

Chapter 7: Goal Setting and the Public Forum



7.1 Overview of the Goal Setting Requirement

One of the most important steps in using water efficiently is setting goals that can be measured. Goals provide a benchmark for achievement and play a significant role in defining the success of your water use efficiency (WUE) program. You must set your own goals through a public process (WAC 246-290-830(4)(a) at least every 6 years.

The Impact of WUE Goals/Programs on Utility Revenue

There is no question that implementing a WUE program and goals to reduce customer consumption has the potential of reducing your revenue. While this may be the case, it's no excuse to not use water efficiently and should not prevent you from developing an effective WUE program. Since you are required to put together a WUE program and goals, you'll need to take a serious look at the effect on revenue and find a way to keep those dollars coming in the door to maintain financial viability.

Here are some tips to create a successful path forward:

- Before you establish a goal, recognize that you may reduce revenue, and consider a rate increase. You may need to re-think your rate structure entirely and adopt a tiered rate approach.
- Consider rate increases on those customers that use the most water, this will help you obtain the revenue you need. Reward those customers that use the least water by not raising their rates at all, if possible.
- Determine the revenue effect of a WUE goal before you establish it. For example, if you establish and achieve a 5% reduction goal over 5 years, how will that affect your revenue?



7.2 Goal Setting Considerations

Goals should be designed to use water more efficiently. You are encouraged to adopt goals that help you and your customers use water in the most efficient way possible. Understand your water supply characteristics, infrastructure improvements, and future needs before establishing goals.

Each goal must identify the measurable water savings that will be achieved at a specific time in the future. See [Appendix I](#) for 15 examples of goals that meet the regulatory requirements.

You must consider the following information and make it available to the public prior to the goal setting public forum⁶ (WAC 246-290-830(4)(d)):

1. Your existing WUE program (see [Chapter 5](#) and WAC 246-290-810(4)):
 - Water saved as a result of implementing WUE measures over the last 6 years (1,000 or more connections only).
 - Current goals.
 - WUE measures currently implemented.
 - WUE measures that have been evaluated.
 - How you are educating your customers (see [Section 5.7](#)).
 - A projection of how much water you can save by implementing your chosen WUE measures.
 - How you will evaluate your WUE program.
 - Distribution leakage information.
 - The water loss control action plan, if required (see [Section 6.7](#)).
2. Any previous annual WUE reports (see [Chapter 8](#)).
3. Water supply characteristics information (see [Chapter 3](#) and [Appendix C](#)).
4. Water demand forecasts information (see [Chapter 4](#)).
5. Summary of any comments received about the proposed goal and how you considered these comments prior to formally establishing the goal.

⁶ In order to make the information easily accessible by the public, the information should be available directly from the water system (place it on your Web site, if you have one). You might also consider sending a copy of the information to your local library.

Process for Establishing a Goal

When getting ready to propose a goal, there are a few key things to think about in order to move the process along smoothly (see [Appendices H, I, and O](#) for more on goal setting). Examples for each step are provided to help you start developing your own goal setting strategy:

- Define your objective for proposing the goal, based on the information listed above.
Example: Reducing per capita consumption will help us provide better service, save money, and may allow us to add more connections for future growth.
- Propose measurable water saving goals that will support your objective.
Example: Demand Side Goal—Reduce our annual consumption per residential connection by 3 percent over a 6-year period.
- Establish a timeframe for achieving the proposed goals.
Example: Our demand forecast shows a need for new connections within 6 years therefore, we have established a 6-year timeframe to achieve our goals.
- Determine the cost-effective WUE measures to support the goal.
Example: Faucet aerators, conservation rate structures, and educational outreach at the county fair are the cost-effective measures that will help support our goal.
- Determine funding source for the WUE measures to achieve the goal.
Example: We will switch from a flat rate structure to an inclining block rate structure for water use.
- Make information available to the public at least 2 weeks before your public forum.
Example: An information packet is available for viewing at our billing office and local library.
- Provide public notice 2 weeks prior to goal setting public forum.
Example: Public notice is posted on the Office of Drinking Water’s website, the local library, published in the local newspaper, and on the utility’s website.
- Hold a public forum and consider public comments.
Example: Public forum held at the town meeting hall, all public comments recorded.
- Establish goals.
Example: After considering public comments, our elected governing board establishes the proposed goal and will make slight water rate increases every year over the next 10 years.



7.3 Goal Setting Authority

Goals must be established by the elected governing board or the governing body of the water system (WAC 246-290-830(1)). The elected governing board or the governing body has the flexibility to establish its own goal to achieve its objective.

