

The Language of Water Conservation

Water Conservation Workshops

2006 and 2007

Great Western Institute

Drought v. Conservation

- Unusual Scarcity
- Severe
- Short-Term
- Response
- Emergency
- Typical year
- Continuum
- Long-term
- Practice
- Sustainable

Dillon Reservoir, circa 2002



Photo: Denver Water

“I try watering and watering, but I just can’t get that asphalt to grow!”



Photo by Jim Knopf

What is water conservation?

- In broadest sense—any action that results in a long-term increase in the productive use of water supply
- 2004 statute defined conservation to mean:
 - Water use efficiency
 - Wise water use
 - Distribution system efficiencies
 - Supply Substitution
 - Curtailment

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Water Conservation Issues

- Demand-Side v. Supply-Side
- Measures v. Programs
- Technology v. Social Behaviors
 - “hardware” v. “habit”
- Fiduciary Responsibilities v. Resource Stewardship
- Customer Initiative v. Utility/Municipal Regulations

What is water conservation?

Decreasing demand by a given population through efforts at the customer level:

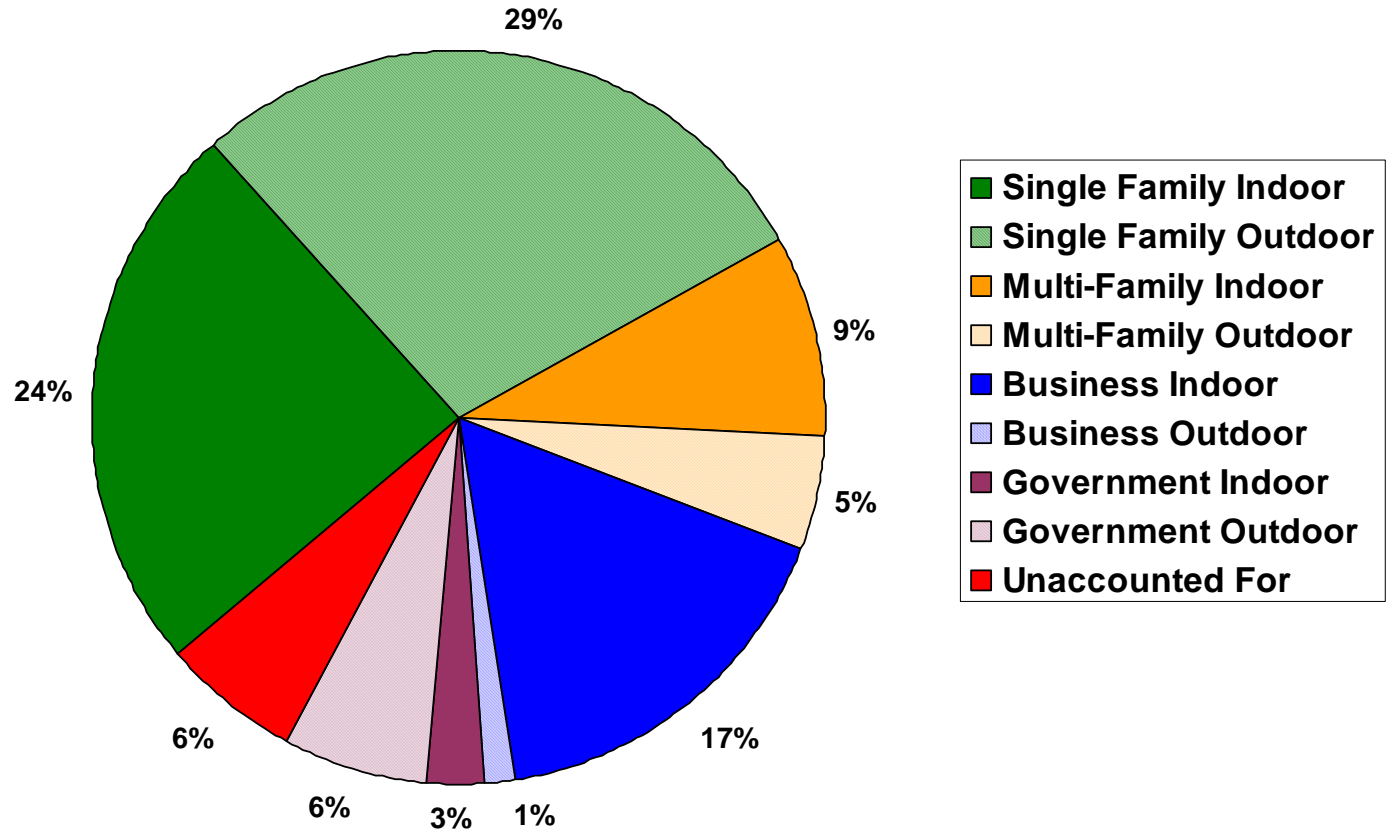
- Landscape re-design and efficient watering
- Indoor appliance upgrades
- Water audits
- Leak detection and repair
- Pricing incentives
- Education

