

On The Water Front



The unique variety of plants and animals that share our desert environment is one of the things that makes our community a great place to live. In the 1970s and 1980s, the City of Tucson purchased 23,920 acres of farm land in Avra Valley for water rights and to preserve groundwater in our central wellfield. We are planning to make use of both these facts to create a more sustainable future.

The City of Tucson, in partnership with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, has applied for and received federal grants to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for this Avra Valley area. A habitat conservation plan is a planning tool that helps municipalities comply with the Endangered Species Act by documenting endangered, threatened, and vulnerable species while also describing conservation strategies to lessen any future negative impacts. The Avra Valley HCP will also allow the City of Tucson and Tucson Water to build critical water-resource and renewable-energy projects while protecting sensitive habitat.

Currently Tucson Water has a number of groundwater wells and the Clearwater Renewable Resource Facilities within the Avra Valley area. In the future Tucson Water may expand its water recharge and recovery facilities, and install solar power facilities – both improvements would mean more renewable energy and sustainability.

As the Avra Valley HCP draft documents evolve, the City and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to seek public input. An initial public comment period for the Avra Valley HCP ended in May; further opportunities to comment on the plan are anticipated for 2010. In addition, there are regular meetings of the HCP Technical Advisory Committee that are open to the public. (Contact the City of Tucson's Office of Conservation and Sustainable Development at (520) 837-6933 or www.tucsonaz.gov/ocsd/HCP for more information.)

Stewardship of our environment is a community responsibility. The City of Tucson and Tucson Water look forward to working with you to preserve and protect Avra Valley while creating long term sustainability.

– Jeff Biggs, Director, Tucson Water

Your Water Connection

News & Tips for Tucson Water Customers
September 2009 www.tucsonaz.gov/water

Water 101

Help Us Get Accurate Meter Data

Water meter boxes blocked by tall weeds and grass, humming with bees, surrounded by thorny bushes, or guarded by protective dogs are just a few of the challenges faced by Tucson Water's 28 utility service workers out in the field. Customers can help field personnel gain safe and easy access to a water meter – usually located in the ground at the front curb or in the alley – by:

- Trimming bushes
- Trimming grass over six inches high and weeds over ten inches high
- Notifying us of bees living in the meter box
- Clearing away debris and trash
- Securing pets and animals
- Providing easy entry by unlocking gates

On average, each working day a single utility worker will read and record data from 480 water meters! Easy access ensures that utility workers obtain accurate readings and, if needed, service the water meter. (Last year, Tucson Water generated 15,782 letters asking customers to help with access to the meter box.)

You can find how to read your water meter and check for possible leaks by clicking on www.tucsonaz.gov/water/read_meter.htm. Or call (520) 791-3242 and billing office staff can help you locate and read your meter.

Suspect There Are Bees In Your Water Meter Box?

- ✓ Be safe – do not remove the box lid
- ✓ Call Customer Service at (520) 791-3242 and Tucson Water will eradicate the bees at night with a mixture of water, dish soap, and rubbing alcohol.

Last year Tucson Water responded to 649 reports of bees in meter boxes.

Have a question for Water 101 or a suggestion for a topic?
Call us at 791-4331 or e-mail to TW_Web1@ci.tucson.az.us

The Roger Road Wastewater Reclamation Facility

The Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department owns and operates eleven wastewater reclamation facilities (WRF). These facilities treat the community's sewage, cleaning it to the point that it can safely be returned to the environment or be used for irrigation of area turf facilities.

The largest of the treatment facilities is the Roger Road WRF. This plant has a capacity of 41 million gallons a day (mgd). It is the oldest treatment facility in Pima County, having been in operation since the early 1950s. Over the years it has gone through a number of upgrades and expansions. In 2015, the department will begin operating a brand new water reclamation campus just north of the existing Roger Road plant. The original plant will be decommissioned when the new state-of-the-art water campus begins operations. The new facility will be smaller and have a capacity of 32 mgd. RWRD will convey some of the flows that are now treated at the Roger Road WRF to the Ina Road WRF.

RWRD also plans to upgrade and expand the Ina Road WRF. The new upgrades and expansion at that facility will be operational by 2014. *Next month's column will provide information about the Ina Road facility.*

New Website Look Plus 24/7 Service

In July, Environmental Services implemented a new website with several features intended to provide customers with service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Customers can access lots of information about their trash and recycling service.

Features include a look-up tool that allows you to type in your address to find your day of service. Additionally, you can submit a service request using an on-line form to order a replacement container, report a missed pick-up, order a special brush and bulky collection, or have a customer service representative contact you.

