

Reasons for Low Water Bills

Water Impact and Connection Fees

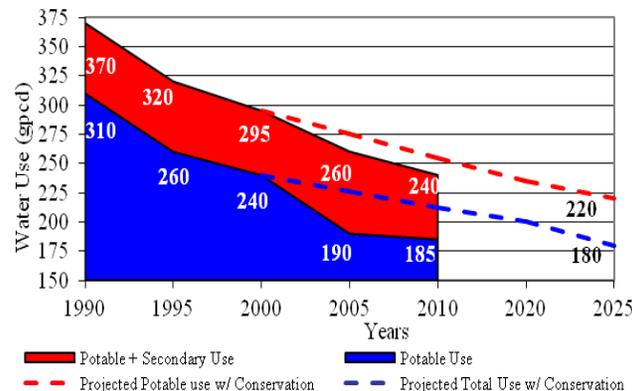
Many areas of the state collect these fees which are an upfront payment of the cost of the water infrastructure. These tend to stabilize water rates, reducing the need for system-wide rate increases to pay for new growth.

Property Taxes

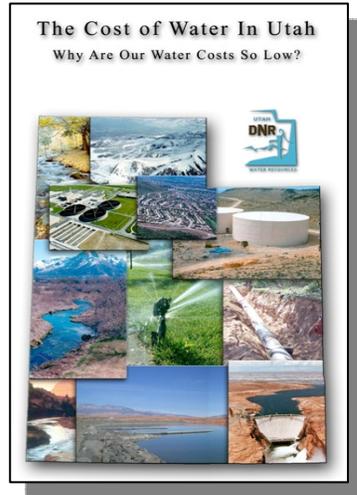
In some areas of Utah, property taxes are used to pay back loans that have been granted to water providers to build this same water infrastructure. This process helps keep monthly water bills lower the portion of the water infrastructure is not paid for in monthly water billing but instead in property tax bills.

Water Conservation

As indicated in the figure below, since 1990 Utahns have reduced their overall water use. From 1980 to 1990 the increase in water use followed the same trend as the population. However, since that time, water use has decreased while population continues to increase. The state has a goal to reduce per capita use by at least 25% by 2025. This decrease in per capita water use also helps keep water costs low because it helps delay water future projects and infrastructure upgrades.



For More Information Visit:
www.water.utah.gov



A detailed report on the cost of water has been prepared by the DWRE and is on the web at:
www.water.utah.gov



Utah Division of Water Resources

Mission: To Plan, Develop, Conserve and Protect Utah's Water Resources

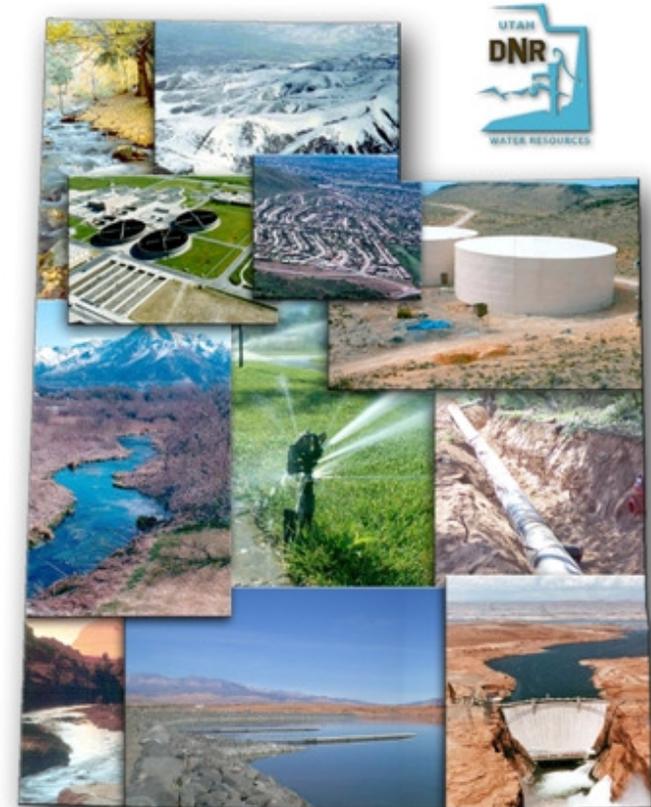


For more information on water conservation visit us on the web at
www.conservewater.utah.gov or
www.slowtheflow.org

