

Education and outreach

Updated January 12, 2017

Municipal examples

Municipality	Initiative
City of Brooks	<p>Water-Wise Plant Tag Program The City of Brooks rolled out a new water-wise plant tagging program in 2015 designed to educate and encourage residents to purchase plants that aid in water conservation. Any plant that is native to the Brooks area, or requires little watering, will be marked with a special tag.</p> <p>The plants included in the program have the added benefits of requiring less mowing, fertilizing and weeding; look unique when compared to common turf landscape, and providing colour, variety and beauty – even in the winter. For more information, visit the Brooks website.</p> <p>Water Use Scorecard The City provides residents with the opportunity to assess where and how they use water and their water use efficiency with a Water Use Scorecard. Citizens can then check out the City's brochure, 100 Ways to Conserve Water, for ideas on how to improve their score.</p> <p>Brooks adapted their scorecard from one developed by the City of Calgary's Water Services Department. Overall the City's Water Awareness program leverages resources available through other Cities, the Federal and Provincial Government and the American Water Works Association. The Water Awareness program also uses the Brooks Public Library to distribute publications on xeriscaping. Given the abundance of information available on water conservation, there is no need for each municipality to spend limited time and money on scraping together "new" information and resources, but it is important for each municipality to adapt the information to ensure it reflects their climate, infrastructure and culture.</p> <p>Yellowfish Road Program The City's Environmental Advisory Committee has partnered with Trout Unlimited Canada to bring the Yellowfish Road Program to Brooks. A variety of youth groups are encouraged to sign out painting kits and paint yellow fish on the storm drains throughout Brooks to remind residents of where the water and items that get washed down the storm drains end up. The participants also go door to door handing out fish shaped brochures with information about water quality and protecting the downstream fish habitats. The program is highly educational and targets both children and residents.</p> <p>For more information, email: yellowfish@yellowfishroad.org.</p> <p>Xeriscaping The City's Environmental Advisory Committee and Parks Services Department recently partnered with local Girl Guides to design and plant two flower bed in a City Park with natural and water wise plants. The Xeriscaping Demo Bed is in a highly</p>

	<p>visible area and residents are encouraged to look at the bed to understand how easy xeriscaping can be, and how much water we can be saved.</p> <p>In addition, Brooks has created a “Xeriscaping at Home” document that gives residents information on how to plan, design, and create a xeriscaped landscape on their property.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p>
<p>City of Calgary</p>	<p>Water Services Website Calgary’s Water Services Website www.calgary.ca/waterservices provides information on water quality and quantity. It includes information on everything from bylaws and construction projects to youth education. Although much of the information is specifically written for a Calgary audience there are a great deal of universal tips and information that other municipalities may want to borrow for their own sites.</p> <p>The site also includes a water conservation section that highlights the importance of conserving water, how the city manages water resources, and success stories from their residents.</p> <p>Outreach at Events and Workshops City staff attend trade shows, summer festivals and community events throughout the year to promote water conservation and provide information and tools to residents. Information and tools are coordinated to align with larger campaigns and seasonal customer activities. Workshops are also provided in partnership with the Calgary Horticultural Society and Green Calgary.</p> <p>Click here for more information on events and workshops.</p> <p>Water School and Community Programs The City also works with community partners to provide educational opportunities for Calgary schools and youth organizations. Various community groups work with the City to allow students to explore and understand the local watershed and water issues. Students also have the opportunity to participate in hands-on learning by testing water as it flows along the Elbow River and touring wastewater treatment facilities.</p> <p>Click here for more information on school and youth programs.</p> <p>Connecting to Multi-Family Residents When looking at multifamily water use the City of Calgary decided to hold focus groups to identify barriers to water conservation and what has already been done. The focus groups made it clear what was missing, who the decision makers are and where they would need to be targeted. The result was that the City of Calgary made efforts to work closer with the associations that deal with the Multi Family sector (The Calgary Apartment Association and the Canada Condominium Institute.) Presentations were made and events were attended to build a stronger relationship between The City and these customers. A brochure was created to explain why conservation is important, show the return on investment for efficient fixtures, answer questions raised during consultations and provide Calgary specific information and examples.</p>

