

Santa Fe Changes Conservation Ordinance

In November, the Santa Fe City Council voted to amend the city's comprehensive water conservation ordinance to tighten some of the water conservation measures and make others more flexible. These changes do not affect another ordinance that addresses emergency measures taken during water shortages caused by droughts and other events.

One of the most significant changes in the comprehensive ordinance is that the city abandoned the rule that allowed landscape watering only on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday for odd-numbered addresses; and Wednesday, Friday and Sun-

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day for even-numbered addresses. (All irrigation was banned on Mondays.) Now, from May through October, land-

scape watering is allowed from 6 p.m. to 10 a.m. any day of the week. (The times have changed from the earlier 4 p.m. to 10 a.m. time frame.) Water Programs Administrator Craig O'Hare said the previous system encouraged people to water lawns on their designated day, even after rains. The city hopes the new rule will encourage people to water when plants actually need the water and not just because it is the day in which they are allowed to irrigate.

Another important change is the way that the ordinance defines "fugitive water." Fugitive water now includes water pooling onto hard surfaces, such as driveways and sidewalks, that has left its intended area of use, not just water that runs off property or down a street. Car washing with a garden hose, banned earlier, is now allowed as long as a shutoff nozzle is used.

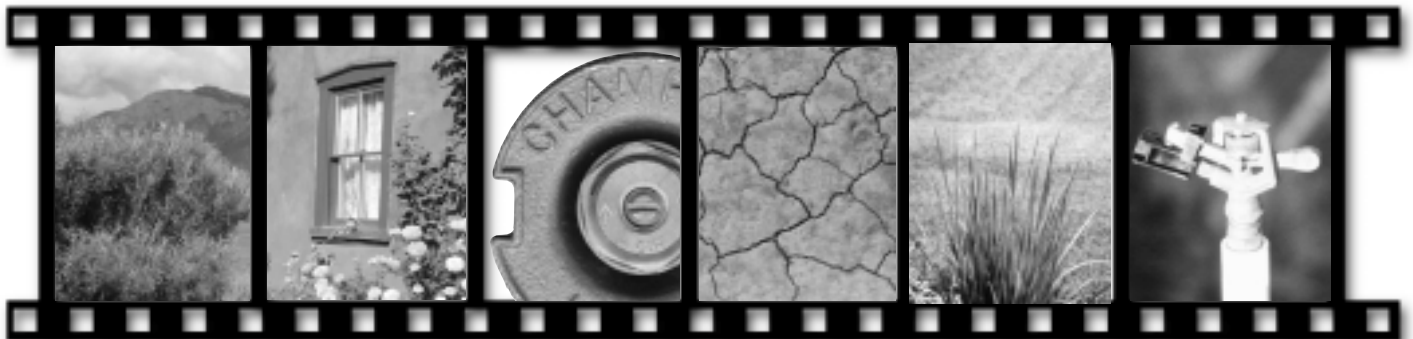
The new rules also require commercial and institutional buildings to be retrofitted with low-water-use toilets, showerheads and faucets by January 2003. Water leaks of one-quarter a gallon per minute or more must be repaired within 15 days

after notice by the city. These provisions do not apply to apartment complexes and other residences.

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Other measures require hotels and motels to withhold daily changes of towels and linens unless guests request the service, and restaurants from serving water except upon request. Restaurants are also banned from using hoses to wash down the floors of outdoor eating areas. In addition, plant nurseries are strongly encouraged to identify low-water-using plants with tags to let buyers know which plants are water thrifty.

The city also added an enforcement section to the ordinance, allowing warnings to be issued first, but following with fines ranging from \$20 for the first violation to \$200 for the fourth and subsequent violations.



Water Festival A Success

Water Festival 2001, held for fourth-grade students at the Albuquerque Convention Center in November, was the largest such festival ever held in the city. It attracted more than 1,000 students from Los Lunas, Rio Rancho and Albuquerque.

Students spent the day participating in five water education activities selected from a group of 22 activities offered at the festival. This year, students from Highland High School acted as MCs for the "Water Jeopardy" competition, Bosque School students taught a session on "Our Cottonwood Forest," and Albuquerque Academy Environment

Club members showed the fourth graders how to make an "Edible Aquifer." Festival Coordinator Susan Gorman said this arrangement had an advantage, explaining that "The younger students really pay attention to the older students because they all speak the same language."

