

Tucson Water Public Information & Conservation Office Water Conservation Program Mid-Year Report for FY 2015

This report describes the activities of the Tucson Water Conservation Program from July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014. The program is funded through a conservation fee that began in 2008 and is currently set at seven cents per hundred cubic feet assessed to all potable water users. The Conservation and Education Subcommittee of the Citizens' Water Advisory Council is charged with overseeing the Conservation Fee Fund and works with staff to review and provide feedback on staff recommendations related to water conservation programming. This report contains updates on our main program components and the recommendations presented in the 2014 annual report.

Education

Tucson Water continues to support three contracts that provide educational services to K-12 audiences and landscape professionals throughout our service area. All numbers reported by our education partners are for the time period of July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

Arizona Project WET (APW)

APW continues to deliver a variety of educational programs including 3rd Grade Groundwater Flow Model presentations, 3rd Grade Sweetwater Wetlands Festivals, 6th Grade Groundwater Flow Model presentations, Water Scene Investigation presentations and the School Water Audit Program. During this time period, 83 classroom presentations were delivered reaching 1,847 students. APW continues to conduct pre and post learning assessments of each student they reach through their formal instruction (i.e. 3rd 7 6th grade presentations) and significant learning is being demonstrated through these assessments. All of these programs have resulted in 881 instructional face-hours. The School Water Audit Program retrofits are saving a projected 2.05 million gallons of water annually. APW has also provided hands-on demonstrations at 36 community events, reaching 1,073 adults and 3,057 students. APW continues to pilot an engineering design, process-driven rainwater harvesting curriculum and is working to develop a smartphone-based Discovery Program using QR codes at Sweetwater Wetlands. APW is also preparing for their spring and summer professional development opportunities.

Environmental Education Exchange (EEExchange)

EEExchange delivered a total of 157 *Da Drops* presentations for grades K-3, 101 *Our Water, Our Future* presentations for grades 3-5, and 46 *El Tour de Agua* presentations to middle school students. In total, 7,665 students in 88 schools were reached by the three outreach programs. EEExchange utilizes a web-based scheduling system providing teachers with an easy way to sign-up. In addition, one Family



Science Night event was attended. *Da Drops* and *Our Water, Our Future* presentations are both up from 2013 numbers and the new *El tour de Agua* has been delivered more than the old *Tucson Toolkit* presentation it replaced, as compared to the same time period last year. As reported by EEExchange, the programs continue to receive extremely positive feedback on evaluation forms and from direct communication with teachers.

SmartScape

SmartScape continues to train landscape professionals and homeowners on water efficiency and proper landscape care through 51 workshops that reached 1,221 people. Currently SmartScape is developing new programming including a webinar/seminar for property managers to address irrigation efficiency and Tucson Water's new Irrigation Efficiency Incentive Program and a Professional Training Module for individuals that have received a Certificate of Completion from "SmartScape Training for Landscape Professionals." This class is titled "Landscape Irrigation – Introduction to Basic Design, Maintenance and Management" and is an important addition to the SmartScape offerings to increase the ability and knowledge of our local professionals to incorporate water efficiency practices into their work.

PICO Outreach

Tucson Water participated in several community outreach events in the second half of 2014, as well as making multiple professional presentations at technical conferences.

Professional Presentations

Several staff members attended the WaterSmart Innovations conference, which is the premier urban water efficiency conference. In addition to networking and sitting in on excellent sessions, PICO staff had a poster on our Low-Income Toilet Replacement Program and a presentation titled "Long-Term Partnerships Provide One-of-a-Kind Water Education Programs for Tucson Youth" and our education partner, Arizona Project WET, presented a poster titled "Students Drive the use of Water Efficient Technology" and presented "Teachers Work with Professionals to Understand Tucson's Water Distribution System."

PICO staff also attended the Irrigation Association conference to keep up on emerging technologies and irrigation approaches to improve the design of our soon-to-be-released irrigation efficiency incentive program. Staff also delivered a presentation titled, "Partnering with Water Purveyors" to share examples of how Tucson Water invests in landscape water efficiency through education (SmartScape) program and incentives.

