

WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Fact Sheet No. 16

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Kansas Water Office

Background

Water conservation is considered to be any beneficial reduction in water use or in water losses. Water conservation means use efficiency. State policy is guided by the principal that the privilege to use water also bears the responsibility to use it wisely.

Water use conservation plans are required for anyone: a) purchasing water from the State Water Marketing Program (K.S.A. 82a-1311a), b) participating in the Water Assurance District Program (K.S.A. 82a-1348), c) sponsoring or purchasing the public water supply portion of a Multipurpose Small Lakes Program project (K.S.A. 82a-1608), d) transferring water under the Water Transfers Act (K.S.A. 82a-1502) and e) applying for a loan from the State Revolving Fund (K.S.A. 65-163g).

When the Governor declares a State of Drought, the Drought/Emergency Contingency Plan portions of approved conservation plans and state facilities plans are triggered (K.S.A. 48-924(e)).

Through its Water Conservation Program, the Kansas Water Office developed industrial, irrigation and municipal water conservation plan guidelines in 1986. The municipal and irrigation conservation plan guidelines were revised in 1990 and 1993 respectively. Kansas Water Office personnel provide technical assistance to water users who are required to adopt and implement conservation plans, as required by K.S.A. 82a-733(c). Technical assistance to water users is funded with Kansas Water Plan Funds and includes visits to explain the guidelines, craft a conservation plan, and prepare the final copy of the water conservation plan.

Municipal Water Conservation

As of January 1, 2001, the Kansas Water Office and the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources has approved 449 municipal water conservation plans, which account for approximately half of

the public water suppliers in Kansas. Since 1994, the Kansas Water Office has made extensive use of two part-time, temporary positions to assist public water suppliers in preparing municipal water conservation plans. During FY 1999, fifty-nine municipal water conservation plans were approved, primarily for public water suppliers who are required by statute to have a municipal water conservation plan in place in order to be considered for approval of a State Revolving Loan Fund Grant.

In August 1999, the Kansas Water Office surveyed public water suppliers who had state-approved municipal water conservation plans based on the 1990 guidelines. The purpose of the survey was to determine the public water suppliers' perception of the quality of water conservation planning assistance provided by the Kansas Water Office and the effectiveness of their plans. A total of 232 survey forms or 84 percent of the 275 forms mailed were returned. Ninety-six percent of the respondents thought that the technical assistance received from the Kansas Water Office was good or excellent and 76 percent thought their water supply systems operated in a more cost-effective manner due to the implementation of their water conservation plan.

In addition, statistical analyses were performed to determine if public water suppliers, who prepared water conservation plans using the 1990 Water Conservation Plan Guidelines, used water more efficiently after their plans were approved, than they did before they were approved. Those analyses found a statistically significant reduction in both unaccounted for water and average gallons per capita day usage after the preparation and implementation of a water conservation plan.

Irrigation Water Conservation

The Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources has required and approved more than 1,000 irrigation water conservation plans, primarily in the early 1990's. Since 1994, the Kansas Water Office has

provided irrigators with on-site technical assistance in preparing irrigation water conservation plans. This assistance has been provided through contracts with groundwater management districts and by using one of the part-time temporary positions identified in the municipal water conservation narrative.

In February 2000, the Kansas Water Office sent a survey to irrigators for each irrigation water right that had an irrigation plan approved on or before December 31, 1997. The purpose of the survey was to determine the irrigators' perception of the quality of water conservation planning assistance provided by the Kansas Water Office and the effectiveness of their plans. For analysis purposes, the data were summarized on the basis of the responses received from irrigators regarding irrigation water rights with plans for which only a single point of diversion was utilized. There were 200 survey forms for plans prepared using the 1993 guidelines. A total of 140 survey forms or 70 percent of the 200 forms were returned. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents thought that the technical assistance received from the Kansas Water Office was good or excellent and 82 percent

thought their irrigation systems operated in a more cost-effective manner due to the implementation of their water conservation plan.

In addition, statistical analyses were performed to determine the effectiveness of the 1993 Irrigation Water Conservation Plan Guidelines. Those analyses found statistically significant reductions in water use after the preparation and implementation of a water conservation plan (for irrigators using the 1993 Water Conservation Plan Guidelines) in Western Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 1, Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4, and in those areas outside of groundwater management district boundaries.

Additional Information

Further information on this subject or on many other *Kansas Water Plan* related programs can be obtained from: Kansas Water Office, 901 S. Kansas Avenue, Topeka, KS 66612-1249, phone (785-296-3185), toll free (888-KAN-WATER) or check our WEB site at www.kwo.org.