



A

water efficiency planning guide for building owners and managers

WATER EFFICIENCY MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE



**BE WATER-WISE...
IT MAKES CENTS!**



**Environmental Citizenship
Écocivisme**

Many municipalities have water conservation programmes.
Contact your local municipality for additional information
on the wise use of water.

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ATER EFFICIENCY MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE

In these times of financial belt tightening, many businesses and organizations are looking for ways to lower costs, become more efficient, and increase competitiveness.

Although there are probably thousands of ways of doing this, there is one option you may not have considered—reducing your water consumption.

By reducing your facility's water use, and by using water wisely, you can save money—a savings of up to 30% of your water bill is probably within your grasp. You can also help improve our environment.

The more water we use and the more we degrade this precious non-renewable natural resource, the more it will cost each one of us to bring it back to an acceptable standard for public use.

Building owners and managers are key allies in helping municipal utilities provide water, an essential public service, at the lowest possible cost.



Greater competitiveness

Increased efficiency will lead to cost and time savings. The result: greater competitiveness for your organization.



Enhanced public image

By demonstrating to the public your willingness to become more environmentally responsible, you can gain public respect, applause and publicity.



Cleaner water and better environment

By using less water, and by polluting it with fewer materials, the quality and quantity of Canada's water will be better now, and for future generations.

THE BENEFITS OF USING LESS

The following five benefits can be achieved through increased water efficiency:



Lower costs

If your water is metered and you have a user pay system, you can reduce your water costs by using less water. If your sewer

surcharge is calculated as a percentage of your water consumption, you benefit from further savings by reducing your water use.



More efficient processes

By taking measures to reduce water use, you can develop more efficient processes and operations within your facility. The result: more value for your money.

DEVELOP A WATER EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME IN

To demonstrate your organization's commitment to water efficiency, develop a comprehensive water efficiency programme that addresses your facility's water use habits in current processes and operations. A successful programme depends on four key steps:

1

GAIN SENIOR MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT

It is crucial that senior management support the programme ideologically and financially. Short payback periods make water efficiency a sound short-term investment for a fast and yet long-term solution.

2

GET TO KNOW YOUR FACILITY BY CONDUCTING A WATER AUDIT

To determine how your organization can improve its water efficiency, you should first become familiar with your water system by conducting a water audit of your facility. A water audit allows you to measure water use in different areas of your facility, and assess where water overuse or abuse is taking place, and where leaks might be. The three main activities involved in a water audit include:

Get to know your water system

Identify all areas of the facility with hot and cold water supplies. Also note the

location of distribution pipes, flow meters, water storage facilities, taps, valves, etc.

Develop an inventory

Find out how water is used in each area of your facility by involving knowledgeable staff and measuring water flows. Once you know how much water is being used in each facility, process or area of operation, you can identify potential water reduction measures.

Prepare a water balance for the facility

This will ensure that all water used in your facility has been identified and adequately quantified, and that the total volume of water supplied has been accounted for. You may want to break the water balance down into smaller areas to accurately identify specific areas of overuse or leaks.

4

EASY STEPS

3

DEVELOP A WATER EFFICIENCY PLAN

Using the information gained from the water audit, you can develop a simple, step-by-step water efficiency plan that outlines water reduction goals and strategies.

Your water efficiency plan should be kept simple and practical so that it can easily be revised. Each plan should include these basic components:

Policy statement that reflects the commitment of senior management.

Water reduction goals that are specific, measurable and achievable. Also state the goal measurement (litres, percentage, etc.), when each goal is expected to be achieved, and by what means.

*Remember the Wise Use of Water will save you money
and help improve our environment!*

Action plan outlining specific tasks, associated costs, and how your organization's water use habits can change. An employee or tenant participation and public awareness plan should be developed at this point.

Your action plan will likely include one or more of the following reduction measures:

- system optimization
- water saving devices
- reuse / recycling
- process changes
- alternative water sources
- metering
- leak detection and reduction measures.

Assign responsibilities for developing and implementing the plan, or for specific tasks. Consider establishing a water efficiency committee led by an enthusiastic manager.

Evaluate and revise the plan continually to ensure that it is flexible, relevant and appropriate.

4

DEVELOP AN EMPLOYEE/ TENANT PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The participation, cooperation and commitment of your facility's employees or tenants is essential to the success of your programme.

The following are some suggestions on how to communicate policies, programmes, ideas, announcements, progress reports and special achievements:

- form a committee of employees or tenants to develop a programme
- create a suggestion box and incentive programme that recognizes people with water saving ideas

- discuss water efficiency progress at staff meetings
- write newsletters and brochures
- post special bulletins
- distribute information with pay cheques
- sponsor a slogan or poster contest
- use displays and exhibits in lobby or cafeteria
- offer water-saving devices to employees or tenants
- develop audio-visual programmes
- bring in speakers from other organizations
- sponsor community seminars on water efficiency

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OW WE CAN HELP

Environmental Citizenship is an initiative of Canada's Green Plan. Its goal is a society where individuals and groups have the knowledge and values which will help them take responsible environmental action. For more information please write or call the Environment Canada office nearest you or:

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