



Tap+Smart: Denver Water's Conservation Plan

- Tap+Smart is the name of Denver Water's plan to accelerate the pace of water conservation in its service area and reduce overall water use from pre-drought usage (2001) by 22 percent by 2016.
- The Tap+Smart conservation plan is a significant part of Denver Water's future water supply planning. Denver Water's ability to provide long-term, reliable supplies for its customers rests on three strategies for augmenting existing supplies: conservation, recycled water and developing new supplies.
- Denver Water has had an active conservation program since the 1970s, but the recent drought and evidence of climate change reminds us that we live in a semi-arid region. Denver Water's service area, which includes more than a million people, gets by on an average annual precipitation of only 16 inches supplemented by water stored in reservoirs.
- In 2006, the Denver Water Board of Commissioners set a new conservation goal to reduce water use to 165 gallons per person per day* by 2016. This is a 22 percent reduction from average pre-drought use of 211 gallons per person per day. Coincidentally, Denver Water customers hit the goal of 165 gallons per person per day during the drought, but we did it in part by making emergency sacrifices, not just by reducing waste.
**Gallons per person per day is calculated using total treated water consumed by Denver Water customers divided by the population in our service area. It includes all uses: residential, commercial, industrial and institutional.*
- Studies show that after communities make significant emergency changes in how they use water, when the crisis is over, usage will creep back toward pre-drought levels unless conservation becomes a habit. In order to have the water we need for the future, we all need to build conservation into our lifestyles.
- Denver Water does enforce water waste rules and has implemented a section in its operating rules that speaks specifically to water conservation. Some components of the the conservation program are mandatory, including restrictions on the time of day and number of days that irrigation can occur and the incorporation of soil amendment on property before a new tap can be set. Of course, during severe conditions, Denver Water will impose mandatory drought restrictions.
- To build community awareness about the need to conserve water, Denver Water will continue its Use Only What You Need ad campaign in 2008.
- 2008 summer watering rules and schedules will be mailed to all Denver Water customers in early May.