A governing body is “the individual or group of individuals with ultimate legal responsibility for operational, technical, managerial, and financial decisions for a public water system” (WAC 246-290-010). Examples include the president of the homeowners association or the owner of the water system.⁷

An elected governing board is also defined in WAC 246-290-010 as “the elected officers with ultimate legal responsibility for operational, technical, managerial, and financial decisions for a public water system.” Examples include your city council, board of county commissioners, or elected water board.



7.4 Regional Program Goals

You may find regional goals established for a particular area will best meet your needs. If a regional goal is proposed, your governing board or elected governing body must formally establish this regional program goal as your own goal through your own public process (WAC 246-290-830(4)).

When completing your WUE report, describe the progress made towards achieving the regional goal. You should also document the specific measures you are implementing for your water system that help achieve the regional goal.

⁷ Private systems not organized under an elected governing board must set WUE goals in a manner that allows customers the same opportunities to provide input, such as during an annual meeting.

Press Release

for immediate release

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Robert Renner, Executive Director
(303) 347-6150 or RRenner@WaterRF.org

**New Water Conservation and Customer Behavior Study Released
*Saving Money Top Reasons to Conserve***

DENVER, CO (August 16, 2010) – A new study released by the Water Research Foundation found the top reason consumers conserve water is to save money.

Researchers surveyed 6,000 residential customers, interviewed water agencies, analyzed billing, and reviewed utility literature to measure the effectiveness of conservation communications campaigns in changing customer behavior. The report *Water Conservation: Customer Behavior and Effective Communication* ([project/order #4012](#)) released this month also found that many customers feel they are already conserving as much water as they can.

Key findings include:

- The top reasons customers conserve are to save money, followed closely by the idea that it's the right thing to do, and then by concern about water availability.
- Many customers believed they are already doing all they can to conserve water.
- Only 9 percent of customers participate in utility rebate programs, but 60 percent said they would participate if they knew about them.
- Customers say they prefer getting information from bill inserts and television ads.
- Customers found water supply managers are the most credible source of information about water conservation. Customers distrusted elected officials, the media and retail outlet sales associates.

“These findings will help utilities promote their conservation programs and encourage more people to participate in water conservation,” said Robert C. Renner, executive director of the Water Research Foundation.

The study found few customers were aware of conservation rebate programs, yet their desire for such programs was high. This provides an opportunity for utilities to promote cost-effective measures that are underutilized, such as repairing leaking plumbing and appliances and replacing water fixtures.

“Because many customers feel they are doing all they can with water conservation, it is important for utilities to clearly communicate an end goal, like reducing water use by 10 percent so that their customers feel like they are doing their part to achieve that goal,” said Renner.

About the Water Research Foundation

Founded in 1966, the Water Research Foundation is an international, 501c(3) nonprofit organization that sponsors research to enable water utilities, public health agencies and other professionals to provide safe and affordable drinking water to the public. With more than 950 subscriber members who provide water for 80 percent of the U.S. population, the Water Research Foundation has funded and managed more than 1,000 projects. For more information, go to www.waterrf.org.

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Stressed Water Supplies are a Great Reason to Focus Your Goals on WUE Efforts

When competition for water increases and factors, such as drought, place a strain on water supplies, it's time to revisit your WUE program and goals. During times like these, elected board members and customers are likely to support a more aggressive approach to saving water.

When you adopted your WUE goals, did you look at your existing WUE/conservation program and decide to keep doing what you've always done. If so, ask yourself this:

- Did we establish a meaningful WUE goal or was our response more of an exercise to meet the state's goal setting requirements and deadlines?
- Is there more we could do to save water? And why would we want to?
- What could we do to encourage customers to do more?

Take this opportunity to evaluate your existing WUE program and consider setting short-term goals that could help your system get through a drought or shortage. And how about setting a more aggressive water-saving goal for the long-term? Remember, you can establish as many WUE goals as you want to.

Achieving goals that are more aggressive will take more than sending annual conservation tips to your customers. Consider implementing efficiency measures that really save water, such as setting up a rebate program to help customers replace old, inefficient showerheads and toilets with WaterSense-labeled ones. The WaterSense logo identifies products that meet EPA water efficiency criteria.

Setting a Goal That Meets Our Requirements

Goals must be measurable and have a timeframe. You must establish a measurable goal that maintains or reduces water use (WAC 246-290-830(6)(b)). For example, express your goals in terms of water produced from the source, customer usage, or other measurable basis.

See [Appendix I](#) for 15 examples of goals that meet the regulatory requirements.

Setting a timeframe for achieving each particular goal is important. You may want to achieve your goal in 6 years to coincide with your water system plan update. Or perhaps 3 years, to allow enough time to see if a particular WUE measure is successful in achieving the goal.

