

Water Conservation: How is it Helping Lubbock?

Dear Customer:



This insert is the fourth in a series that is provided to inform you about our water and sewer services, major projects, and the cost to deliver these services.

The City has developed three main strategies for creating a sustainable water supply:

1) conserve water, 2) diversify water supply, and 3) reuse water where possible. For a number of years, the City of Lubbock has asked that citizens conserve water. The focus has been on eliminating the wasting of water. Since our water supplies will always be limited, conservation must remain an important water strategy for the future of Lubbock.

In only 5 years, the City of Lubbock achieved a 20 year water conservation goal because of our citizens' commitment to the effort. Water use in Lubbock has decreased by about 20 percent since 1999. That saves us about 2.6 billion gallons of water annually.

Because water revenues come from water usage, water conservation has led to a decrease in water revenues at a time when water supply projects must be funded to ensure Lubbock's future water demands are met. Therefore, water rate increases resulted in some people concluding that the City is now penalizing them for conserving water.

However, the efforts of Lubbock's citizens to conserve water have a number of significant benefits that should be considered:

First, water conservation is the right thing to do. Water is a limited resource and should not be wasted. Conserving water means doing our

part to make sure we have enough water today and for the future.

Second, conserving water means that Lubbock's existing water resources will last longer. If we conserve now, the Bailey County Well Field, which provides ground water from the Ogallala Aquifer, will last for another 30 to 40 years. The Bailey County Well Field is used to help meet peak-day water supply needs in the summer for many years. Failure to conserve means that the Bailey County Well Field could begin to fail within 5 years, costing us more money to replace this water source.

Third, conserving water means that we will actually be able to hold off on future water supply projects. One of the City's challenges now is that we are still paying for multiple water supply projects including: (1) Bailey County Well Field improvements, (2) Roberts County Well Field improvements, (3) the Lake Alan Henry Dam project, and (4) initial financing for the Lake Alan Henry water pipeline and water treatment projects.

Lastly, conservation also means we will have time to pay off the debt for major water supply projects, including the financing for the Roberts County Well Field and Lake Alan Henry pipeline, before any new water supply projects become necessary.

Few, if any, investments have a quick return. Conservation is a long term investment that ensures we have adequate water supplies now and in the future. It is an investment that can postpone the need for additional water supply projects until existing projects are paid for.

Thank you for conserving water and doing the right thing for Lubbock.

Sincerely,
City of Lubbock