Primary donors for the water festival were the New Mexico Environment Department, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the city of Albuquerque. Sixteen other organizations also made financial contributions, and dozens more organizations provided presenters and volunteer helpers.



Students at 2001 Water Festival learning how to make an "Edible Aquifer"

Another festival is planned for 2002. The festival's steering committee is inviting people to participate as donors, presenters or volunteer workers. For more information about how to get involved, contact Susan Gorman at 505-259-7190 or bblairb@aol.com, or visit the website at www.pioneerwest.net.

Educators Give OSE Materials Good Marks

The New Mexico Office of the State Engineer has received a positive response from teachers and educators across New Mexico to the water conservation educational materials it distributes.

During the 2000-2001 school year, the agency's Water Use and Conservation Bureau distributed over 35,000 pieces of school educational materials to approximately 230 teachers, principals and other educators in the state. To determine if these materials were meeting the water conservation education goals of the agency, as well as the needs of New Mexico teachers, a survey was sent to all educators who had received the materials.

Of the approximately 230 teachers who received the survey, 53 teachers, or 23 percent, completed and returned it. As an incentive for a quick response, the first ten teachers to return a completed survey received a free water education video.

The results of the survey were quite positive. Of the teachers responding, 98 percent said they had used the materials they were sent. When asked to rate a series of questions from one to five, with one being "I don't think so" to five being "Yes, definitely," the teachers gave the

materials a four or higher rating in all four categories of (1) whether learning had occurred, (2) if the students were motivated to take action, (3) whether the materials were easy to use, and (4) if they planned on reordering the materials.

When asked about what they liked or disliked about the materials, teacher responses were also very positive. Common compliments were that the materials were easy to get and use, they fit easily into existing programs, they were relevant to New Mexico and available in Spanish, they were geared to the appropriate grade level, and they were free. Very few negative comments were made. The common complaint was that not all of the materials were available in Spanish.

In looking to the future, the survey asked teachers what additional services would be most helpful. Sixty-two percent wanted a newsletter on current issues and activities, 58 percent requested teacher workshops, 43 percent wanted locally sponsored water festivals and events; and 19 percent noted a need for additional curriculum on a variety of topics.



Senators Introduce Conservation Bills

Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici of New Mexico, and James Inhofe, a Republican senator from Oklahoma, have introduced two bills designed to promote groundwater conservation in New Mexico and other High Plains states in which the Ogallala aquifer is located.

The aquifer is the primary source of water for thousands of farmers, ranchers and residents in eastern New Mexico. During the last two decades, intense mining of the aquifer has lowered the water table up to 40 feet in some areas. Senator Bingaman has described the aquifer as "not sustainable at this pace."

S. 1537 would provide funds to increase hydrogeologic mapping, aquifer modeling and

Bills, continued on page 3

Conservation for a Sustainable Future

February 22 and 23

Register Now!

If you have not registered for the Xeriscape conference to be held in Albuquerque February 22 and 23, do so now. The registration deadline is February 12.

"Conservation for a Sustainable Future" is the theme for the conference, which will present seminars and workshops on a wide variety of topics, including sustainable planning, landscape architecture, architecture, planning a xeriscape demonstration garden, water harvesting, and planning perennial gardens in a high desert climate. A xeriscape fair and trade show will run concurrently with the scheduled seminars and presentations.

Featured speakers will be former Senator Paul Simon, author of *Tapped Out*, a best-selling book about the impending global water crisis, and Peter Warshall, editor of the *Whole Earth Catalog* magazine and a well-respected environmental advocate.



Paul Simon

The registration fee is \$100, which includes lunch and refreshments both days, conference materials, and access to the Xeriscape Fair and Trade Show. All events on Saturday are free to the general public. They will include "how-to" sessions, along with a Children's Corner with hands-on activities for children of all ages.

For more information about the conference, call 505-341-5743 or visit www.xeriscapenm.com.