Setting a Goal to Maintain Historic Use

After reviewing the information, if you determine no further reduction is reasonably achievable, you may propose a goal that maintains water consumption levels. Before assuming that you cannot achieve further reductions in water use, ask yourself these questions:

1. Have we looked at all the possible conservation measures?
2. Are there cost-effective measures I may not know about?
3. Have I surveyed my customers to find out which measures they might consider trying?
4. Does my budget support additional measures?

We recommend against maintaining a historic consumption level. Instead, think about how you might be able to narrow your focus in different areas. Consider establishing a goal for:

- A particular customer class (such as industrial/commercial).
For example: "Reduce consumption by 10% for our industrial and commercial customers by the year 2016."
- Seasonal consumption. Consider a goal that may reduce seasonal outdoor water use.
For example: "Reduce the amount of water pumped from our source well by 5% in July and August each year through 2017."
- Your customers that use the most water.
For example: "Reduce average monthly seasonal consumption by 15% for our top 10% highest water users by 2017."

If you end up establishing a goal to maintain a historic level (such as maintaining daily consumption at 65 gallons per person per day), you must explain why you are unable to reduce water use below that level (WAC 246-290-830(3)). **Justification must be included in your annual WUE report** and planning document (WAC 246-290-830(3)).

How Do I Establish Goals If I Don't Have Customer Meters?

You probably already have a source meter, if not, you must install one immediately. Since goals must have a water savings target and timeframe/benchmark for achieving that target, then your source meter is your only option to establish a WUE goal if you don't have customer meters.

For example, your goal could be, "Reduce the amount of water pumped from our source well by two percent each year through 2017 during the months of July and August."

How Often Do I Need to Evaluate and Re-establish Goals?

Goals must be evaluated and re-established:

- Every 6 years.
- Any time a water system planning document is submitted to the Department of Health for approval.

You may want to consider evaluating and re-establishing goals as part of your 6-year planning update, if you are required to do so. Evaluation and re-establishment of goals must follow the same public process and the same goal criteria used to establish the original goals.

Changes to goals are allowed at any time (WAC 246-290-830(8)). If you want to change your established goals, you must:

- Modify the goal by following the same public process and goal setting criteria used to establish previous goals.
- Identify the change to the goal in your next annual WUE report and planning document (WAC 246-290-830(8)).
- Make necessary changes to your WUE program to achieve the modified goal (WAC 246-290-830(9)).

Documenting Goals

Keep records that show you met all the WUE requirements when you established your goals, we may ask to see this information. Records should include such things as:

- Meeting notice details, such as place and time of meeting, where and when notice was posted, and how the public was able to access the materials supporting your proposed goals.
- Public comments received about your proposed goals and how they were considered prior to formally establishing the goals.

Saving Water and Energy in Small Water Systems

The Montana Water Center has developed a training course to help small water systems operate efficiently with respect to water and power. This program consists of four 45-minute presentations meant for use in a classroom type setting. **Use it to educate your elected governing board when establishing WUE goals/programs and options for saving water and energy for your water system.**

Four main topics are covered: Energy management, Water Conservation, Alternative Energy in Water Treatment, and Water Accounting (Audits and Leak Detection). Each presentation covers:

- Why a water system should care about this topic.
- What steps to take and how to measure success.
- Case history experiences of small water systems.
- Pertinent laws and regulations.

Download it from the [Montana Water Center website](#) or order the CD (preferred for ease of use) from the National Environmental Services Center at 1-800-624-8301 and ask for product #DWCDTR29.



7.6 Setting Goals Through a Public Forum

Setting the Stage for a Public Forum

You must engage your customers and interested members of the public in a public forum (meeting) when establishing your WUE goals (WAC 246-290-830(4)(a)). This meeting has many benefits. It ensures your customers and the public can provide input on the decisions made by the governing body. It also helps the public understand the need to use water more efficiently and teaches them how they can help you achieve your goals.

Identifying Your Target Audience

You should look at three distinct groups of attendees:

- Your water system's customers.
- Local community members.
- Special interest groups such as the environmental community, local tribes, and watershed planning units.

Public Notice Requirements

The communication method you choose will be based on the audience you are trying to reach. You must provide notice at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting (WAC 246-290-830(4)(b)).

Posting your public notice on the Office of Drinking Water's website is one acceptable way of getting the message out. If your customers would not consider visiting the Office of Drinking Water's website to learn about the meeting scheduled to adopt your goals, then use other methods of notification.

The notice must include the following information:

- Purpose of the meeting.
- Date of the meeting.
- Time when the meeting begins.
- Location for the meeting (include map if needed).
- Where your audience can find additional information supporting your proposed goal.

