

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

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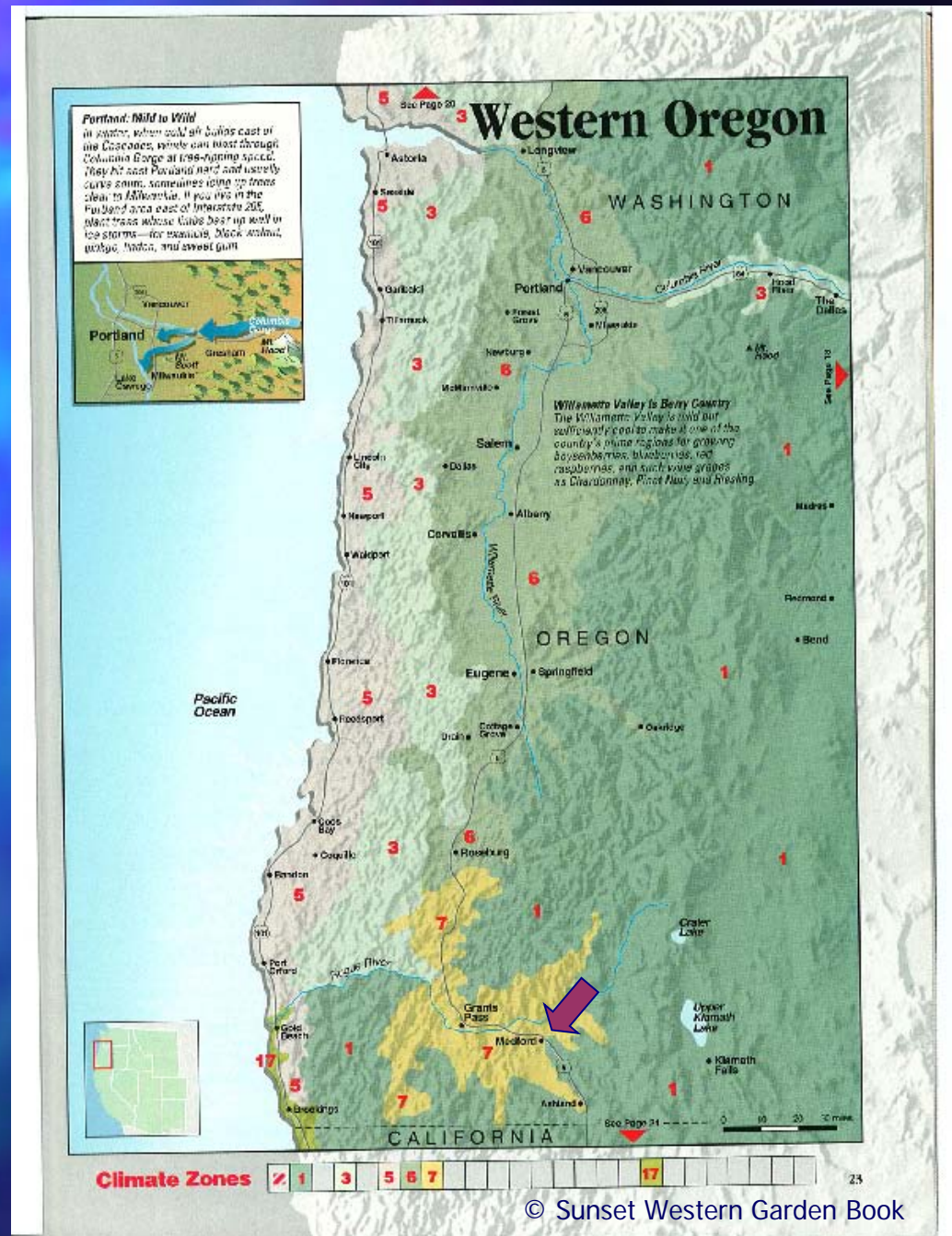
Selling Conservation Without a Crisis

Laura Hodnett
Public Information Coordinator
Medford Water Commission
Laura.Hodnett@cityofmedford.org

