

# **WATER CONSERVATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

**MAY 2005**

Prepared and distributed by the:

Office of Water Conservation and Drought Planning

Colorado Water Conservation Board

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Guidance Document was created through the combined efforts and perseverance of a number of individuals and organizations that share a strong desire to support local water planning to meet the challenges of managing our State's water resources. Contributors to this document also acknowledge that meaningful water conservation, linked to effective water resources planning, must be allowed to occur under the leadership of local water planners, supported where and when appropriate by the State and other available resources.

The individuals that assisted in the development of this guidance document include:

Kevin Bommer, Colorado Municipal League  
Garin Bray, Colorado Farm Bureau  
Natalie Brower-Kirton, City of Aurora  
Carrie Campbell, Pagosa Springs Water and Sanitation District  
Matthew Cook, Coors Brewing Company  
Elizabeth Gardener, Denver Water  
Paul Lander, City of Boulder  
Bart Miller, Western Resource Advocates  
Don Wojcik, Western Resource Advocates  
Jason Wolfe, Special Districts Association  
Jack Byers, State Engineers Office  
Alexandra Davis, State Attorney General's Office  
Frank McNulty, Department of Natural Resources, Executive Director's Office

This document draws heavily on table templates and other material from the U.S. EPA's Voluntary Water Conservation Plan Guidelines. The authors and the CWCB gratefully acknowledge the use of this public domain material.

# Table of Contents

## Preface

- Purpose
- Use of the Guidance Document
- Document Organization

## 1 - Introduction

- What is Water Conservation?
- The Role of Water Conservation in Water Management

## 2 - The Nine Planning Steps

## 3 - Guide to Water Conservation Planning

- Step 1 - Profile Existing Water System
- Step 2 - Characterize Water Use and Forecast Demand
- Step 3 - Profile Proposed Facilities
- Step 4 - Identify Conservation Goals
- Step 5 - Identify Conservation Measures and Programs
- Step 6 - Evaluate and Select Conservation Measures and Programs
- Step 7 - Integrate Resources and Modify Forecasts
- Step 8 - Develop Implementation Plan
- Step 9 - Monitor, Evaluate, and Revise Conservation Activities and the Conservation Plan

## 4 - Model Plan Template and Worksheets

## 5 - References

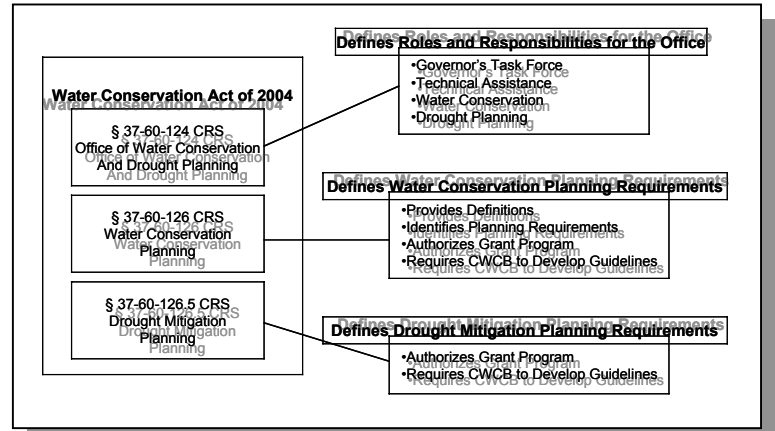
## Appendices

- A - Glossary of Terms
- B - Description of Conservation Measures and Programs
- C - Metro Mayor's Caucus & Colorado WaterWise Council Best Management Practices for Water Conservation Stewardship
- D - The Water Conservation Act of 2004 (§§ 37-60-124 through 126.5, C.R.S.)
- E - Other Available Resources for Water Conservation Planning
- F - Basic Water Account System

# PREFACE

## PURPOSE

Water conservation plans are required under §37-60-126, C.R.S. (hereafter the "Water Conservation Act of 2004" or "the Act") for those covered entities<sup>1</sup> that receive financial assistance from either the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) or Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority (CWRPDA). In accordance with the Water Conservation Act, water conservation plans must be prepared and submitted to the Office of Water Conservation and Drought Planning (OWCDP) for review to determine whether the plans comply with the requirements of the Act prior to the release of loan proceeds to a covered entity.<sup>2</sup>



In addition, the Act authorizes the OWCDP to provide monetary assistance (in the form of grants) to covered entities for purposes of developing their water conservation plans. Under the grant program, the OWCDP intends to promote a state-of-the-science approach to water conservation planning that goes beyond the minimum planning requirements of the Act, whenever practical.