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groundwater monitoring of the aquifer, and establish a High Plains Aquifer Coordination Council to oversee these efforts, evaluate current programs and make recommendations regarding policy changes. A section of the bill would also provide funds to High Plains states

Study Shows Laundry Rooms Use Less

Common area laundry rooms are 3.3 times more efficient.

A study commissioned by the Multi-housing Laundry Association shows that apartment residents with clothes washers in their individual units used 3.3 times more water for laundry than residents using coin-operated clothes washers in common laundry rooms of apartment complexes.

The in-unit washers used 11,804 gallons of water per apartment unit per year, and the coin-operated machines in common laundry rooms used 3,588 gallons of water per apartment unit per year, resulting in a savings of 8,216 gallons of water a year by the common-area washers.

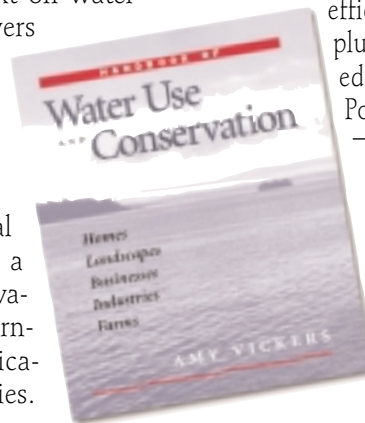
The study, in which 191 in-unit washers and 50 common-area machines were metered, was conducted in eight apartment buildings in four cities across the U.S. According to the National Multi-housing Council and the National Apartment Association, more than 15 million American households, totaling approximately 32 million people, are apartments.

For a copy of the study report, contact the association at 800-380-3652 or visit the website at www.laundrywise.com.

Long-Awaited Handbook Published

Water Use and Conservation, authored by well-known conservation leader Amy Vickers, is now available – and no water conservation professional should go without it.

This long-awaited book, totaling 446 pages, is the definitive text on water conservation. It fully covers the topic of water conservation planning and discusses a long list of conservation measures for the residential, landscape, industrial and agricultural sectors. It also includes a chapter on water conservation organizations, governmental programs, publications and product directories.



The author is an engineer with an independent consulting practice specializing in water conservation and integrated resources management, and has overseen water conservation projects in the United States, England and Eastern Europe. Vickers also authored the federal water efficiency standards for plumbing fixtures adopted in the U.S. Energy Policy Act of 1992.

The book sells for \$99.95 and is distributed by WaterPlow Press in Amherst, Massachusetts. To order, go to www.waterplowpress.com, phone 413-253-1520 or fax 413-253-1521.

to develop water conservation educational programs for agricultural producers and groups, state and local decision makers, and elementary and secondary students.

S. 1538 would provide funds and technical assistance to states, conservation districts, tribes, and other political sub-

divisions for the development of comprehensive groundwater conservation plans. Cost-share provisions in the bill would make funds available to agricultural producers for making improvements in structural or land management practices that would result in quantifiable groundwater savings.

New Curriculum Centers on Rio Grande/Rio Bravo

Discover a Watershed: The Rio Grande/Rio Bravo Educators Guide is the newest publication in the Discover a Watershed series from The Watercourse/International Project WET. Its publication is the result of a collaborative effort among thousands of educators, students, resources managers, scientists, and others from both Mexico and the United States.

The curriculum provides educators and students from grade six through university level with opportunities to investigate the hydrology, geology, geography, plants, fish and wildlife, culture, history, or contemporary issues of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo watershed, and includes activities on water conservation topics. It contains a substantial reference section and a collection of innovative activities that are easy to use, interactive, challenging, and fun.

The activities are presented according to a proven and practical format for classroom use and are entirely self-contained. They can

provide a six- to eight-week course of study, or they can be used individually to supplement an existing course.

A Spanish edition of the curriculum will be available in the near future. To order the English edition of *Discover a Watershed: The Rio Grande/Rio Bravo Educators Guide*, contact Linda Hveem at The Watercourse/International Project WET at 406-994-1916. The cost is \$23.95 each when ordering 1 to 15 books, or \$306.56 for a case of 16 books.

If you are interested in hosting a teacher workshop in New Mexico, please contact Bryan Swain, New Mexico Project WET Coordinator at 800-523-5996.



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