2010 WaterSmart Innovations Conference

Location; Medford, Oregon

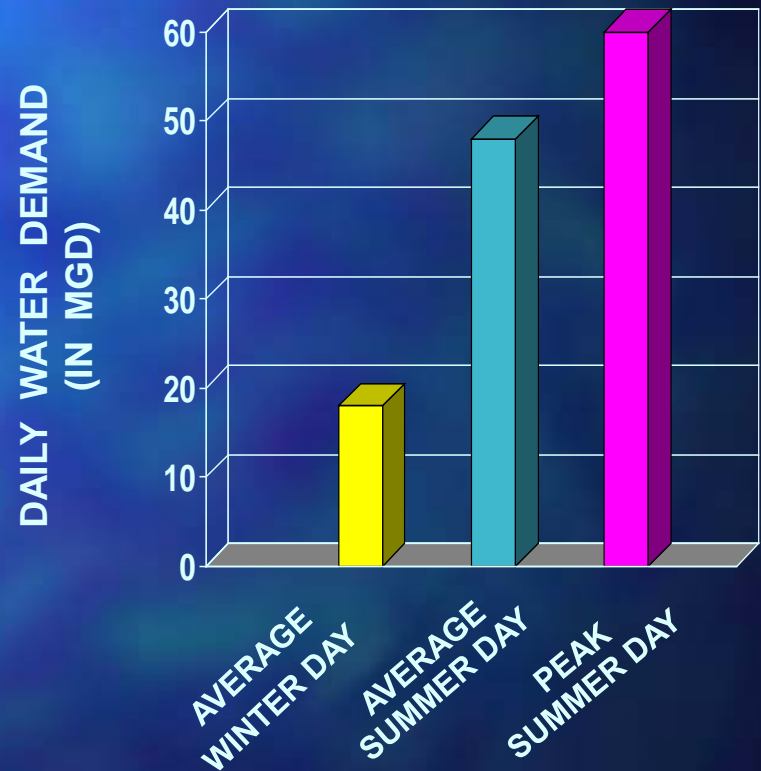
- Located in southwest Oregon, 25 miles north of California
- "Mediterranean" climate; summer temperatures: high 80s to low 100s
- Rainfall about 20" per year; minimal rain from mid-June through mid-October



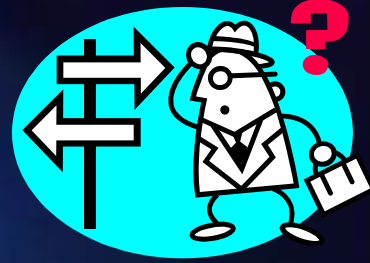
Overview;

Medford Water Commission

- Summer water use is triple winter levels
- Irrigation systems standard in all new construction;
- Population served: 130,000 (retail and wholesale)
- Largest potable water supplier within 150 miles; minimal opportunity for joint conservation projects with others



The Negative Side to Positive Utility Attributes



Strong financial condition and reliable water resources can inhibit conservation

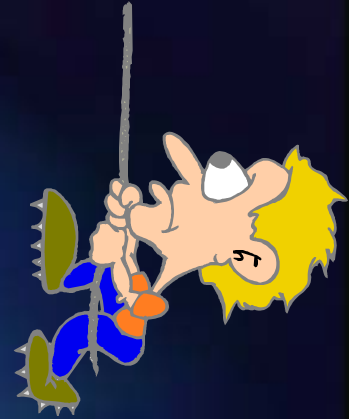
- 💧 Ample water rights for at least 30 years; have never had to implement curtailment
- 💧 MWC is debt free
- 💧 Primary water supply is very low cost, so rates very low



So Why Conserve ?

- Conservation program initiated 1992; region was in drought, though MWC's supplies were sufficient
- BUT recognized that modest actions begun early could delay or avert severe measures later
- Largely envisioned as a PR program that would inspire customers
- Management not ready for most ideas staff gleaned from early conservation conferences and networking
- 18 years later: Program still not ground-breaking, but it's come a long way

Many Lessons Learned



Be patient, but persistent

- 💧 Absent a crisis, conservation may not be seen as important as other operational issues
- 💧 It's OK to lose some battles on the way to winning the war
- 💧 May have to present multiple versions of some proposals over several years to slowly build support

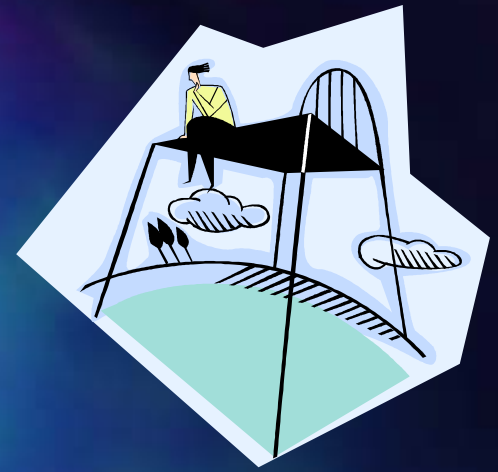
Moving Forward



Build your expertise and credibility

- 💧 Take training and network with others
 - Other conservation professionals
 - "Green industry"
- 💧 Become familiar with your utility's consumption data (trends, peaking, per capita usage, customer groups)
- 💧 Learn how your utility operates, and how conservation objectives might impact other divisions