If public notice requirements in WAC 246-290-830(4)(b) are met, you may use an existing public meeting already scheduled, such as a city council meeting. Otherwise, you will need to arrange a special goal setting meeting.

Ways to Provide Public Notice

You can provide public notice in several different ways. A combination of the following examples may be needed to make sure your target audience is aware of the public forum:

- Develop a bill stuffer to include in customers' billing statement.
- Send direct mailing to customers and interested parties.
- Contact your customers and interested parties by phone or e-mail.
- Put up neighborhood posters.
- Include the public notice in your newsletter.
- Put posters in windows of local businesses.
- Run a public notice as an advertisement in your local newspaper or community shoppers' guide.
- Publish in bulletins put out by churches or civic organizations.
- Publish on your website.
- Distribute a news release to local print media, radio, and TV stations.
- Publish on the Office of Drinking Water's Web at www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/programs/wue.htm

Handling Meeting Logistics

Select a meeting room large enough to accommodate the number of expected attendees. You should designate one person to handle all logistical arrangements:

- Find out if there is a cost for using the room.
- Visit the room ahead of time to make sure the room will work for you.
- Make sure the room is accessible to people with disabilities.
- Reserve the meeting room or building.
- Identify and supply any needed equipment, such as recording equipment.
- Determine how you want the meeting room set up.
- Establish who lets you in, if the building is locked after hours.
- Identify who will take meeting minutes.
- Provide a sign-in sheet for attendees.
- Have an agenda and handouts available.
- Consider using a facilitator to run the meeting.

If your regularly scheduled meetings are closed to the public, dedicate the first half hour of the meeting to the public for goal setting, then ask those non-members to leave so that you can conduct your private meeting afterwards.

Tips for Conducting Effective Public Forums

Start and end the meeting on time, based on an agenda created prior to the meeting. Be clear about the purpose of the meeting and expected outcomes. In addition to preparing **what** you want to say, spend time practicing **how** the content will be delivered. Choose someone in your organization with good communication skills, who is comfortable speaking in public.

At the beginning of the meeting, introduce water system personnel in attendance. Stop frequently to provide attendees the opportunity to ask questions. Answer their questions as completely as possible in a clear, concise way. Always end the meeting thanking everyone for coming and provide contact information for follow-up comments or questions.

Remember, successful public forums require preparation, practice, and good communication skills.

Key Message to Use When Setting Goals



When the public, your customers, or the elected boards ask, “Why are we here?” think of some key messages that they might relate to, such as:

1. Using water efficiently will save you and your customers’ money!
2. You value the water supply (both quantity and quality).
3. You are doing your part to ensure water is available for future generations.
4. Point out the importance of relating the goals back to the unique needs and limitations of your water system.
5. Make it real for your customers so that the goals address the needs of the water system and the measures support your goals.

Appendix H: Goal Setting Flowchart

The goal setting flowchart on the next page shows the steps needed to establish your goal, including the public forum process. [Chapter 7](#) and [Appendix O](#) have detailed information about goal setting. Here are some important things to remember about goal setting:

- If you have 1,000 or more connections, you have until July 1, 2009, to establish your goals.
- If you have less than 1,000 connections, you have until July 1, 2010, to establish your goals.
- A minimum of one goal is required.
- The goal must be designed to enhance the efficient use of water by your customers.
- If you established a goal to maintain a historic level (such as maintaining daily consumption at 65 gallons per person per day), you must explain why you are unable to reduce water use below that level (WAC 246-290-830(3)).
- Goals must be **evaluated and re-established**:
 - Every 6 years.
 - Any time a water system planning document is submitted to the Department of Health for approval.
- The elected governing board or governing body at your water system must establish your goals.

Appendix I: Examples of Customer Goals

- Goal 1:** Reduce average day demand per connection from 310 gallons to 260 gallons in 5 years.
- Goal 2:** Reduce daily use per person from 100 gallons to 70 gallons in 10 years.
- Goal 3:** Reduce water production per person, on an average annual basis, from 250 gallons per day to 230 gallons per day within 6 years.
- Goal 4:** Save 100,000 gallons per day, on an average annual basis, at full implementation of the conservation program in 6 years.
- Goal 5:** Reduce average 3rd-tier residential water consumption per customer by 15 percent by 2013.
- Goal 6:** Reduce seasonal outdoor water use by 2 to 3 percent by December 31, 2010.
- Goal 7:** Save 5 gallons per family home per day by 2014.
- Goal 8:** Reduce single-family residential water consumption by 25 gallons per day (gpd) per home by 2014.
- Goal 9:** Reduce per connection use by 7 percent by 2010.
- Goal 10:** By 2015, reduce consumption per equivalent residential unit (ERU) from 495 to 415 gpd/ERU.
- Goal 11:** Reduce consumption by 20 percent for the highest 10 percent water users in our single-family class customers by 2012.
- Goal 12:** Reduce seasonal summer demand by 25 gallons per day for residential customers within the next 6 years.
- Goal 13:** Reduce total production from our wells by 5 percent within 6 years.
- Goal 14:** Maintain daily per capita consumption at 65 gallons per person per day for the next 2 years (justification required for maintaining consumption levels (see WAC 246-290-830(3) and [Section 7.5](#)).
- Goal 15:** Reduce regional consumption by 1 percent at the end of 3 years (based on a regional program goal).