Therefore, this Guidance Document presents a Model Water Conservation Plan ("Model Plan") that has been crafted to provide guidance to covered entities, and other planning entities, that are interested in developing water conservation plans, by defining:

- ✓ The minimum requirements of the Act; and

<sup>1</sup> Covered entities are defined as "each municipality, agency, utility, including any privately owned utility, or other publicly owned entity with a legal obligation to supply, distribute, or otherwise provide water at retail to domestic, commercial, industrial, or public facility customers, and that has a total demand for such customers of two thousand acre-feet or more".

<sup>2</sup> There are some limited exceptions to this requirement.



Factoid!

### Minimum Requirements for Water Conservation Plans under the Act

At a minimum, plans must consider "plan elements" that address:

- ✓ Water-saving measures and programs;
- ✓ The role of water conservation plans in the entity's water supply planning; and
- ✓ The actions an entity shall take to develop, implement, monitor, review, and revise its water conservation plan.

In addition, plans must specify past and expected future water savings goals related to the implementation of water - saving measures and programs.

- ✓ **The current state-of-the-science with regard to water conservation planning.**

The presentation of the Model Plan, and related support documentation, therefore includes two levels of guidance to an entity that is developing a water conservation plan:

- ✓ First, the material provided clearly indicates **the minimum content necessary for a covered entity's plan to meet the requirements of the Act.**
- ✓ Second, the Model Plan depicts a preferred process that covered entities and other planning entities **may use** to develop the state-of-the-science structure and content for a water conservation plan.

The Model Plan that is presented within this Guidance Document clearly differentiates those components that address the statute-defined minimum water conservation plan content from additional content that is recommended and promoted by the OWCDP.



**CWCB Preference to Promote Use of the Model Plan**

To promote the use of the Model Plan, the CWCB **may give preference to those grant applicants** that follow the format and content described in the Model Plan templates. In addition, the Board **may reimburse the entity awarded a grant up to 50% of the matching funds** used to develop the water conservation plan if the planning entity utilizes the Model Plan format and content, and the plan that is developed is reviewed and approved by the OWCDP.

**USE OF THIS MODEL PLAN AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

Any water utility or special district that wants to integrate meaningful water conservation into their water resources planning can use the Model Plan plan process and templates contained in this document.

As will be described in Section 3, **the Model Plan is best used as a template that can be modified for application to suit the needs of individual covered entities**, for it is the appropriate modification of the planning elements contained in the Model Plan that will be of most use to covered entities in the development of meaningful water conservation plans. **It is highly recommended that covered entities seek technical assistance during development of their water conservation plans** such that their efforts to use, and where appropriate modify, the Model Plan

Technical Resources that Are Available to Covered Entities			
	Workshops	Consultation	Web-Based Resources
OWCDP	●	●	●
Colorado Water Wise Council		●	●
Other Resources (see Appendix E)			●

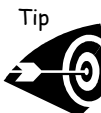
templates can benefit from the collective wisdom and experience of others (see table).

If a covered entity is interested in pursuing a CWCB grant to support the development of its water conservation plan, **technical assistance is also available to support development of the grant application.**

## DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This Guidance Document is organized to provide the reader with important background information regarding water conservation, as well as the Model Plan and its templates. The following specific information is provided within the document:

- ✓ A narrative description of what water conservation is and is not (Section 1);
- ✓ A description of how planning for meaningful water conservation occurs, including a delineation of nine planning steps (Section 2);
- ✓ Guidance as to how to implement the step-by-step approach to development of a water conservation plan (Section 3); and
- ✓ A Model Plan "template" that entities may use to define the "scope-of-work" for developing a water conservation plan (Section 4). The Model Plan template includes both the scope-of-work and worksheets that entities may use to organize and assimilate the information needed to prepare a water conservation plan.



### Look for CWCB Workshops

The CWCB will be hosting workshops around the state to help covered entities understand the requirements of the Water Conservation Act of 2004 and the Office's grant program, and how to use this guidance document to prepare grant applications, as well as develop water conservation plans.