

PROTECTING OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE: WATER



Water is our most precious resource. It is what makes the South Metro Denver region's outstanding quality of life and growing economy possible. We must be responsible stewards of this limited resource, and the South Metro region is leading the way through innovative and effective approaches to conservation and smart water use.

Together, South Metro Water Supply Authority and our 13 water provider members are conserving and creating sustainable systems for those who live here now and in the future.



Conservation Success

Our region can be proud of our track record of conserving water. We have reduced per capita water demand by more than 30 percent since 2000. Some communities in the South Metro area are among the lowest in the state when it comes to the number of gallons of water consumed per day.

Our members are focused on educating customers about the importance of conservation and ways to achieve it. At the same time, they are creating new models to do even more:

- Castle Rock and Inverness have taken an innovative approach where they pay customers to replace water-thirsty plant materials, such as Kentucky bluegrass, with low water use landscaping.
- Providers serving Highlands Ranch and Castle Rock are two of only utilities in the state to put water customers on a **water budget** that manages use by household.
- Sterling Ranch and Castle Rock are leaders in the state in integrating **water efficiency and conservation** into real estate development plans. Douglas County is one of the few counties in Colorado to incorporate water supply into its Comprehensive Master plan and require that new developments have 100% renewable water supplies for their new homes.
- South Metro Water's regional **Water Ambassadors** program enlists high school volunteers to work with local elementary schools to teach students about water conservation.

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Efficient Systems

Water stewardship goes beyond conservation, however. It also means being smart about how we use water and building more efficient systems. Our members are leading the way in developing innovative approaches to water efficiency.

- Castle Rock recently adopted an innovative fee structure that reduces a developer's tap fee if they limit the amount of turf, have no Kentucky bluegrass, and limit grasses to those that can survive on 19 inches or less of water a year, half of what Kentucky bluegrass requires. Developments that take advantage of this program will use 26 to 47% less water.
- Water reuse is a priority throughout the region.
 - Inverness and Meridian are among **the earliest adopters of water reuse in Colorado**. They reuse 100 percent of their water with zero discharge.
 - The **Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Project** will significantly increase the reuse capability of Centennial, Castle Rock and Castle Pines North.
 - Castle Rock recently completed a state-of-the-art water treatment plant allowing them to access their **reusable water supplies**.
- Sterling Ranch is conducting the state's first **rainwater harvesting** pilot study which looks at the feasibility of capturing and reusing rainwater.
- Douglas County is developing **graywater regulations** that will enable water that has already been used in a home to be recycled and used in outdoor watering.

South Metro residents should be proud of the region's commitment to being good stewards of this precious resource. Our success in conservation and water efficiency is helping ensure a more secure water future. That commitment will continue as we execute on the region's plan to deliver a more secure and sustainable water supply to the region.

In 2017, as part of our commitment to the efficient and sustainable use of water, the SMWSA Regional Conservation Subcommittee developed a Model Regional Landscape & Irrigation Ordinance. The purpose of this effort was to provide to our members an exhaustive, locally focused model ordinance to not only support existing local ordinances, but to also enhance conservation efforts in a practical way.

A copy of the Model Regional Landscape & Irrigation Ordinance can be found at:

<http://southmetrowater.org/conservation/>