeted Customer Category [5]	Qualitative Screening [6]					Carry to Evaluation [7]	Reason for Elimination [8]	
		Existing/Potential Activity [3]	SWSI Framework Levels [4]			Notes on Additional Pros/Cons to Consider		Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Add additional screening criteria				
			Level 1 Customer Type(s) within the Existing Service Area	Level 2 New Development	Level 3 Point of Sales on Existing Building Stock										
<b>General Water Use Regulations</b>														IX	
Water Waste Ordinance (BP 5)															
Time of Day Watering Restriction															
Day of Week Watering Restriction															
Water Overspray Limitations															
Add additional activities															
<b>Landscape Design/Installation Rules and Regulations</b>														IX	
Rules and Regulations for Landscape Design/Installation (BP 9)															
Landscaper Training and Certification (BP 8)															
Irrigation System Installer Training and Certification (BP 8)															
Soil Amendment Requirements (BP 9)															
Turf Restrictions (BP 9)															
Irrigation Equipment Requirements															
Outdoor Water Audits/Irrigation Efficiency Regulations (BP 10)															
Outdoor Green Building Construction (BP 8,9)															
Add additional activities															
<b>Indoor and Commercial Regulations</b>														IX	
High Efficiency Fixture and Appliance Replacement (BP 12)															
Commercial Cooling and Process Water Requirements (BP 14)															
Green Building Construction (BP 12)															
Indoor Plumbing Requirements (BP 12)															
City Facility Requirements (BP 12)															
Required Indoor Residential Audits (BP 13)															
Required Indoor Commercial Audits (BP 14)															
Commercial Water Wise Use Regulations (Car Washes, Restaurants, etc.)															
Add additional activities															
<b>Integration of Land Use Efforts</b>														IV(f)(i)	
Examine Existing Land Use Regulations for Barriers and Conflicts															
Adopt or Strengthen Water-Related Ordinances or Regulations															
Water Conservation in New Development, Re-Development, and Annexation															
Incorporate Water Efficiency into Zoning Codes and Rezoning Procedures															
Subdivision or Site Plan Regulations that Include Water Conservation															
Implement Requirements that Contribute to Water Efficiency and Compact Infrastructure															
Water Efficient Landscape Code															
Building and Plumbing Codes															
Ordinances Promoting Efficient Fixtures in Existing Buildings															
Regional Coordination of Water Policy and Procedures															
Add additional activities															

**Instructions:**

[1] This column provides a list of possible activities & if applicable identifies the Best Practice activity as defined under Colorado WaterWise Guidebook of Best Practices (BP) for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado. List additional activities identified through the planning process.

[2] This column identifies, by roman numeral, the elements that correspond with the best practices and that shall be fully considered in the planning process per Colorado State Statute 37-60-126.

[3] Specify whether the activity is an "Existing" or "Potential" activity to carry through screening by entering an "E" or "P", respectively.

[4] For current/historical activities, specify which level the activities fall under by entering an "X" in the appropriate column.

[5] As applicable, specify which customer category (residential, commercial, etc.) is/would be impacted by the activity.

[6] Enter screening criteria based on qualitative goals developed in Step 3 and insert an "X" for activities that meet the listed screening criteria.

[7] Based on the screening process, indicate which activities will be carried on the the evaluation phase with an "X".

[8] If eliminated via screening, comment on why.

## WORKSHEET G - IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Water Efficiency Activities for Screening [1]	State Statute Requirement [2]	Identification					Qualitative Screening [6]					Carry to Evaluation [7]	Reason for Elimination [8]	
		Existing/ Potential Activity [3]	SWSI Framework Levels [4]			Targeted Customer Category [5]	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Enter screening criteria	Add additional screening criteria	Notes on Additional Pros/Cons to Consider			
			Level 1 One-Way	Level 2 One-Way with Feedback	Level 3 Two-way communication									
<b>Customer Education (BP6)</b>													VI	
Bill Stuffers														
Newsletter														
Newspaper Articles														
Mass Mailings														
Web Pages														
Water Fairs														
K-12 Teacher and Classroom Education Programs														
Message Development/Campaign														
Interactive Websites														
Social Networking (e.g Facebook)														
Customer Surveys														
Focus Groups														
Citizen Advisory Boards														
<i>Add additional activities</i>														
<b>Technical Assistance</b>													VI	
Customer Water Use Workshops														
Landscape Design and Maintenance Workshops														
Xeriscape Demonstration Garden														
Water Conservation Expert Available														
<i>Add additional activities</i>														
<b>Integration of Land Use Efforts</b>													IV(f)(i)	
Consistent Online Information														
Water Provider and Planning Department Work Together to Educate the Public														
Lead by Example														
Jointly Engage with the Development Community and HOAs														
Share Success Stories and Case Studies with Other Communities and the Public														
Coordinate Education and Outreach Across the Region														
<i>Add additional activities</i>														

**Instructions:**

- [1] This column provides a list of possible activities & if applicable identifies the Best Practice activity as defined under Colorado WaterWise Guidebook of Best Practices (BP) for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado. List additional activities identified through the planning process.
- [2] This column identifies, by roman numeral, the elements that correspond with the best practices and that shall be fully considered in the planning process per Colorado State Statute 37-60-126.
- [3] Specify whether the activity is an "Existing" or "Potential" activity to carry through screening by entering an "E" or "P", respectively.
- [4] For current/historical activities, specify which level the activities fall under by entering an "X" in the appropriate column.
- [5] As applicable, specify which customer category (residential, commercial, etc.) is/would be impacted by the activity.
- [6] Enter screening criteria based on qualitative goals developed in Step 3 and insert an "X" for activities that meet the listed screening criteria.
- [7] Based on the screening process, indicate which activities will be carried on the the evaluation phase with an "X".
- [8] If eliminated via screening, comment on why.