



# PSC Water Currents

The water conservation and efficiency newsletter of the  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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**December 5 , 2013**

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## **Wisconsin WaterSense Partners Honored for Their Contributions**

In 2007, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began recognizing outstanding work in the field of water efficiency through its WaterSense Partner of the Year awards program. 2013 award winners were announced at this year's WaterSmart Innovations Conference (to see presentations from the conference, visit <http://www.watersmartinnovations.com/schedule-sessionslist.php?year=2013>) and included two Wisconsin WaterSense partners: [Kohler Co.](#) and the [PSC](#). "All of our WaterSense partners have taken steps to reduce our nation's water use, but several stood out in 2012 for their commitment to the WaterSense program and collaborative efforts to promote WaterSense-labeled products, new homes and outreach and educational programs," said EPA's acting Assistant Administrator for Water Nancy Stoner. "We are pleased to honor these organizations which have consistently supported our mission to protect the future of our nation's water supply."

In recognition of the company's continuous high level of support, Kohler Co. received one of the first-ever WaterSense Sustained Excellence awards. Kohler, a three-time WaterSense Manufacturer Partner of the Year and two-time Excellence Award winner, used online

promotions, social media, and traditional advertising, as well as the company's presence at conferences, trade shows, and industry events to help keep the WaterSense brand in the spotlight across the country. Kohler also participated in The Home Depot's 2012 Earth Day Celebration in New York City, where its team demonstrated the flushing performance of a WaterSense labeled toilet in the middle of Times Square to thousands of consumers.

The PSC received its second WaterSense Excellence award, this year for education and outreach. In partnership with Wisconsin's public water utilities and other water industry representatives, the PSC works to spread the word about water efficiency and the WaterSense program across the state. In 2012, PSCW staff gave presentations at trade shows, conferences, and throughout communities, extolling the benefits of the WaterSense partnership. In order to increase public awareness of the WaterSense brand, the PSC promoted the program via social media, press releases, newsletters, and radio advertisements. The list of Wisconsin's WaterSense partners includes water and wastewater utilities, local and state governmental entities, irrigation specialists, trade associations, manufacturers, non-profit organizations and retailers. For more information on how your organization can become a partner in promoting water efficiency, visit the [WaterSense website](#).

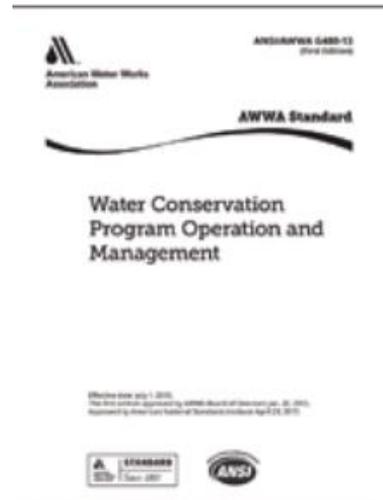
## **Technical Guidance on Efficiency Improvement Strategies Now Available**

Improving efficiency in water utility operations can provide a wide range of benefits to utilities, consumers, businesses and the community as a whole. EPA recently published a series of [technical guidance documents](#) targeted at small and medium sized public water systems, state drinking water programs, and technical assistance providers that interact with the water systems. These documents include information on developing and implementing management strategies and making wise investments in water and energy efficiency to help minimize cost and ensure water supply availability. Topics include water audits, water loss control, and water efficiency, strategies for saving energy, and strategies for dealing with water availability and variability.

