2.1 Conservation Coordinator

Applicability

This BMP is intended for all Municipal Water User Groups ("utility"). A common element in successful conservation programs1 is a conservation coordinator who is responsible for implementing and maintaining the conservation program.

Description

A Conservation Coordinator is an individual designated to oversee and coordinate conservation efforts within a utility's service area. A regional supplier may have a coordinator that works with all of its wholesale customers. Under this BMP, the utility designates a Conservation Coordinator to be responsible for preparation and implementation of the utility's water conservation and drought contingency plans, preparation and submittal of annual conservation status reports to utility management, and implementation of the utility's conservation program. Other duties should include preparation of the annual conservation budget, promotion of water conservation programs, developing marketing strategies for conservation programs, coordination with other utility staff and promoting the value of conservation programs within the utility, participation in regional water planning conservation and drought period initiatives and management of conservation staff, consultants and contractors when appropriate.

The Conservation Coordinator may have other duties and job titles within the utility. Small utilities may share costs with other small utilities by jointly hiring a Conservation Coordinator. Wholesale suppliers may hire a Conservation Coordinator to serve the retail utilities that receive water from them.

Implementation

Implementation should consist of identifying a Conservation Coordinator and support staff (when needed), whose duties can include the following:

1) Manage and oversee conservation programs and implementation; 2) Document water conservation program implementation status as this relates to state requirements and BMPs adopted; 3) Communicate and promote water conservation to utility management; 4) Coordinate utility conservation programs with operations and planning staff; 5) Prepare annual conservation budget 6) Manage consultants and contractors assisting in implementing the water conservation program; 7) Develop public outreach and marketing strategies for water conservation; and 8) Participate in regional water conservation planning and drought planning initiatives

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Often, the Conservation Coordinator is the spokesperson for the utility on conservation issues. For small utilities, the Conservation Coordinator may have other responsibilities. Utilities that jointly operate regional conservation programs are not expected to staff duplicative and redundant Conservation Coordinator positions.

Schedule Utilities pursuing this BMP should begin implementing this BMP within six (6) months of adoption of the official resolution to initiate the program. Implementation should be completed in a timely manner.

Scope A utility should staff and maintain the position of Conservation Coordinator and provide support staff as necessary. This includes providing the Conservation Coordinator with the necessary resources to prepare and implement the water conservation program. Depending upon the size of the utility or opportunity to collaborate with neighboring utilities or wholesale agencies within its region, this BMPs objective may be achieved by sharing resources and implementation efforts with other utilities.

Documentation To track this BMP, the utility should gather the following documentation:

1) Description of the Conservation Coordinator position. 2) The date the Conservation Coordinator was hired. 3) Annual or more frequent reports on progress of water conservation program implementation, costs and water savings.

Determination of Water Savings Water savings are not quantified for this BMP. The Coordinator assists in the implementation of other BMPs and this additional effort can be considered as essential to the savings accrued by the implementation of the whole range of conservation program(s) which are offered by the utility.

Cost-Effectiveness Considerations Without specific water savings, it may be difficult to do a true cost-effectiveness analysis for this BMP. However, this BMP is essential to the successful implementation of other BMPs the utility chooses to undertake. There will be non-financial benefits as a result of implementing this BMP such as enhanced public image through increased outreach and visibility in emphasizing conservation programs. The salary and associated overhead expenses for the Coordinator would be the primary costs that would be incurred in implementing this BMP. Depending on size and scope of the water conservation programs, the Coordinator position could be full-time, part-time, shared with others, or contracted out.

References for Additional Information

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1) Texas utilities and regional suppliers with conservation coordinators include (but are not limited to) Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Lower Colorado River Authority, San Antonio,San Marcos, Post Wood Municipal Utility District, and Harris Galveston Coastal Subsidence District. 2) Memorandum of Understanding, California Urban Water Conservation Council, 1999. 3) Groundwater Conservation Plan, Edwards Aquifer Authority, 2000.