



PSC Water Currents

The water conservation and efficiency newsletter of the
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin



September – October, 2011

Volume 4, Issue 5

In This Issue

- PSC releases 2011 Wisconsin Water Fact Sheet
- Jeff Ripp named PSC's Assistant Administrator for Water
- UW Extension helps customers calculate water and energy savings
- Alliance updates water conservation tracking tool
- Cows, creampuffs, and conservation
- Upcoming Events
- Focus on Wisconsin Water: Fitchburg provides conservation leadership

Water Saving Tip

40 GALLON CHALLENGE

The *40 Gallon Challenge* is a call to reduce water use on average by 40 gallons per person, per day. Participants enter their water savings in an on-line pledge form, and can view maps and charts illustrating pledge activities in Wisconsin and across the United States. The challenge is a great public education tool for water utilities. Make a pledge at: www.40gallonchallenge.org/.

News

PSC releases 2011 Wisconsin Water Fact Sheet

Wisconsin water utilities sold 148 billion gallons of water to retail customers in 2010, according to the Public Service Commission's (PSC) recently released 2011 Wisconsin Water Fact Sheet. The Commission compiles the annual fact sheet using data reported by water utilities for the previous calendar year. Most Wisconsin communities have access to plentiful and high-quality water supplies, including groundwater and the Great Lakes. In 2010, 62 of the state's 583 utilities relied on surface



waters within the Great Lakes basin. By volume, these utilities provided 46 percent of the water pumped in Wisconsin in 2010. The fact sheet provides other useful water-related information, including water loss, total water sales, average water costs, energy consumption, and trends in rates. For more information, visit:

<http://psc.wi.gov/conservation/documents/WaterFactSheet.pdf>.

Jeff Ripp Named PSC's Assistant Administrator for Water



PSC Chairman Phil Montgomery named Jeff Ripp as the Assistant Administrator for Water in the Commission's Division of Water, Compliance, and Consumer Affairs. Mr. Ripp previously served as the PSC's water conservation coordinator and water policy advisor. In his new position, he will oversee the Commission's water regulatory programs, including water rates, water utility construction, and water conservation and efficiency programs. He replaces long-time Assistant Administrator David Sheard, who retired in June 2011 after 32 years with the Commission.

UW Extension helps customers calculate water and energy savings

Inefficient showerheads and toilets send money down the drain. A new water cost and savings calculator developed by UW-Extension's Center for Watershed Science and Education and UW-Stevens Point lets Wisconsin residents see how much money they are wasting—and how much they could save—through increased water use efficiency. The calculator allows users to select their water utility from over 400 water providers in Wisconsin and calculates cost of showering and toilet flushing. It also estimates the energy associated with hot water based on gas and electricity costs in their area. The Excel-based calculator can be downloaded at the Center's website at:



http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/watersheds/programs_outreach/watersavings.htm.

Alliance updates water conservation tracking tool

The Alliance for Water Efficiency released a new version of its Water Conservation Tracking Tool in August 2011. The tool is an Excel-based model that helps utilities evaluate the water savings, costs, and benefits of conservation programs. The tool can be tailored to a specific utility and provides a standard method for water savings and benefit-cost accounting. Changes to the tool include an updated library of activities and a new greenhouse gas module. The tool is available exclusively to Alliance members. For more information, visit:



<http://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org/>.

Cows, creampuffs, and conservation



PSC and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff and volunteers provided fair-goers with water conservation information at the 2011 Wisconsin State Fair. The exhibit included a hands-on demonstration of low-flow toilets and faucets, free faucet aerators and showerheads, and tips on how citizens can reduce their water use. The display was made possible by donations from the Plumbers Union Local 75 and Castleman and Sons Plumbing in Franklin, Wisconsin. For more information about DNR's water conservation program, visit: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/greatlakes/conservation.htm>.