## **AWWA Releases Voluntary Water Conservation Standard**

The new G480 Water Conservation Program Operation and Management Standard from the American Water Works Association (AWWA) specifies elements that are critical to include in an effective water conservation program and describes operations that can improve water use on the supply side through distribution system management and on the demand side through customer billing and education practices. The G480 Standard includes the following elements:

- Dedicated staff for conservation efforts (point of contact)
- Conservation planning
- Integrated resources planning
- Public information and education
- Water waste ordinance
- Universal metering practices
- Non-promotional water rate
- Monthly or bi-monthly billing based on metered use
- Landscape efficiency program
- Water loss control program



Through publication of its G-series, AWWA hopes to foster excellence in water utility operations through self- and peer-evaluation that encourages continuous improvement. AWWA anticipates developing a guidebook to assist water utilities in adopting and complying with the G480 standard. To purchase a copy of the AWWA G480 Standard, visit the [Alliance for Water Efficiency \(AWE\) website](#). A portion of all sales of the G480 standard directed from this site will go to support AWE programs and services.

## News on Water-Energy Nexus Issues

A number of key reports and programs on water-energy issues became available over the past several months. The [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy \(ACEEE\)](#)'s [Saving Water and Energy Together: Helping Utilities Build Better Programs](#) provides recommendations on program models and frameworks that utilities can use to save both water and energy. In another endeavor, the [Johnson Foundation at Wingspread](#) brought together a range of experts to discuss ways to foster collaboration between the water, wastewater, and electric power industries. The resulting report, [Building Resilient Utilities: How Water and Electric Utilities Can Co-Create Their Futures](#), describes how innovations in technology and enhanced energy efficiency offer opportunities to reduce significantly or eliminate net energy use while also achieving greater nutrient recovery and more efficient water use. The report recommends new approaches for stronger coordination between the water and electric power sectors.

The Pacific Institute's [Coordinating Efficiency Programs in California](#) provides case studies that describe a range of programs, including those that save hot water indoors (clothes washers) and those that save cold water outdoors (efficient landscaping), to achieve water and energy efficiency goals jointly. The report provides a series of recommendations for water and energy utilities to promote coordinated programs that address customer end-use efficiencies. Closer to home, [Saving Energy and Water through State Programs for Clothes Washer Replacement in the Great Lakes Region](#) examines existing residential and commercial clothes washer markets and evaluates the technical and economic potential for water and energy savings in various clothes washer markets in the Great Lakes states.

Published earlier this month, ACEEE's [Apartment Hunters: Programs Searching for Energy Savings in Multifamily Buildings](#) recommends ten best practices for designing and implementing effective multifamily programs and includes examples and case studies of leading programs. While focused on energy savings, the results from these programs may provide water utilities with ideas for achieving water savings and reaching new customers through water fixture replacement and rebate programs.

Through recent developments in the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) (USGBC)'s LEED green building certification program, the building certification world took a step closer toward fostering integrative design for water and energy use. Since 2000, the number of global commercial projects certified under the LEED program has gone from zero to nearly 60,000. The latest [LEED User Guide](#) includes a number of elements focused on water use. These elements include new requirements that projects include building-level metering, meet outdoor water use reduction targets of thirty percent, and provide water meter data to the USGBC for five years.

## New Ideas for Fix a Leak Week

Is your community or organization planning a race to promote 2014's Fix a Leak Week? The "Chasing Leaks" logo and other new tools are now available on the [WaterSense partner website](#) to assist you in planning your event.



Road races are a popular way to generate interest and participants in support of an issue, whether it's fixing leaks, protecting a watershed, or promoting a rebate program. The partner website includes very specific instructions, complete with timeline and tips, for organizing a successful race in your area. While planning your event, consider including [NeverWaste water bottles](#) in your list of prizes. Part of a national campaign to build awareness about the impact of wasting water, the stainless steel, double-walled, vacuum-insulated bottle is covered with fun facts about the amount of water we waste. If you choose to use these bottles as a prize, your race winners will be the proud owners of a bottle that not only is sturdy and functional but also won second place in the first International Carafe Contest at the [2013 IWA Efficiency Conference in Paris](#).

### About this newsletter

Water Currents is published by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to provide information about water conservation-related news and events in Wisconsin. The newsletter is compiled and edited by Denise Schmidt, PSC Water Conservation Coordinator, (608) 266-1282.



To submit information for consideration in future newsletters, send an email to [Denise Schmidt](#). Include your name, organization, and contact information in the body of the message.

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