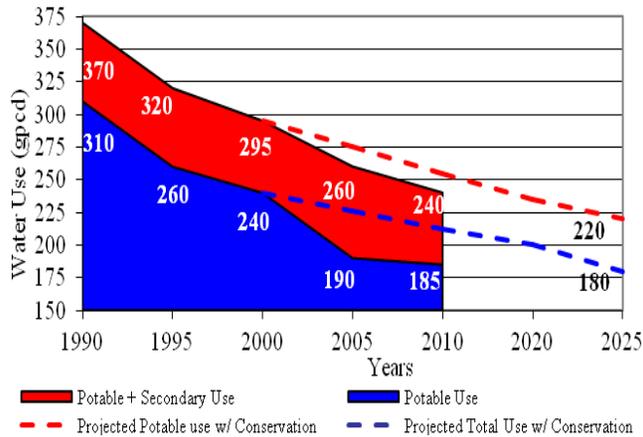


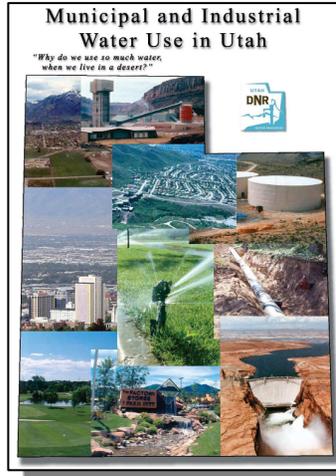
# Water Conservation

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. This decrease in per capita water use shows that Utahns are attempting to reduce their overall water use. The state has a goal to reduce per capita use by at least 25% by 2050.



*Water wise landscapes don't have to be boring rocks they can be colorful*

**For More Information Visit:**  
[www.water.utah.gov](http://www.water.utah.gov)



A detailed report on M&I water use has been prepared by the DWRe and is on the web at:  
[www.water.utah.gov](http://www.water.utah.gov)



## Utah Division of Water Resources

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



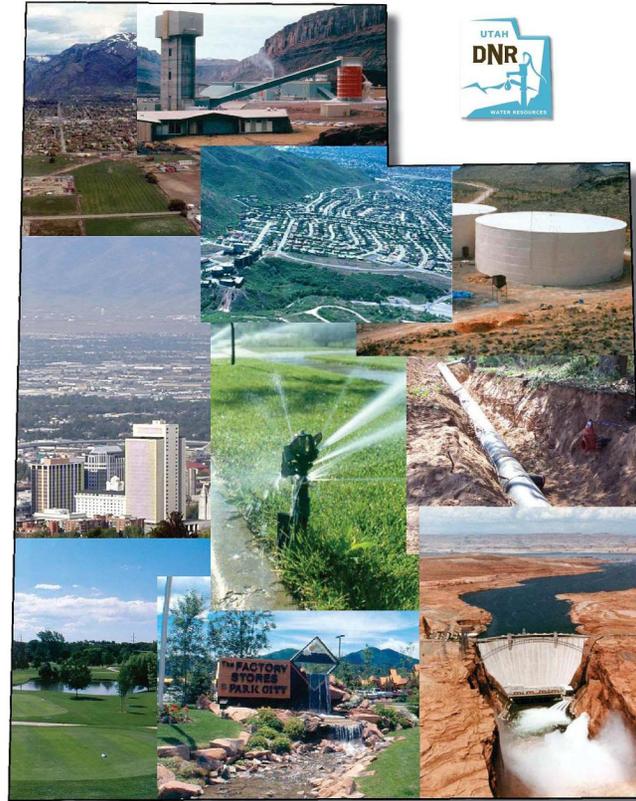
For more information on water conservation visit us on the web at  
[www.conservewater.utah.gov](http://www.conservewater.utah.gov) or  
[www.slowtheflow.org](http://www.slowtheflow.org)

# Utah Division of Water Resources

Water Issues Education Series

## Municipal and Industrial Water Use in Utah

*"Why do we use so much water, when we live in a desert?"*



[www.conservewater.utah.gov](http://www.conservewater.utah.gov)

## Water Use in Other States

The standard report that is most often used to compare water use of various states is the United States Geological Survey's (USGS) *Estimated Use of Water in the United States*. This report evaluates water use every five years and the last reported data is from 2005. This reports states that the U.S. annually diverts 408 million acre-feet of fresh water. Utah ranked 31<sup>st</sup> in total water diverted. California and Texas rank first and second respectively. This is in large part due to the populations of those states. Below is shown the public supply water diversion amounts of several states. Also shown is the gallons per capita day (gpcd) or how many gallons one person uses in a day. Utah is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest consumer per capita in the nation.

### Public Community System Water Diversions by State

State	Water Diversion (acre-feet)	Gallons per Capita Day (gpcd)
Arizona	1,309,000	197
California	7,827,000	193
Colorado	968,000	185
Idaho	276,000	172
Nevada	757,000	280
New Mexico	321,000	148
Oregon	591,000	146
Texas	4,786,000	187
<b>Utah</b>	<b>680,000</b>	<b>238</b>
Wyoming	108,000	110

## Factors Affecting Utah's High Water Use

### Climate

Utah is the second driest state in the U.S. receiving only 13 inches of rain annually, with only 6 of those inches falling during the growing season. Lawns and gardens require roughly 30 inches of water to survive here in Utah, therefore an additional 24 inches of water is needed to maintain healthy landscapes. This requirement of supplemental water facilitates higher water use.

### Traditions of Early Settlers and Unique Topography

Brigham Young's proclamation to "make the desert blossom as a rose" was earnestly followed by the early pioneers. These pioneers had come from eastern, mid-western and English societies and were accustomed to the large, lush green landscapes of their homelands. Thus, it was natural for many to want large green lawns and fields when they arrived in Utah. Today, the average lot size in Utah is higher than many of the surrounding Western states.

### Secondary Water Systems

Utah is unique in that many communities have secondary water systems. These systems deliver untreated water for irrigating lawns and gardens. Users of the secondary system tend to over use water because these systems are not metered and only one flat low seasonal fee is charged regardless of how much water is used. Thus, there is very little incentive to reduce water use.

**If water is so precious in our state why do we use so much?**



*Inefficient watering means higher water use*

### Over-Watering

Over-watering of landscapes is a problem among residents in Utah because of the lack of understanding how much water is actually required to maintain healthy plants. There are three techniques that can be used to irrigate lawns and gardens, by hose, manual sprinklers or automatic sprinklers. Studies have shown that people who use automatic sprinklers over water their landscapes by about 30% with the majority of the over watering occurring in the spring and fall months.

### Water Prices and Rate Structures

Because of the low cost of water in Utah, people are not as likely to be concerned with water losses due to problems with their sprinkler systems or leaks in their homes. This "wasting" of water may not significantly raise their individual water bills. Hence, there has been less of a financial incentive for residents to adjust their outside watering practices or think of other ways to conserve.