Upcoming Events

- SEPT** WisWARN Free Workshop and Tabletop Exercise. September 7-8. Lake Delton, WI. Sponsored by U.S. EPA. <http://www.horsleywitten.com/warn/>.
- Making Sustainable Design Functional for Small Utility Installations Webinar. September 13. Sponsored by WWA. <http://www.wiawwa.org/>.
- Behind the Scenes of Madison Geology. September 17. Madison, WI. Sponsored by WI Ground Water Association. <http://www.wgwa.org/events.html>.
- Fresh Water, Fresh Ideas: ICMA's 97th Annual Conference. September 18-21. Milwaukee, WI. Sponsored by the International City/County Management Association. <http://icma.org/en/conference/welcome>.
- Water Summit V. September 19-20. Milwaukee, WI. Sponsored by the Milwaukee Water Council. <http://www.thewatercouncil.com/>.
- The Blue Frontier: Water Technology and Innovation in Buildings. Sept. 20-21. Madison, WI. Sponsored by the WI Green Building Alliance. <http://wgba.shuttlepod.org/se2>.
- WWA Annual Conference. September 21-23. Wisconsin Dells, WI. Sponsored by Wisconsin Water Association. <http://www.wiawwa.org>.
- PHCC Connect 2011. September 21-24. Minneapolis, MN. Sponsored by Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association. <http://www.phccweb.org>.
- Evaluating Water Use Efficiency. September 22-23. Milwaukee, WI. Sponsored by UW-Milwaukee. <http://www4.uwm.edu/sce/course.cfm?id=23682>.
- Using Non-Regulatory Tools to Achieve Water Quality Goals Webinar. September 23. Sponsored by Wisconsin Water Star. <http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org/webinars.cfm>.
- Saving Energy at Wastewater Facilities Webinar. September 27. Sponsored by Focus on Energy. <http://www.focusonenergy.com/>.
- OCT** Urban Water Sustainability Leadership Conference. October 3-5. Milwaukee, WI. Sponsored by Clean Water America Alliance. <http://www.cleanwateramericaalliance.org/>.
- WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Expo. October 5 - 7. Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.watersmartinnovations.com/index.php>.

Focus on Wisconsin Water

Fitchburg provides conservation leadership

The City of Fitchburg (population 25,260) uses a mix of regulations and non-regulatory initiatives to promote water conservation. The City is one of Wisconsin's water conservation leaders and has earned the "Gold" designation from the Wisconsin Water Star program. In 2009, the Fitchburg Water Utility implemented inclining block rates for residential customers and irrigation rates for all customer classes with separate outdoor use meters. Fitchburg also maintains inventory of water utility infrastructure that enables it to evaluate and monitor energy use. The utility made improvements to its infrastructure, including installation of variable frequency drive motors at its wells, which reduced the energy required to pump water by an average of 270 kWh per million gallons.



The Fitchburg Sewer Utility launched a successful residential toilet rebate program in 2010 and continues to offer incentives and rebates for on-site stormwater management practices, including an innovative Creek Supporter Program. Concern about declines in the groundwater table in Dane County prompted Fitchburg to partner with the UW-Madison Water Resources Management program and the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District on the Nine Springs Discharge Project. As an EPA WaterSense Partner, Fitchburg continues to explore new ways to conserve water, and is currently planning an educational outreach program for its commercial water users. For more information about Fitchburg's water conservation programs, visit: www.city.fitchburg.wi.us.

Highlight your community's water conservation and efficiency efforts in a future issue of Water Currents. Send a summary of your program or water-saving idea to water.currents@wisconsin.gov. Include your contact information, a link for more information, and an estimate of the amount of water saved or expected to be saved. Please limit your submittal to 250 words.

About this newsletter

Water Currents is published by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to provide information about water conservation-related news and events in Wisconsin. The newsletter is compiled and edited by Jeff Ripp, Assistant Administrator, Division of Water, Compliance and Consumer Affairs, (608) 267-9813.



To submit information for consideration in future newsletters, send an email to water.currents@wisconsin.gov. Include your name, organization, and contact information in the body of the message.

Subscribe to the newsletter at <http://psc.wi.gov>.