Appendix T: Examples of a Water Loss Control Action Plan

Example #1:

Our water system established a supply-side goal to reduce Distribution System Leakage (DSL) to less than 10% by 2010 or within 3 years after becoming fully metered. We finished installing water meters on all connections and city-owned facilities in April 2010. The DSL was at 20% for 2008 and was reduced to 19.2% in 2009; which is a savings of 1 MG per month on average.

We have been very active in taking steps to help reduce the DSL, such as repairing leaks when they are found or when we are notified, and replacing older water lines and leaking valves. We also set up a meter replacement schedule for the larger outdated commercial and industrial water meters; which is expected to be completed in 2012.

As a result of replacing these meters, we expect our revenue to increase from more accurate measurements. The city has taken steps to verify the collection of the monthly data and to have the source meters calibrated for accuracy. We plan to propose a 1% rate increase to our city council this spring to cover the expenses of needed infrastructure improvements to reduce DSL. We are concerned with the amount of DSL and committed to finding, repairing, and meeting the established system distribution leakage standard by 2013.

Example #2:

Summary

The Water Department is effectively working to reduce our Distribution System Leakage (DSL). We established a supply side goal to reduce DSL from 15.2 % to 12.5% by 2013. We expect to achieve 10% or less DSL by 2015.

Finding Apparent Losses

The first step is to find out more about our apparent losses by obtaining more accurate data. To do this, we aim to resolve our method of reading meters this year. We installed radio-read meters last year to obtain more accurate consumption data year-round because we didn't read manual meters during the winter. We also plan to implement a system to account for the un-metered authorized water consumption, like hydrant flushing. Last year, we identified an unauthorized connection without a meter tapped into the system. The situation has been corrected and we continue to look for and remove any unauthorized consumption.

Finding Real Losses

Another priority of ours is to identify sources of water loss within our system. Our leak detection survey has been a great success. Initially in 2007, our calculated leakage was over 22%. We have reduced that to an average of 15% in 3 years and established future goals to reduce it to less than 10% DSL by 2015.

We had a company perform a leak detection survey in 2009; the results of that survey prompted us to replace 750 feet of water main. We also discovered many deteriorated service line connections (between the main water line and service lines to customers), and we have replaced or are working to replace those lines next year.

At this time, only two of six city-owned buildings/facilities have meters installed. We will install meters on those other four facilities by 2012.

We also have planned a new metered filling station for water trucks and the Fire Department. This will help us track previously unmetered authorized uses for trucks for cleaning streets, fire fighting, or construction.

In addition, we have taken the following measures to reduce the annual volume of water loss:

1. Resolution #304 enforces a \$500 fine for unauthorized fire hydrant use.
2. Upgraded meter telemetry capabilities and reliability for increased monitoring of water production.
3. Calculating distribution system leakage twice a month as well as the required annual calculation.
4. Quick and efficient response by staff to all known distribution leaks.
5. The replacement of aging and unreliable watermains.
6. An annual leak detection program that will survey a minimum of 25% of our watermains every year until compliance is achieved.

Funding Our Water Loss Program

The water department staff and city council have made both a financial and philosophical commitment to using our water effectively and wisely, now and into the future. Through both changes to our rate structure and actively seeking out loans for needed system improvements/repairs, we expect to meet our DSL reduction goal. We will achieve this by:

- **Enhancing Our Conservation Billing Structure** – Our rates are designed to reward conservation and penalize over use. We adopted a third tier to the existing two-tiered rate billing system. Those customers in the third tier will now pay more for excessive water use, which will help fund our WUE program and provide general financial viability for our water system.
- **Seeking Funding Opportunities:** We will actively seek funding to repair our aging infrastructure, which is over 50 years old in some areas.



Setting Goals to Use Water Efficiently

Why set goals to use water efficiently?