	<p>Calgary's Water Services now has a webpage dedicated to providing information on how Multi-Family Residents can Tap into Water Conservation.</p>
<p>City of Camrose</p>	<p>Presentations</p> <p>The City of Camrose has an active outreach program. The City provides its residents with a Guide to Water Conservation in Camrose. Groups can also book a presentation to learn more about water conservation. Staff from the City often join the city's water conservation mascot Wayne Drop at community events to further spread the information about water conservation.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p>
<p>City of Edmonton (EPCOR Water Services)</p>	<p>EPCOR has developed several community outreach initiatives to spread information and enthusiasm about water conservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Bucket Crew: students and EPCOR volunteers, joined by a water drop mascot named Splash, attend various community events to educate visitors and residents on how to use water more efficiently around their homes and yards. The crew reached out to the community through in-person communication, ads, and YouTube how-to videos that offer tips for fixing leaking toilets and taps. Learn more about the Blue Bucket Crew here. • Online home audit tools: A simple water calculator and an apartment water calculator are provided to calculate how much water is used and wasted every day, month, year. The calculators can be found here. <p>Commercial Efficiency Awareness</p> <p>Some of the commercial efficiency awareness programs that EPCOR has undertaken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness program for mid-sized companies – mail outs and information in EPCOR newsletter • An awareness program for once-through cooling units in large buildings – article distributed through Business Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) • A restaurant toilet retrofit and awareness program – mail out and a low flow toilet discount for smaller restaurants • A restaurant awareness program about efficient spray rinse nozzles • A Standard Industrial Classification code analysis – analyzed commercial customer groups and determined if there were any discernible water consumption patterns within different commercial businesses
<p>Medicine Hat</p>	<p>Water Utility Webpage</p> <p>The water utility webpage has links to water initiatives, water stewardship, and water conservation.</p>
<p>Red Deer</p>	<p>Municipal Conservation Initiatives</p> <p>Red Deer has created an informational water site that allows site users to easily navigate information about water conservation. In particular, the site outlines information about water treatment, outdoor water use, water efficient appliances, water meter replacement programs, and tips on how to manage water bills.</p> <p>Click here to view the Red Deer water site.</p>

<p>Strathcona County</p>	<p>Online Water Calculator Residents can use the online water calculator to compare their water use to the average household in the community. In addition, this resource provides tips for water saving.</p> <p>Click here to access the calculator.</p> <p>Water Conservation Programs Strathcona County has a number of municipal water programs that help educate the public about environmental issues and solutions. Examples include indoor, outdoor, and stormwater education, as well as community events like "Pond Parties."</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p>
<p>Town of Athabasca</p>	<p>Money-saving Water Conservation Tips</p> <p><i>A Conserving Water in Your Home</i> brochure was distributed to all residents with their utility bill. Copies of the brochure are also available at the Town Office and may be available at various locations around town.</p> <p>The brochure contains suggestions and recommendations for reducing water use throughout the home.</p> <p>Click here for more information</p>
<p>Town of Cochrane</p>	<p>Water Matters Brochure In 2008, the Town published a brochure called "Water Matters" which explained how water is managed in Cochrane and outlined plans for ensuring an adequate water supply in the future. Throughout the year, more information is published in local newspapers, sometimes in specific articles or in the "Municipal Matters" feature. Other materials, including copies of reports and links to relevant web sites, are provided on the Town of Cochrane website.</p> <p>Water Conservation Officers In 2008, Cochrane began hiring seasonal WCO's who would focus 75% of their time on education and communication and 25% of their time on bylaw enforcement. A key component of the WCO job was community outreach at the weekly Farmers' Market, presentations at kids' summer camps, and attendance at special events such as Canada Day. The WCOs spoke with many Cochrane and area residents, provided informational pamphlets and brochures, and offered free low flow shower heads, low flow faucet aerators, outdoor tap timers, leak detection tabs, and other rewards for water conservation.</p> <p>The WCOs were very popular at the kids' summer camps, especially when the water rifles came out so children could see exactly how much water it took to fill a measuring cup to one inch deep – the amount of water the average lawn might need in a week during dry conditions. Other games and challenges were equally exciting for the WCOs and the campers, all of whom ended up quite wet on the hottest days of the summer. Water Conservation Initiative t-shirts were welcome give-aways, and served to remind the children and their parents of the need to use water wisely.</p>

	<p>More information about the WCO program is available in Cochrane's Water Conservation Strategy.</p>
<p>Town of Okotoks</p>	<p>Summer Conservation Educators</p> <p>The Town of Okotoks has coordinated the Summer Conservation Educator Program for the past decade to increase awareness, understanding and participation in achieving the Sustainable Okotoks targets associated with reducing household water use and waste production. Between the months of May to September, five Conservation Educators visit approximately 1,000 households and 100 businesses educating the community on water and energy conservation and waste management.</p> <p>The Educators also attend all summer community events and provide conservation presentations to children at schools and summer day camps. The team works closely with several Town Business Centres including Parks, Resource Recovery and Community Programs as well as EPCOR Water Services to coordinate initiatives.</p> <p>Click here for more information on the Conservation Educators Program</p>