



City of Portland Water Bureau
Water Conservation Program
2009 –2010

About the Water Conservation Program

The Portland Water Bureau's Water Conservation Program offers high-quality technical resources and information about efficient water use to all of our customers.

Our Programs

1. Outreach and Education

- **Community Events and Presentations** – The Portland Water Bureau provides indoor- and outdoor-focused water conservation information to homeowners, commercial property managers, landscape professionals, gardeners, and children at community events and through presentations.
- **Web site** – The Portland Water Bureau has an extensive web site with information on residential, commercial, and multi-family water conservation strategies.
- **Summer Radio Campaign** – The Portland Water Bureau conducts a radio campaign each summer (when water usage is at its highest) to remind people about the importance of water conservation. The bureau partners with the Regional Water Providers Consortium and the Portland Area Radio Council to maximize the purchasing power of media time.
- **School Assembly Programs** – The Portland Water Bureau provides an interactive water-focused school assembly program to approximately 3,000 students each year. The show for 2009-10 fiscal year, "What Do You Know About H₂O" is targeted to 4th- and 5th- grade students and is presented by Mad Science.
- **Children's Clean Water Festival** – The Portland Water Bureau is a sponsor of the Children's Clean Water Festival, which brings together more than 1,000 4th- and 5th-grade students to spend one day learning about water. Students and teachers experience science, environmentalism, art and theatre during this fun and educational day. Conservation staff actively participates on the planning committee and over 20 Portland Water Bureau staff volunteer on the day of the festival.

2. Conservation Device Distribution

The Portland Water Bureau distributes informative outreach materials and water conservation devices throughout the year including: 1.5-gallon-per-minute (gpm) showerheads; 5-minute sand shower timers; bathroom faucet aerators with flow rates from 0.5 gpm to 1.0 gpm; kitchen faucet aerators that flow at 1.5 gpm; toilet displacement bags that can save about 0.5 gallon per flush; toilet fill-cycle diverters that can save an additional 0.5 gallon per flush; and leak detection tablets. Limited resources are available for multi-family housing providers serving low-income customers to replace toilets with WaterSense high-efficiency models.

Customers can receive devices through the following channels:

- **Web-based Orders** – Visit www.portlandonline.com/water and select the conserving H₂O tab at the top.

- **Customer Service Walk-in Center** – Customers can request a packaged conservation kit that includes a showerhead, kitchen faucet aerator, bathroom faucet aerator, 5-minute shower timer, toilet fill-cycle diverter, and toilet displacement bag.
- **SmartDrips** – A targeted neighborhood distribution program in partnership with the Portland Bureau of Transportation. Residents in the selected neighborhood (rotates annually) receive an order form where they can select to receive indoor or outdoor water conservation devices. Devices are then distributed by bicycle by Bureau of Transportation staff.
- **Low-Income Toilet Replacement Grant** – Small grants made to not-for-profit organizations who serve low-income customers through multi-family housing. Applications will be available mid-winter 2010.

3. Technical Assistance

- **BIG (Business, Industry & Government) Program** – Staff from the BIG program provide onsite water surveys that help customers better manage their water use. BIG also provides support for customers seeking green building certification and customers who have unusual spikes in water use that cannot be accounted for. Staff regularly acts as guest instructors and presenters for local organizations and at conservation conferences.
- **Residential Water Assessments** – The Portland Water Bureau provides a limited number of free home water assessments to single-family residential customers. A professional auditor from the Energy Trust of Oregon will visit the customer's home and install water conservation devices, as well as energy-saving light bulbs.

4. Pilot Projects

- **Soil Moisture Sensor Project** – The Portland Water Bureau is field testing soil moisture sensor technology at a few small commercial sites. Conservation staff will recruit sites, hire a contractor to install the soil moisture sensors, and collect data on the performance of the irrigation systems. The pilot study will end in June 2012.

5. Partnerships

- **Regional Water Providers Consortium** – The Portland Water Bureau is one of 24 water providers in the Portland metropolitan area that participates in the Consortium to collaboratively discuss, study and adopt policy, as well as facilitate partnerships to improve the planning and management of municipal drinking water supplies. Conservation staff participates in the Consortium Conservation Committee, attends monthly meetings, and volunteer at Consortium events.
- **BEST Business Center** – The Businesses for an Environmentally Sustainable Tomorrow (BEST) business center provides education and free evaluations of local business operations. The conservation program provides conservation devices, telephone and email technical advice, and completes onsite water efficiency surveys for some BEST customers. The Portland Water Bureau is a funding partner of the BEST Business Center.
- **Green Investment Fund** – The Water Bureau is a sponsor of the Green Investment Fund, a competitive grant program that supports innovative green building projects in Portland. The conservation group provides technical reviews of all applications and participates in grantee selection.
- **Small Business Advisory Council** – The Small Business Advisory Council provides an organized voice communicating directly with the Portland City Council on policies that impact small business. BIG staff represents the Water Bureau on the Council and provide input and assistance when requested.
- **Alliance for Water Efficiency** – The Alliance for Water Efficiency serves as a North American advocate for water efficient products and programs, and provides information and assistance on water conservation efforts. The Water Bureau is a Bronze Charter Sponsor.
- **WaterSense** – WaterSense is a national program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to build partnerships for water conservation. WaterSense labels water fixtures to help customers identify good products. The Portland Water Bureau is a partner.