

## **Water Conservation Plan Gold Star Recognition**

### **Administered by the Water Conservation Advisory Council**

#### **Background**

Utilities provide Water Conservation Plans to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) or the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) every five years. Requirements for these plans can be found at: <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/conservation/municipal/plans/doc/TWDB-1968%20Water%20Conservation%20Plan%20Checklist%202019.pdf?d=6690>. These plans must be updated at least every five years and contain information that should make it possible for each community to develop and adopt a plan that helps secure water for future Texans. The Gold Star Recognition effort was started by the Water Conservation Advisory Council (WCAC) to encourage and recognize stellar water conservation planning documents that reflect careful analysis and care in communicating information to readers.

#### **Application Process**

Any utility that has submitted their Water Conservation Plan to the appropriate agency (TWDB or TCEQ) may also apply for the Gold Star Recognition. The recognition is not automatic for high quality plans. Utilities must self-nominate and provide examples from the plan that show how criteria were met.

#### **When to Apply**

Self-nomination for the Gold Star Recognition should be completed after the Water Conservation Plan has been completed and turned in to the appropriate agency.

Plans will be reviewed for completion and acceptance by the appropriate agency before being reviewed for the Gold Star Recognition.

#### **Process**

- 1. Review of Plan and Acceptance by TWDB or TCEQ**
- 2. Self-Nomination**
- 3. Review of Application and Plan by WCAC Gold Star Recognition Committee**

**This process will be ongoing as plan reviews are completed. Plan review can take up to a year to complete. Upon receipt of application, the committee will notify applicant of whether their plan has been reviewed and when application can be processed accordingly.**

- 4. Notification of Results by Gold Star Recognition Committee**
- 5. Posting of Gold Star Recognition Utilities on [SaveTexasWater](#) website and issuance of Gold Star Certificates.**
- 6. Those getting recognition will also receive permission to use Gold Star logo in association with the plan that has been recognized. This may be in print and on the recipient's web page.**

**Timing:** The Gold Star Recognition committee will review applications quarterly and issue information on applications quarterly.

## Gold Star Recognition Application

Utility Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Conservation Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Plan Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Submitted to TCEQ or TWDB (circle as appropriate)

Please provide a reference under each criteria the illustrates how the criteria were met.

### 1) Plan Submitted and Considered Complete by TWDB or TCEQ

This will be confirmed by the appropriate agency.

### 2) Conservation Strategy Discussion

The plan should include narrative that explains the reasons for the GPCD targets, drought measures and the conservation efforts described. This will often reference back to the utility profile information to explain why certain conservation interventions or best management practices were selected. For example is peak summer production particularly challenging? Is there a lot of older housing stock needing retrofits? Is a significant percent of water sold to industrial customers so programs are offered for them?

- a) GPCD Target Discussion; why this level of per capita reduction?
- b) Drought Plan Discussion; why are these strategies best for this community?
- c) Conservation Efforts Selected; why are these conservation best management practices best for this community?

**Applicant:** Cite page(s) where the above information can be found in the plan:

### 3) Detailed Conservation Program Description

Plan requirements include listing the types of conservation education and conservation programs that will be offered over the Water Conservation Plan's lifespan. Gold Star Plans should describe these and include information on how prior program efforts have informed the new plans.

- Description of Education Efforts in Next Five Years; include how these will be deployed and for what audiences
- Description of Conservation Programs in Next Five Years; include how these will be deployed and for what target customers

- Description of Prior Conservation Education and Program outcomes and how lessons learned informed new plans

**Applicant:** Cite page(s) and paragraph(s) with on Conservation Program Description.

#### **4) Discussion of Conservation Best Management Practices**

TWDB has a Water Conservation Best Practices Management Guide with many options to consider. Some of the BMP options are strategic and would enhance the planning process. Others are specific programs that will help address seasonal challenges or a particular segment of customers. Referencing which of these are being considered and why is part of a Gold Star Plan.

**Applicant:** Cite page(s) and paragraph(s) where BMP discussions can be found. (Note Conservation programs in the same spirit of the BMP but under a different program name are allowed.)

#### **5) Discussion and Details of Water Loss Control Program**

Water Loss Control is a critical part of any conservation plan. Gold Star Plans will have descriptive detailed information that helps the reader understand the scope of investment the utility is making to improve water losses.

- a) Meter Accuracy
- b) Leak Monitoring
- c) Water Loss Audit Data Validity Process

**Applicant:** Cite page and paragraph where section on Water Loss Discussion can be found.

## 6) Evaluation Strategies

All Water Conservation Plans should include information about how efforts proposed will be evaluated to determine if they are effective. If the plan for evaluation is considered in advance of the program deployment, it will be more effective. There are suggestions within each of the Conservation Best Management Practices for guidance on how to evaluate impact and effectiveness.

**Applicant:** Cite page and paragraph where program evaluation information can be found.

## 7) Evidence of Outreach About Plan

Each Water Conservation Plan must be approved by the appropriate entity before it is considered complete. It is desirable to also get input from customers and stakeholder groups about the plan. Gold Star Plans will have a description of how customers and stakeholders were informed of the plan and how they were able to provide input.

**Applicant:** Describe how and when outreach took place to education water users and stakeholders about the plan.