

2002 Legislative Session in Review

The 2002 legislative session adjourned as scheduled on March 14. With the significant legislative challenges of the budget shortfall and transportation funding that needed to be addressed, adjourning on time was somewhat of an achievement. One challenge that remained unresolved, however, was the passage of comprehensive water legislation. But it wasn't for lack of trying: legislators and the Governor's water team dedicated significant time and resources both before and during the legislative session trying to address some of the more vexing water resources challenges in the state.

This combined effort became known as JELO (Joint Executive Legislative Organization). The JELO included two members from both caucuses in each house and three members of the Governor's water team. The JELO started its work back in September and held two stakeholder "listening sessions" in the fall and early winter and continued their deliberations through the legislative session. The goals of the JELO were to address instream flows, growing communities, relinquishment and infrastructure as part of a unified package. Members of the Forum participated in these listening sessions,

2002 Legislative Session continued on page 3



INSIDE:

- 2002 Legislative Session in Review
- Seattle and Its Wholesale Customers Team Up to Save Water
- City of Tacoma Conservation Update
- Covington Water District Slows the Flow by 15%

Seattle and Its Wholesale Customers Team Up to Save Water

(provided by Seattle Public Utilities)

Seattle and its 25 wholesale customers (including suburban cities) have been aggressively pursuing conservation since the early 1990s. This effort has paid off substantially, per capita consumption has fallen 23% from what it was during the 1980s (not counting savings experienced in last year's drought). Seattle's newest conservation effort, the Saving Water Partnership (SWP), comprised of Seattle Public Utilities and its wholesale customers, is in the second year of a 10-year conservation program that is expected to cost approximately \$50 million by year 2010 and save 18 million gallons per day (mgd). The programs build on SPU's successful results from past and current conservation programs.

Seattle and Its Wholesale Customers continued on page 2



Visit the Forum's web site at www.ci.seattle.wa.us/forum

Seattle and Its Wholesale Customers

Continued from page 1

Residential Landscape

The program emphasis has been on changing landscape and irrigation practices at single-family homes through integrated multi-resource conservation education and customer incentives such as soaker hoses and mulch mower discounts. This approach leverages partnerships with the landscape industry and other agencies, building upon the highly successful “naturals” and “sustainable” themes. Last year, the SWP invested nearly \$600,000 in residential landscape programs to reduce average consumption by an estimated 350,000 gallons per day (gpd). Future research and development will focus on hardware devices that complement behavior messages and opportunities, and explore water efficient landscapes in new construction.

6,000 rebates were provided for toilet replacements for single-family and multifamily customers, and educational efforts supported replacement of thousands more. In the next few years, most of the toilet rebate activity will focus on the multi-family sector, which has the greatest savings potential per toilet replaced and the slowest natural replacement rates.

The educational efforts have also targeted fixing leaks, replacing toilet flappers and long-term behavior changes. Youth education continues to play an important role in future savings. Overall the SWP invested over \$1,400,000 in residential indoor conservation in 2001, producing an estimated 380,000 gpd in savings from efficient fixtures and an estimated 300,000 gpd in savings from permanent behavior changes.

promoted the “naturals” theme, and built a network of partnerships with the landscaping and irrigation industry to promote efficient irrigation. The program also supports new R&D technologies and techniques, model code regulations, and efforts to make new construction and new irrigation systems more water and resource efficient. Overall this program invested under \$200,000 in 2001, producing an estimated 180,000 gpd in savings.

Commercial Domestic, Cooling and Process

Most of historic program savings have been achieved through the Water Smart Technology program, by identifying commercial efficiency measures that are relatively easy to implement at a low cost. The program provides technical assistance to help businesses identify savings and financial incentives for any cost-effective projects. Partnerships with other agencies has allowed the program to leverage resource dollars and increase benefits.

Common cooling and process opportunities include ice machine cooling conversion, elimination of other pass-through cooling applications, cooling tower upgrades, commercial clothes washers, and water using medical equipment upgrades. Last year, 42 projects were provided with financial incentives, producing an estimated 354,000 gpd in new savings.

Restroom upgrades have also been a focus for eight years, providing assistance and incentives for businesses to upgrade toilets and urinals. Last year 28 restroom projects produced about 30,000 gpd in savings. For more details on the overall conservation program go to: www.savingwater.org



WaterWise Garden at Bellevue Botanical Garden.

Residential Domestic

This sector focuses on equipment upgrades, such as washing machines and toilets through education, incentives and long-term behavior changes. The Wash Wise residential laundry program provided over 8,000 rebates last year to support customers purchasing more efficient machines, saving over 100,000 gpd. Nearly

Commercial Landscape

The Water Efficient Irrigation Program uses site assessments, irrigation audits and incentives to improve efficiency of existing commercial irrigation systems. Last year the program provided financial incentives to over 50 system upgrades, saving an estimated 90,000 gpd. Education and training has

City of Tacoma Conservation Update

(provided by Tacoma Water)

Conservation in Tacoma continues with a noticeable downward trend in water use among all customer classes. As with other utilities in the region, this can be attributed to three intersecting, domino-like factors:

- The energy crisis that dominated local and national media, and which placed economic stress on many energy using industries;
- The drought of 2001, which instigated high impact media efforts at the state level and among various utilities and collectively influenced utility customers throughout the region; and
- A softening economy, which has further stressed commercial and industrial energy and water users.