Water system owners, managers, and operators work hard to provide safe and reliable drinking water to their customers. Using water efficiently helps you manage the growing demand for water. One of the most important steps in using water efficiently is setting water efficiency goals. Goals help you track your progress and determine the success of your water use efficiency (WUE) program.

We've heard some water systems ask questions like:

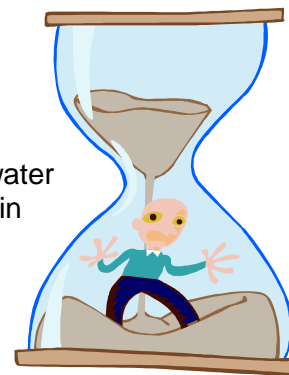
- "Why should we spend the time and money to use water more efficiently?"
- "Why do we need to worry about saving water, there's water all around us?" Usually they are referring to large water bodies such as the Columbia, Snake and Yakima rivers, Lake Washington, and Puget Sound.
- "We've never run out of water before, so why set a goal to use water efficiently?"

In answering these questions, we remind systems how important it is to look at the "big picture" of water efficiency. Consider the value of water not just as a source of revenue, but also for its aesthetic, recreational and environmental benefits, and the benefits to the health of the watershed in which you live. Our water supplies are not endless; demands on the state's water are increasing daily. Understanding that water is a finite resource that we simply cannot do without helps explain why we need to set goals for using water efficiently.

Don't wait until it's too late

The water use efficiency rule is a proactive approach to protecting public health, preserving our state's water resources, and ensuring the efficient use of water. Water systems are in a better position to provide sufficient water to their customers when they take action to reduce the amount of water taken from the resource. Water efficiency becomes even more important in the event of a drought, as climate changes become more evident, as the state's population grows, and as fewer water rights become available to water suppliers.

As you think about setting your goals, consider the water supply in your community and what challenges you may face in the future. Show your community your commitment to protecting the resource. Demonstrate good stewardship by establishing goals that use water in the most efficient way possible.



HELPING TO ENSURE SAFE AND RELIABLE DRINKING WATER

Where to start

When getting ready to propose a goal, think about how your community can use water more efficiently without sacrificing cultural values. For example, if your community likes to garden, focus on how customers can change their gardening practices to use water more wisely. Consult your local nursery or county cooperative extension program to find materials and ideas you can use to educate your customers. Those water saving ideas can turn into a measurable water savings goal for the community. Here are some things to consider:

- Determine what types of cost-effective measures (such as water saving devices and education) will support the goal.
- Keep your customers informed of new water saving technology, such as soil moisture sensors or water efficient washing machines.
- Show how saving water can reduce other utility bills such as energy, gas, or wastewater.
- Identify a funding source for the measures you use to achieve the goal.
- Establish a timeline for achieving the goal.

Setting your goals

By law, you must establish at least one goal to help your customers use water efficiently. You must use a public process to do so.

Exploring what type of goals to set for your water system begins with stating a clear objective. We encourage you to adopt the most effective and water efficient goals possible. Every goal is specific to each water system. Your objective may involve different motivating factors such as water supply characteristics, infrastructure upgrade needs, social pressures, reducing outdoor water use, or the need to obtain additional connections to meet future demand.

You must evaluate and re-establish your goals every six years **and** any time you submit a water system planning document to the Department of Health for approval.

You have the flexibility to determine goals that makes sense for your customers and set as many goals you want.

How efficient can you be?

You might be asking yourself, “How good is good enough? Have I set a goal that the Department of Health will accept? Should I maintain the historic water use patterns of my community?” These are all questions you will need to consider. In many cases, you can find ways to reduce water use; it just takes some creativity to find those water savings.

If you end up establishing a goal to maintain a historic level (such as maintaining consumption at 65 gallons per person per day), you will need to explain to us why you are unable to reduce water use below that level.

The following are examples of acceptable goals:

- Reduce total production from wells by five percent within six years.
- Maintain daily consumption at 65 gallons per person per day for the next two years.

Before establishing your goal in a public meeting, please review the [Getting Started: Water Use Efficiency Guidebook](#), DOH 331-375, for more information.

Don't limit your choices

Many times, water systems only look at their average day demand or average use per person per day when setting goals. Consider establishing a goal that targets specific water users within your customer base. Reducing water use within the commercial or industrial class might be a good option for your goal if those customers use a large percentage of your system's water.

For example, you might establish a goal to "Reduce industrial customer water use from 40 to 30 percent of total water system production by the year 2014." You can achieve this by conducting water audits of your industrial customers, providing rebates, evaluating rates, and identifying how reducing water consumption can save them money.

What is the difference between setting goals and meeting the leakage standard?