The new website also has lots of educational information regarding recycling. Here you can view informative and fun videos about recycling in Tucson and operations at the Los Reales Landfill. You can also play the new recycling game to learn what is recyclable in Tucson and why some things can't be recycled.

The new site and services were used by customers immediately after being uploaded. In just a month, more than 60 customers have used the service request form to access customer service via the internet. It's convenient and available on your schedule. Take a look—we are available on-line at www.tucsonaz.gov/esd. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call Customer Service at 791-3171 any time to hear recorded information, and also leave a message which will be returned by the next business day.

Remember to recycle those old electronics. Use the Tucson Clean and Beautiful Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Directory at www.tucsonaz.gov/tcb or call the Recycle Infoline at 791-5000.

Your Utilities Services statement includes fees for your water, wastewater, and environmental services.

The Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (PCRWRD) - For more information about the regional wastewater system, call (520) 740-6500 or visit www.pima.gov/wwm.

Environmental Services (ES) - To ask questions, learn more about ES, or schedule a Los Reales tour, call (520) 791-3171 or visit www.tucsonaz.gov/esd or www.tucsonrecycles.org.

Sign Up Now for Fall & Winter

Free WaterSmart Classes

Each year more than 500 homeowners attend WaterSmart classes taught by local conservation experts through the University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension. Classes are free, popular, and seating is limited, so advance registration is strongly recommended. To register or for more info, contact Kathryn or Teri at (520) 626-5161. On the web, WaterSmart information can be found at http://cals.arizona.edu/pima/smartscape/workshop_water.html

All classes are taught at *Pima County Cooperative Extension, 4210 N. Campbell Avenue in Tucson.*

October 3 (Saturday)

Desert Rain Gardens 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m.

October 17 (Saturday)

Hands-On Drip Irrigation 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon
Irrigation Controllers 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

November 18 (Wednesday)

Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

November 21 (Saturday)

Landscape Water Budgeting 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Clearwater Quality Report

Most recent water quality data (July 10 – Aug. 7, 2009)

61	Sodium (mg/L) (July 17)
446.8	Mineral (mg/L) (July 10 – August 7 avg.)
199	Hardness (mg/L) (July 17)
7.92	pH (S.U.) (July 10 – August 7 avg.)
Neg	Coliform Bacteria (July 15)
1.12	Chlorine level (mg/L) (July 10 – August 7 avg.)
89.7	Temp (deg F) (July 10 – August 7 avg.)

Plant Succulents Now for Summer Stamina

Autumn is a great season for planting succulent desert landscapes – literally. Succulent plants are nature's water harvesters, storing water and food in their leaves, stems or roots for later use during dry spells. From unusual ornamentals to familiar natives, succulents come in a rich variety of textures, colors, shapes and sizes which can be mixed and matched to create a new landscape or spice up an existing design. Yuccas, agaves, and cacti readily establish when planted during this mild season and will be better able to endure environmental stresses of the following summer. Keep these tips in mind:

- ✳ Locate plants where they'll receive at least six hours of sunlight.
- ✳ Avoid sunburning cacti by planting them in their original orientation.
- ✳ Plant in porous or fast-draining soil (not sand) to avoid rot.
- ✳ Use rock mulch, not organic, to protect shallow root systems.
- ✳ Water sparingly (when soil is completely dry) and fertilize with half-strength 16-30-16 water soluble fertilizer as required March through October.

By designing your landscape to be water smart, you will save time, energy, money, and water. For more information on landscape water conservation, please contact the SmartScape Program office at (520) 626-5161.

