



# PSC Water Currents

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

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## **In This Issue**

[PSC Approves Irrigation Rates for River Falls Utility](#)

[Madison Wins National Water Conservation Challenge](#)

[Wisconsin Receives B- for Water Conservation Efforts](#)

[MMSD Extends Toilet Rebate Program](#)

[Apartments and Condos Eligible for WaterSense™ Label](#)

## **PSC Approves Irrigation Rates for River Falls Utility**

On April 9, 2012, the PSC approved conservation-oriented irrigation rates for the River Falls Municipal Utility. The special "irrigation only" rate applies to those customers who have a second meter dedicated to outdoor water use. The utility currently has 495 irrigation customers, and while these customers avoid sewer charges on water used for landscaping, they are charged at a higher rate for their water usage. The utility's irrigation rate is \$2.05 per 1,000 gallons, compared to the residential customer charge of \$1.40 per 1,000 gallons. The irrigation rate adds to the City's is intended to reduce demand peaks associated with lawn watering during the summer months. For more information about implementing conservation rates or other water efficiency programs in your community, visit: <http://psc.wi.gov/conservation/water/wc-utilities.htm>.

## **Madison Wins National Water Conservation Challenge**

The City of Madison was recently recognized as one of the 12 most "water-wise" cities in the country. The 2012 National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation was designed to encourage residents to reduce their water use between March 30 and April 30 by making a free, online commitment at MyWaterPledge.com. Overall, residents from more than 1,000 U.S. cities pledged to reduce their water use by nearly 6 billion gallons. Cities, grouped by size and region, with the

highest percentage of people to make water saving pledges within their ZIP code area were deemed the winners. Madison Mayor Paul Soglin attributes Madison's success to its efforts to promote sustainability and water conservation through such programs as the Water Utility's toilet rebate. The challenge was sponsored by the Wyland Foundation, Toyota, Water Sense, and other public and private partners in honor of the 40th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act. For more information about Madison's water conservation programs, visit:

[..http://www.cityofmadison.com/water/](http://www.cityofmadison.com/water/)

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## **Wisconsin Receives B- for Water Conservation Efforts**

The Alliance for Water Efficiency and the Environmental Law Institute recently released the results of a research effort that surveyed water efficiency and conservation policies and laws throughout the 50 states. The Water Efficiency and Conservation State Scorecard: An Assessment of Laws and Policies used results of a 20-question survey to assign grades to each state's water efficiency and conservation policies. The research, funded in part by a grant from the Turner Foundation, examined laws and policies such as plumbing fixture standards, water loss control rules, conservation planning and program implementation, volumetric billing for water, conservation requirements related to water rights, funding sources for water efficiency and conservation programs, and technical assistance and other informational resources. While actual implementation of conservation programs is not evaluated in this report, AWE may incorporate this analysis in future revisions of the report.

Wisconsin's grade of B- was the highest among all Great Lakes states. As a group, the 50 states averaged a "C" grade. According to AWE, the report is intended to reveal opportunity where policies are absent or lacking strength. In addition, the report highlights policy examples which can potentially serve as models for new initiatives. A full breakdown of the AWE scores, along with question-by-question detail for each state, can be viewed in the report at:

<http://allianceforwaterefficiency.org/final-scorecard.aspx>.

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## **MMSD Extends Toilet Rebate Program**

Residents in Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's service area still have time to save significant money on a high efficiency, water saving toilet through MMSD's instant rebate program. Customers looking to save money and water can purchase 1.28-gallon toilets for \$50 (Kohler's Wellworth model) or \$75 (Sterling's Stinson model), plus tax. The two models available under this instant rebate offer can be found at Ferguson Bath, Kitchen and Lighting Gallery, 2030 South 116th Street, West Allis. Sales are limited to two toilets per customer and no more than two per household. No coupon or rebate form is necessary. For more information, visit:

[.http://v3.mmsd.com/toiletrebate2011.aspx](http://v3.mmsd.com/toiletrebate2011.aspx)

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## Apartments and Condos Eligible for WaterSense™ Label

By allowing new apartment and condominium units to earn the WaterSense label, EPA's modified specification for new homes will allow even more people to enjoy the comforts of home while saving water inside and out. After January 1, 2013, individual units in new residential buildings will be eligible to earn the label. In addition, builders must ensure that the common areas of these buildings meet specific indoor and outdoor criteria.

Other revisions to specifications for all new WaterSense-labeled homes, be they single- or multi-family units, include requirements that builders of WaterSense-labeled homes use EPA's Water Budget Tool to inform their landscape design. An easy-to-use, interactive version is available on the WaterSense website. Another new landscape-related requirement specifies that an irrigation system with a weather-based irrigation controller used for lawn watering must be a WaterSense-labeled model. WaterSense-labeled controllers act like a thermostat for your lawn, using local weather data to determine when and how much to water. The new showerhead specification for WaterSense homes requires that they be WaterSense-labeled models using 2.0 gallons per minute or less. WaterSense labeled showerheads save homeowners more than 2,300 gallons of water and 300 kilowatt-hours of energy per year. For more information on WaterSense-labeled new homes, visit: [http://epa.gov/watersense/new\\_homes/homes\\_final.html](http://epa.gov/watersense/new_homes/homes_final.html)

### 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](mailto:Denise.Schmidt@psc.wisconsin.gov). Include your name, organization, and contact information in the body of the message.

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