Utah Division of Water Resources

Water Issues Education Series

The Cost of Water In Utah Why Are Our Water Costs So Low?



www.conservewater.utah.gov

Cost Comparisons

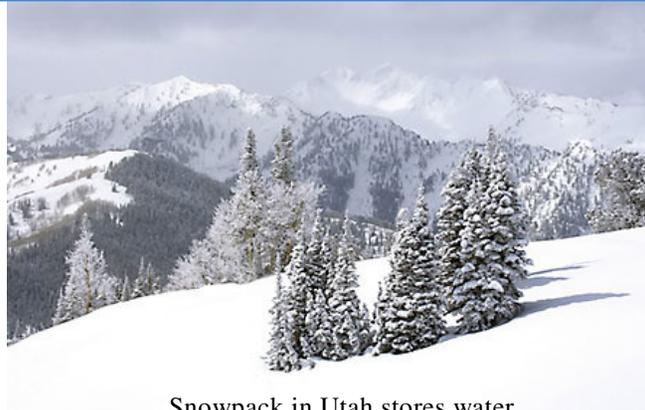
Reasons for Low Water Costs

There are very few reports that offer statistics calculating the cost of water per capita. The Utah Division of Drinking Water (DDW) compiles yearly information regarding Utah's water cost per capita. The Raftelis Financial Consultants (RFC) in conjunction with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) generates similar data for the entire nation. The table below is derived from the most recent RFC/AWWA report (2006). The table shows the average residential, combined (all user types, residential, commercial, industrial and institutional) monthly bills and the cost of water per 1000 gallons.

Average Monthly Water Bills

State	Residential (\$)	Combined (\$)	\$/1000 gallons
Idaho	23.16	30.57	1.26
Utah	23.47	31.27	1.34
Wyoming	24.30	33.14	2.67
New Mexico	27.07	38.63	2.93
Colorado	31.43	43.54	2.54
Arizona	35.23	48.19	2.48
Nevada	44.42	60.78	2.80
Michigan	20.70	23.54	2.70
New York	41.92	44.77	2.51
Georgia	22.13	24.46	3.27

How can water be so inexpensive in such a dry state?



Snowpack in Utah stores water

Climate and Geography

Utah's annual snowpack acts as a storage reservoir for billions of gallons of water. Once it melts this water is stored in reservoirs and groundwater aquifers until the summer months. When the water is needed it is released out of the reservoirs and/or pumped from wells and springs to the populated areas of Utah.

Water Quality and Delivery Systems

The water that is provided by the winter snowpack is relatively clean. Therefore it requires little treatment prior to entering drinking water systems. Also, the majority of the systems in Utah are gravity fed, therefore little to no energy is required to transport or pressurize the water.

Energy Cost

Analysis of a typical large water distribution system indicates the required energy to convey and treat a unit volume of water is less in Utah than elsewhere in the west. This is due to some of the factors discussed earlier, higher quality water sources and gravity fed systems. In addition, Utah ranked 4th lowest in 2007 for energy costs to consumers. Thus ensuring lower water delivery costs in Utah

Effect of State and Federal Funding Programs

The Utah Board of Water Resources, Utah Drinking Water Board and the Community Impact Board work closely with federal agencies, water districts, irrigation companies, cities and towns statewide to develop new water sources and upgrade irrigation and community M&I water systems so that water usage can be carried out in a more efficient manner. The Federal Government has provided funding for past water projects. Some of these projects have already been paid for. This combined effort helps provide water to Utahns at a lower cost.

Conversion of Agricultural Water to Municipal and Industrial Uses

With population increasing throughout the state more water will be needed for M&I uses. Some of this water will convert from agricultural uses that no longer exist. Since the 1950's, the percentage of agricultural water use in Utah has dropped from 92% to 81% of the total water use. This conversion has assisted the state's drinking water providers in adding relatively inexpensive water to their M&I supplies

Early Irrigation and Municipal Water Developments

Due to the dry nature of the state several projects were initiated early on as settlers began to develop the land. These projects enabled water to be delivered to certain areas of the state which what is now relatively inexpensive water projects.