Visit the Tucson Water website at www.tucsonaz.gov/water

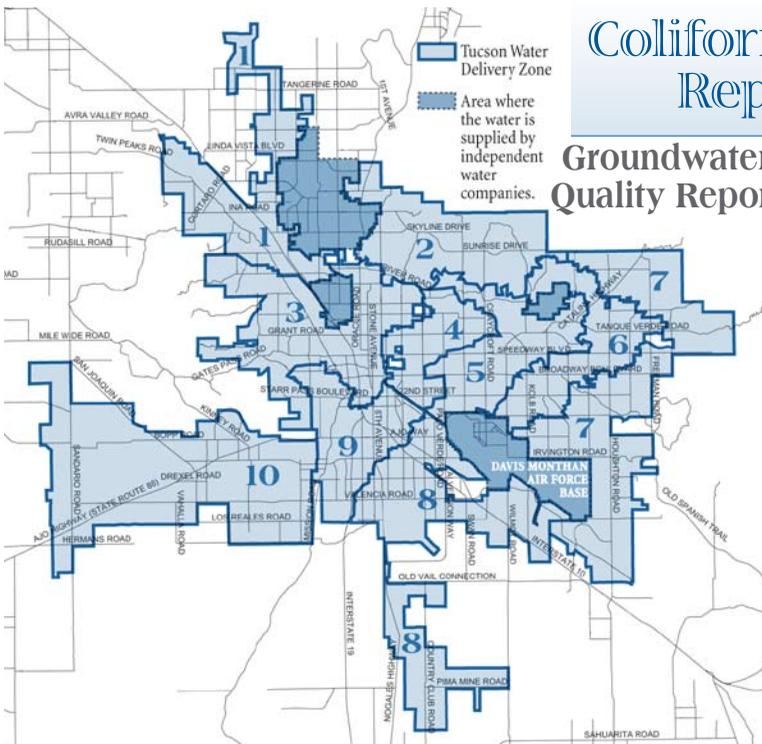
Your Water Connection is produced by Tucson Water. To receive a copy, or to receive this information in Spanish, call 791-4331 or mail your request to: Tucson Water, Customer Information, P.O. Box 27210, Tucson, AZ 85726-7210. City of Tucson TTY number: 791-2639

Si usted desea este documento escrito en español, por favor llame al 791-4331.



Groundwater Quality Report - July 2009

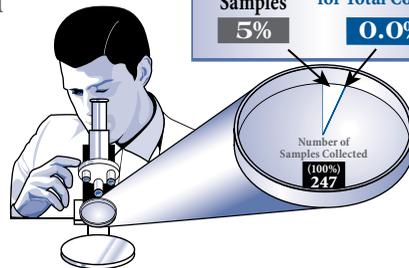
Water Quality Zone		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	System Wide
Sodium (mg/L)*	Average	40	63	62	56	57	54	34	46	55	46	53
77 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	32-47	61-64	51-66	35-64	44-68	35-60	23-58	38-49	43-65	42-56	23-68
Mineral Content (mg/L)*	Average	326	475	463	442	405	416	300	392	380	298	399
234 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	155-595	450-492	253-490	224-490	172-491	224-469	159-470	275-448	218-493	225-484	155-595
Hardness (mg/L)**	Average	229	217	211	188	198	191	129	187	159	105	184
77 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	61-330	208-223	176-231	70-218	147-236	107-219	75-201	159-211	80-222	82-171	61-330
pH (S.U.)	Average	7.7	7.9	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.5	7.9	7.8	7.8
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	7.4-7.9	7.8-7.9	7.6-8.0	7.7-8.0	7.4-8.0	7.3-7.9	7.5-7.9	7.4-7.7	7.7-8.1	7.5-8.0	7.3-8.1
Temperature (deg F)	Average	87	88	88	89	87	87	88	88	89	90	88
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	82-93	85-91	81-97	86-95	82-93	80-92	83-92	82-94	86-95	87-93	80-97



Coliform Bacteria Testing Report - July 2009

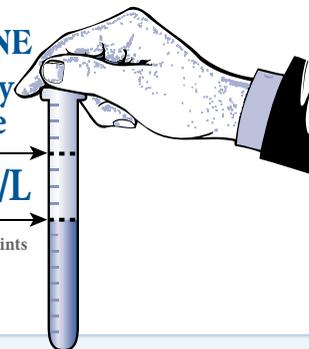
Groundwater Quality Report COLIFORM

EPA Standard for Positive Samples	Number of Positive Samples for Total Coliform
5%	0.0%



CHLORINE Monthly Average

Target = 0.8 to 1.2 mg/L
0.8 mg/L
 247 Sample Points



* mg/L means milligrams per liter; 1 mg/L = 1 teaspoon in 1,302 gallons

** 17.1 milligrams per liter (mg/L) = 1 grain per gallon; Therefore, the system-wide hardness average as reported for July 2009: 184 mg/L divided by 17.1 = 10.76 grains per gallon.

To give you a more accurate measurement of the water quality in your neighborhood, the Tucson Water service area has been divided into 10 zones based on differences in water pressure and water quality. For a detailed description of the zone boundaries, call 791-4331.

With the exception of chlorine and coliform bacteria, none of the water quality parameters reported here have U.S. Environmental Protection Agency primary standards set for them. For more information about primary and secondary water quality standards, visit Tucson Water's website at www.tucsonaz.gov/water.