From: Karry Rathje <Karry@wcwcd.org>
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Subject: Washington County responds to drought with increased water pricing and additional conservation measures

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Manager

Contact: Karry Rathje
Communications

435.673.3617
karry@wcwcd.org

Washington County Responds to Drought with Increased Water Pricing and Additional Conservation Measures

The Washington County Water Conservancy District (district) thanks Governor Spencer Cox for his leadership on Utah's drought and supports the measures outlined in yesterday's press conference.

As the hottest, driest and fastest-growing region in Utah, water conservation is critical for Washington County's future. The district is taking additional actions to reduce water demand including:

- Implementing an Excess Water Surcharge starting at $1.00 per 1,000 gallons on the county's high water users
- Asking cities to conduct an internal audit on all public facilities to 1) reduce water use by an additional 10%, and 2) identify non-functional lawn areas that will be converted to water-efficient landscapes
- Requesting cities pass and enforce ordinances to 1) limit/restrict grass in new commercial and residential developments, 2) prohibit irrigating with treated water between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. 3) eliminate water features in new developments, 4) require commercial car wash facilities to recycle water onsite, and 5) determine lawn limits and/or water budgets for golf courses

Washington County has reduced its per capita water use by more than 30% since 2000 – the highest percent reduction in Utah. The county was also the first to adopt the state's most aggressive water conservation goal.

"We have to take conservation seriously," said Zach Renstrom, district general manager. "We have one local water resource that is almost tapped out and a population that is projected to more than double in the next 40 years."

In collaboration with its municipal partners, the district has invested more than $70 million in recent conservation efforts. The district currently offers more than two dozen conservation programs and is working with Maddaus Water Management, an international authority specializing in water demand analysis, water conservation and drought planning, to identify additional programs to implement in its 2021 water conservation plan. Additional programs under review include rebates for turf removal, water-efficient irrigation devices and water-smart appliances.

Maddaus audited the district's current water conservation program and reported it "is on par with other notable programs in the western United States and exceeds those of other entities of a similar size and customer base."

"Water is the lifeblood of our community," said Renstrom. "We're experiencing one of the worst droughts on record and we can and must do more to protect and conserve our water."

About Washington County Water Conservancy District

The Washington County Water Conservancy District is a not-for-profit public agency that oversees water resources in Washington County, UT. Visit www.wcwcd.org for more information.

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Karry Rathje
Communications & Government Affairs Manager
Washington County Water Conservancy District
P: 435.673.3617 | C: 435.668.5622 | wcwcd.org