In addition to setting a goal to reduce consumption by your customers, which you are required to do by law, we also encourage you to set a goal to reduce leakage within your water system. You are required to meet a leakage standard aimed at reducing leaks within your distribution system to no more than 10 percent, but this cannot be your only goal.

We realize that fixing your leaks may be your first priority and is one of the most cost-effective ways to use water efficiently. It's also a great way to show your customers how you are protecting this important resource and might even encourage behavioral changes in how they use water.

Use education to achieve your goal while installing meters and reducing leaks

We understand that you will need to spend money on reducing leaks and installing meters. For many systems, installing meters and fixing leaks will be a priority and we support those efforts to meet the deadlines.

You can achieve your customer goal without spending a lot of money. Many water systems will rely entirely on education and outreach to achieve their goal. EPA's WaterSense program is a great tool to help you meet your goal (see sidebar).

Educating your customers about using water efficiently is a requirement of the water use efficiency rule. It's also one of the easiest things you can do to encourage changes in how your community uses water. As long as you educate your customers once per year, you have met the education requirement.

If you want to educate your customers more than once per year, (which we recommend) you can count it as a measure in your WUE program. The more often you can remind your customers about using water efficiently, the more likely they are to change water use patterns and understand why it's important.

WaterSense can help!

WaterSense is a voluntary public-private partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Its mission is to promote the value of water and help you and your customers make smart decisions about water use and water-using products.

For more information, visit their website

<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>

or contact the WaterSense Helpline by email at watersense@epa.gov or call 866-WTR-SENS (987-7367)



One good point to make: It takes energy to heat water. Using water efficient devices and appliances (such as low-flow shower heads and water efficient washing machines) will save your customers money on their gas and electricity bills and provide a great incentive to lower their water use.

Consider these educational opportunities to reduce water use:

- Add water efficiency tips to your annual Consumer Confidence Report.
- Monthly newspaper advertisements.
- Quarterly newsletter, which could include seasonal water use efficiency ideas.
- Bill stuffers.

Focal points for education and outreach

Many water systems have created demonstration gardens that show how certain landscapes can save a lot of water. Consider starting a demonstration garden or pilot project within your own community to prove how implementing water saving measures will save water. A project like this would count as part of an education and outreach strategy to help achieve your goal.

Achieve the goal using demand-side (customer) measures

There is a difference between demand-side measures and supply-side measures. When you are setting goals for your customers, you must choose demand-side measures.

Demand-side measures reflect actions that affect how much water customers use, and include things such as education programs, rebates for high-efficiency toilets, rate structures based on the amount of water use, water bills that show consumption history, or a program that notifies customers they may have a leak on their property.

Choosing the right WUE measure(s) is critical to helping you achieve your goals. Choose measures that directly relate to your goals. If you are not achieving your goals, try implementing different measures.

Pilot project idea:

Select a homeowner that is willing to try out specific water savings measures within their home and compare that to historical water use patterns. Write up their story in your community newsletter to share with others. This will give you a good idea about how well the measure is working. It also gets your customers thinking about how to reduce their water use.