SAHBA Home Show

Tucson Water has participated in the SAHBA Home Show since 2008, providing attendees opportunities to ask questions and receive Tucson Water promotional and educational materials. Working with our marketing contractors, we designed an improved set of displays to emphasize the Water Reliability message our utility is focused on. Many individuals took information on our rebate programs and people primarily had questions about recycled water, water rates and hard water solutions.



Southern Arizona Construction Career Days

Tucson Water was invited to participate with 30 other area organizations in the 2014 Southern Arizona Construction Career Days held on November 13th and 14th. Four hundred high school students attended the event each day and Tucson Water was reputed to have one of the more exciting booths with hands-on displays of pipes, valves and assembly kits.

Other Community Events

Tucson Water also had booths at the El Rio Health & Safety Fair, the Senior Health Fair, the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base National Night Out, the Home Depot Safety Event for Kids, the Sunnyside Neighborhood National Night Out, the City/County G.I.S Fair and Science Night at Rattlesnake Ridge Elementary School. In addition to hosting a booth, Tucson Water provided sponsorship for the following events: Family Festival in the Park at Reid Park, the Envision Tucson Sustainable Festival at the YWCA and the Boo Bash at the Clements Center.



Social Media



Tucson Water has become more active on social media in the last year. Our office has been contributing to the City of Tucson Facebook and Instagram pages on a regular basis and is moving in the direction of creating unique water department accounts for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Although connected, each of these social media platforms provides different opportunities for engaging with our customers, providing important information about water outages, repairs, etc. and interesting information on the many facets of a water utility. SeeClickFix is an app already being utilized by the City of Tucson to report potholes, graffiti and other municipal problems. Water waste has been added to the list and these violations, which will go directly to our Water Conservation Inspectors to address. This tool provides our customers with another way to report water waste in our community. Our social media strategy should be fully launched by the end of FY15.

Regional Collaboration

Tucson Water PICO staff hosted an Arizona Water Conservation InfoShare on December 9th at the Randolph Golf Complex. This quarterly meeting brings together water conservation professionals from around the state to exchange ideas, identify opportunities for collaboration and learn about research and new technology in the field. The morning featured a presentation from Gary Woodard of Montgomery and



Associates who presented on “Changing Preferences, New Development and Passive Conservation: What’s Driving Down Domestic Demand?” After lunch the attendees were taken on a tour of the new Advanced Oxidation Process Water Treatment Plant and the Southern Avra Valley Storage and Recovery Project (SAVSARP).

Updates on FY 2014 Annual Report recommendations:

- Streamline and create more equitable high-efficiency toilet rebate programs by setting two rebate prices. \$75 for gravity-tank type and pressure assist-tank type toilets and \$150 for flushometer-valve type toilets (flushometer-valve types only for commercial sector).
 - *Update: Rebate changes will go into effect March 1st.*
- Reduce high-efficiency urinal rebates back to \$200 to be consistent with commercial HET rebate and evaluate progress next year.
 - *Update: Rebate changes will go into effect March 1st.*
- Gray water and rainwater harvesting rebates will continue to be evaluated for water savings and customer equity.
 - *Update: Tucson Water staff is currently working to address the expansion of the rainwater harvesting rebate program, as directed by City of Tucson Mayor & Council.*
- Offer a new high-efficiency washing machine rebate of \$100, available to residential, multi-family, and commercial customers.
 - *Update: Rebate language has been drafted and promotional materials are being developed, with a plan to “go live” at the beginning of FY 2016.*
- Offer a new, customized commercial rebate that will calculate a customer rebate amount based on potential water savings determined from a facility water audit.
 - *Update: The RFP has been drafted and a review committee assembled for selection of a contractor to conduct the necessary commercial water audits for this program. We hope for this program to “go live” at the beginning of FY 2016.*