Tacoma Water experienced a decline of approximately 9% in daily average consumption in 2001 alone, due to these factors. Tacoma Water responded to the Governor's statewide drought declaration by following its water shortage response plan, Stage I, which calls for public information via regular news releases and

increased communication with our customers.

A water use rate increase, approved by the Public Utility Board and City Council, also went into effect in April of 2001. The rate increase was approved as a two-step increase and averaged 9.5% throughout Tacoma Water's customer categories, for each step. If you are interested in learning more about Tacoma Water's conservation program go to: <http://www.ci.tacoma.wa.us/Water/service/service.htm>

Low-flush (3.5 gallons) and ultra-low flush (1.6 gallons) toilets will save between 32-78% on water use, respectively, compared to conventional toilets (5 gallons).



2002 Legislative Session

Continued from page 1

submitted white papers related to the goals, and were engaged in ongoing discussions with members of JELO.

Unfortunately, the JELO was never able to develop a bill that addressed all these issues, while at the same time securing the full support of all of the JELO members. With little time remaining in the session, Representative Linville, a member of the JELO, introduced a significant bill, HB 2993, which partially addressed the goals established by the JELO. The bill did not generate broad-based support from stakeholders. In the end, a "skinny" version of Representative Linville's bill passed and was signed by the Governor on April 3rd. The bill, HB 2993, provides some tools for specific issues, but does not attempt to address the broader goals of the JELO group.

The legislature did include funding for ongoing water resources work in the budget. They appropriated \$87,000 for the Attorney General's Office to prepare a report on federal and Indian reserved water rights, \$189,000 for facilitation services for studying judicial and administrative alternatives for resolving water disputes, and \$200,000 for supporting the development of the Central Puget Sound Regional Water Resources Initiative.

The Central Puget Sound Water Suppliers' Forum publishes *Water Link* to keep you informed of our activities in the arena of water supply planning, environmental stewardship and legislative activities.

Water Link Contacts:

Project Manager - Celia S. Kennedy,
celia.kennedy@ci.seattle.wa.us
(206) 684-4606

Graphic Design - Joan Schlichting

Forum Contact:

Ken Merry - Tacoma Water
(253) 502-8206

This issue of *Water Link* highlights some of the conservation efforts of local water utilities, including Seattle Public Utilities and its wholesale customers, Tacoma Water and the Covington Water District. Upcoming issues of this newsletter will summarize conservation efforts by other utilities around the central Puget Sound area.

Covington Water District Slows the Flow by 15%

(provided by Covington Water District)

Year-end water sales figures for 2001 showed a water use reduction of 15% over the previous year at Covington Water District. When comparing just the irrigation seasons, June through September, the reduction grew to 23%. Customers were highly responsive to news coverage of last year's drought, and were very watchful of their water usage.

To help customers reduce the flow, the District offered the following:

- Water-saving toilets at below wholesale cost (the 750 toilets distributed to date are anticipated to save 5.5 million gallons a year)
- Low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators at reduced cost
- \$50 rebate on EnergyStar washing machines (300 washers rebated to date anticipated to save 2 million gallons per year)
- 1 Free Shower Buddy Bucket per household (while supply lasts) to catch shower warm-up water
- Soaker hose rebates offered last spring
- Compost and waterwise plant rebates

- Award-winning rainbarrel program - over 4,000 barrels sold in last 3 years
- Landscape seminars for customers
- Conservation tips/articles in bi-monthly customer newsletter
- Award-winning ad campaign with monthly ads in local newspapers
- Monthly articles in local newspapers
- New-owner packets with conservation information

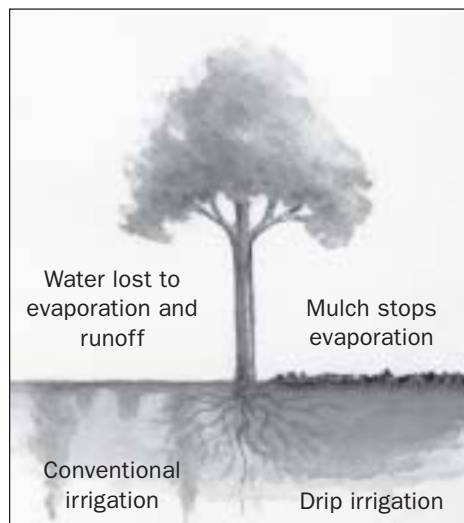
- Information booth at community events
- Speakers for community service and homeowners' organizations
- Wide variety of handouts available in Customer Service lobby and at events
- Water Conservation Demonstration Garden
- Educational programs including classroom presentations and at Water Festival

New Water-Saving Programs Implemented:

- Dual meter program requiring irrigation meters with stringent water budgets at new developments

Supply-side Conservation:

- Ongoing leak detection and repair program
- Main and hydrant flushing projects delayed during water shortages
- Vehicle washing discontinued during drought - minor cleanups accomplished with rainbarrels
- Irrigation greatly reduced.



WaterLink

710 2nd Avenue, 10th floor
Seattle, Washington 98104

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 02129
SEATTLE, WA