Achieve the leakage standard using supply-side measures

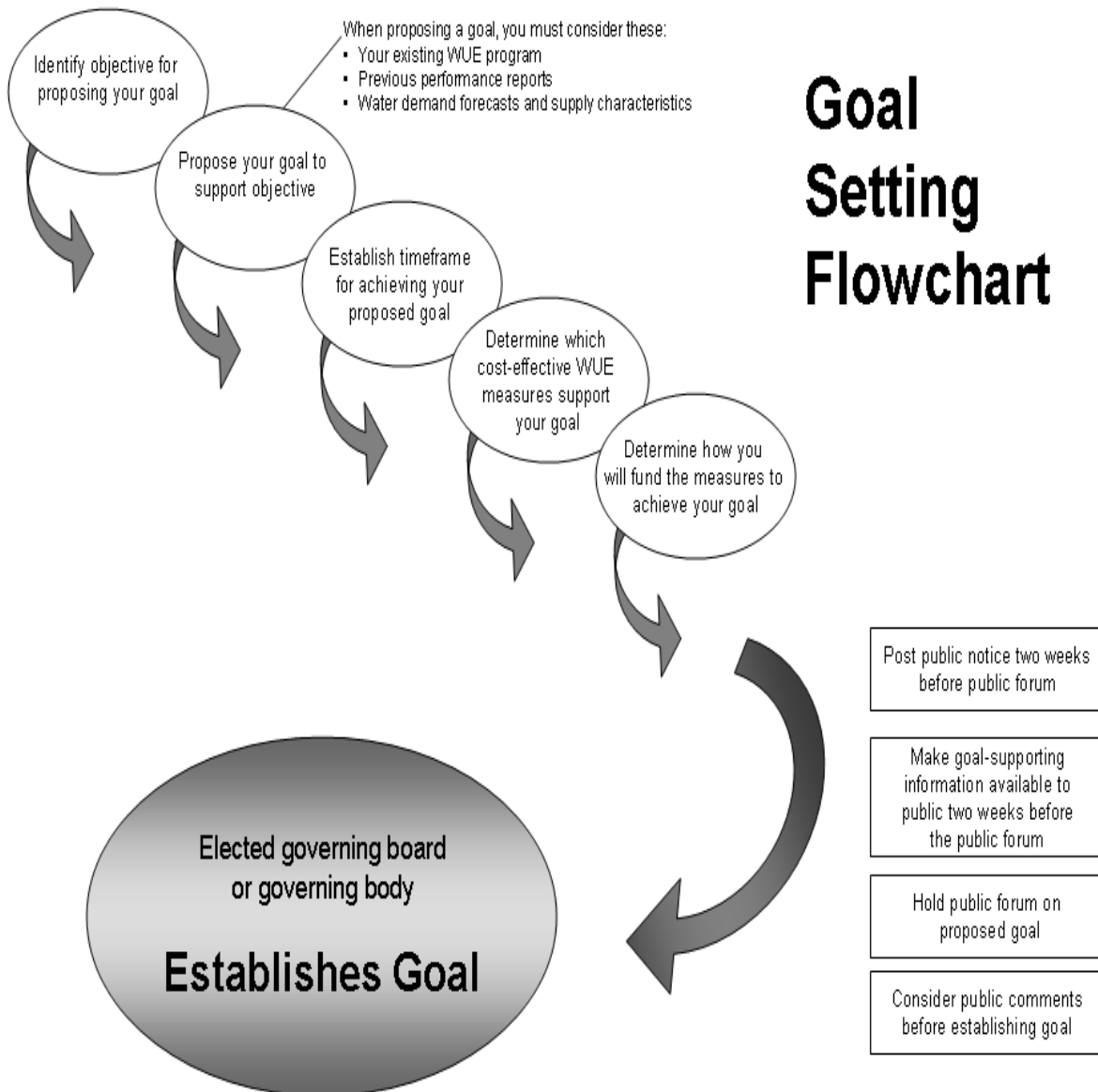
Supply-side measures show how efficiently the water system is operating, and generally include actions that will reduce leakage. They include things like meter replacement programs, source meter calibration, leak detection surveys, and water distribution system audits. You cannot use these types of measures to achieve a customer efficiency goal. These measures will not support a customer goal since they do not have a direct effect on whether customers use water more efficiently. Be careful not to select these with the assumption they will help meet the customer efficiency goal.

Setting goals in a public forum

You must engage your customers and interested members of the public when establishing your WUE goals. This meeting (forum) has many benefits. It gives your customers and the public a chance to affect decisions made by the governing body. It also helps consumers understand the need to use water more efficiently and teaches them how they can help you achieve your goals.

You should be prepared for any of the following three distinct groups to show up at your public meeting:

- Your water system's customers.
- Local community members.
- Special interest groups such as neighboring water systems, environmental organizations, tribal communities, and watershed planning units.



Public notice requirements

You must provide notice at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. The notice must include the following information:

- Purpose of the meeting.
- Date, time, and location for the meeting.
- Where your audience can find additional information supporting your proposed goal.

Use ODW's Website to provide public notice

Our [water use efficiency](#) website now has a feature that allows you to announce your goal-setting meeting and meets the public notice requirements. You can start the process by using this link on our website: [How to post your goal-setting public forum to our website](#)

Who can help

Seek out vendors and local conservation groups to find water efficiency products and services. The WaterSense website is a great resource to find products, services, manufacturers, retailers, distributors, and water efficient landscape professionals. Also available to help are the following organizations:

The Partnership for Water Conservation
<http://www.partners4water.org/>
206-957-2199

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington
<http://www.erwow.org/>
800-272-5981

Don't forget to ask your neighboring water systems about their water use efficiency programs when looking for ideas. Often they have the same questions you do, and together you may be able to form a local partnership for using water efficiently.

For more information

This and other publications are available at
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater.aspx>

[Mike Dexel](#), Water Resources Policy Lead, 360-236-3154
Northwest Region – Kent 253-395-6750
Southwest Region – Tumwater 360-236-3030
Eastern Region – Spokane Valley 509-329-2100



If you need this publication in an alternate format, call 800-525-0127. For TTY/TDD, call 800-833-6388.