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Efficient supply development at utility level:

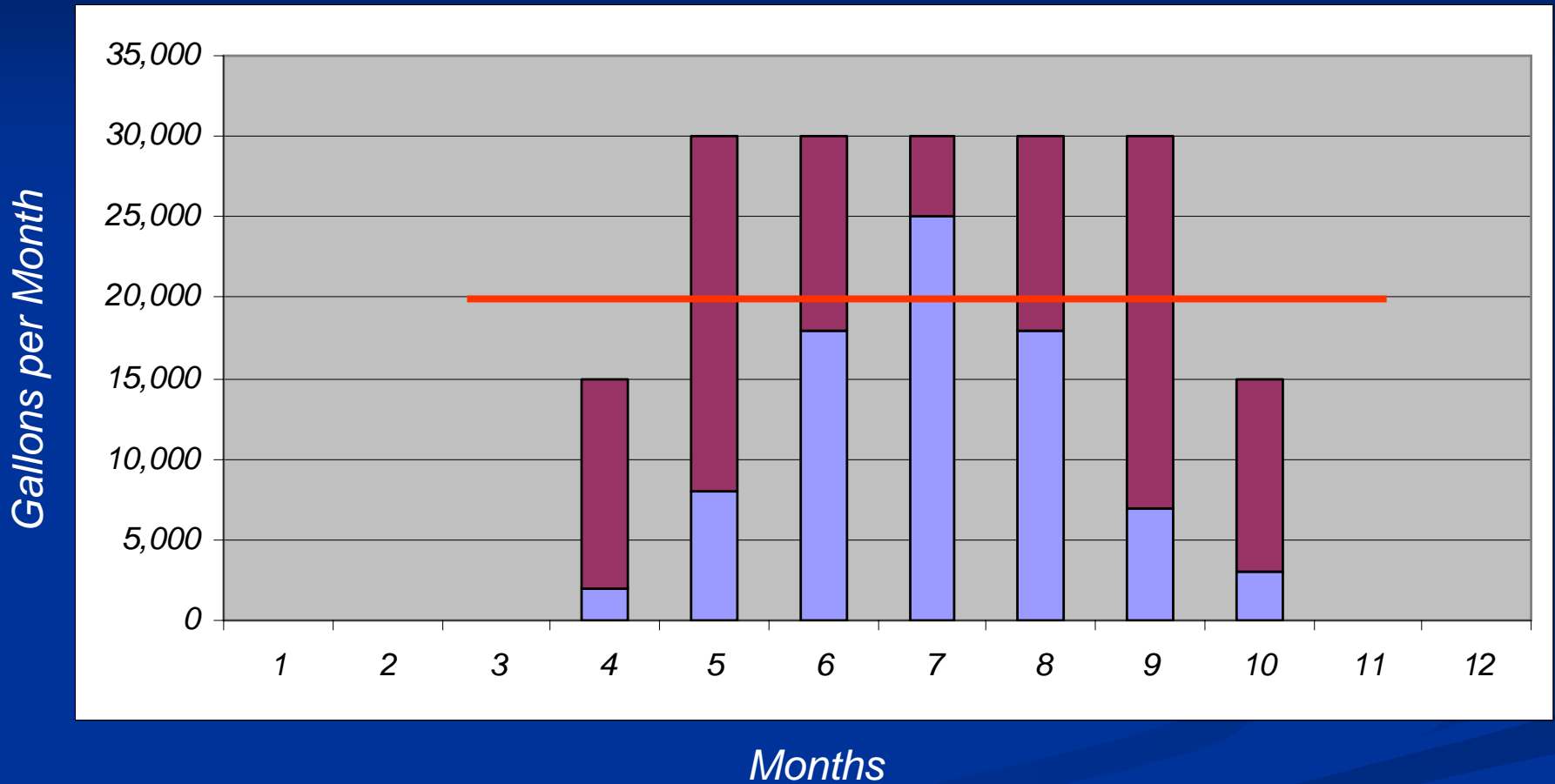
- Leak detection and repair
- Water Re-Use
- Coordinated use of surface and groundwater
- Sharing agreements with agriculture
- Cooperative planning and development

Water Use by Category



Outdoor Use equals 41% of total use

How much water on your lawn?



Expected outdoor water use requirement for Kentucky Bluegrass (based on Metro ET)

Average quantity of water applied by automatic sprinkler systems

KEEFE FOR DENVER POST '77



'WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE . . . THE GRASS IS STILL WET!'

Water Conservation Issues

- Water conservation is not an end in itself,...
- It's context is overall water management
- Goal
 - *“To supply adequate, reliable water customers while minimizing costs and protecting the environment.”*

Benefits of Conservation

- Reduce or avoid need to develop new supplies
- Alter need for new infrastructure
- Reduce operating costs (e.g., water treatment)
- Improve system reliability/margin
- Comply with regulations
- Improve public credibility
- Promote sustainability of finite resources

How do YOU define conservation?