Maintaining Perspective



Keep expectations modest

- 💧 Can be better to pursue part of a goal than shoot for the stars and get turned down
- 💧 Avoid taking on more than you can handle; smaller or fewer successful projects often a better approach
- 💧 "Test the waters" before jumping in; do smaller pilot programs to enable assessment before expanding



Defining Direction

Know your policy makers

- 💧 Convince management staff first; they will be looked to for guidance by boards
- 💧 Water utility management staff often engineers; load up on facts and figures to sell your proposals
- 💧 Seek ways to capitalize on supportive board members and anticipate objections of opponents

Remember the Bottom Line; the Budget

Some actions can have minimal cost

- 💧 Rate structure modifications
- 💧 Befriend your Web site manager
- 💧 Regulations for new construction
 - Landscape guidelines
 - Pressure management



Bill Inserts / Newsletters; Low Cost “Advertising”

- 💧 Widespread delivery for minimal additional cost
- 💧 Like all PR efforts, some won't be read
- 💧 Some customers DO read though; was very effective in launching a toilet rebate program



Waterlines
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MEDFORD WATER COMMISSION

1 TANKING OLD TOILETS

No doubt toilets are high on the list of household fixtures that most people would prefer to ignore. However, in an average home with older plumbing fixtures, nearly a third of the water used indoors is flushed down these fixtures. As a result, we are initiating a program to help homeowners replace their old relics with new models.

It's now been fifteen years since "low flow" toilets became standard in the market place. While many models worked well from the start, the ones people heard about and remember were the ones that challenged their owners' patience. Performance testing eventually became routine, however it was often hard for consumers to learn the test results before buying.

With the initiation of a new national program known as WaterSense®, obtaining a new toilet that is both extra efficient and has passed performance tests is easier than ever. And to "sweeten the pot," we're now offering rebates to our single family residential customers when they install WaterSense qualified models.

So why should you be interested? Aside from the fact that it can just be nice to have something new, with the rebate some models can be purchased with little to no end cost to you. Once installed, the new toilets will then provide years of savings on water charges. Just how much depends on the age of your current toilet and the number of family members using it. With WaterSense certified toilets using no more than 1.3 gallons per flush, you'll flush 60% less water than a toilet that's about 15-30 years old. Replacing even

Toilet tidbits

A constantly running toilet can waste more than 200 gallons of water every day.

You'll flush 60 percent less water down the drain by replacing a 1990s toilet with a WaterSense model.

For more information about the WaterSense program check out the US Environmental Protection Agency's Web site: www.epa.gov/watersense/

Committed to:
Excellence in Water Quality
Professionalism
Customer Service
System Reliability

Contact Us:
200 South My Street, Room 177
Medford, OR 97501
541-776-2430
ed@medfordwater.com or
www.medfordwater.org

look for
WaterSense
EPA Certified

New program offers rebates for installation of WaterSense toilets

The Bill Itself; Often an Untapped Opportunity

- 💧 Readership of the bill itself often better than inserts
- 💧 Consumption graphs fairly common
- 💧 We add Timely Tips as poems; gives messages in a fun format.

MEDFORD UTILITY BILL

ACCOUNT #: [REDACTED]
SERVICE DATES: 06/09 to 07/12
DAY/ROUTE/SEQ: 071/486000
SERVICE ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
CURRENT DUE DATE: JUL 27, 2010
TOTAL DUE: 17.79

MEDFORD OR 97501

Questions about your bill:
City of Medford Charges: (541) 774-2600
Medford Water Commission Charges: (541) 774-2430
(CLOSING)

Your Balance:
Previous Billing: 38.61
Payments/Credits: .00
Adjustments: .00
Current Monthly Total: 20.82-
TOTAL DUE: 17.79

Detailed Account Information:
CITY OF MEDFORD CHARGES - (541) 774-2600 - www.ci.medford.or.us

STREET	CHARGE
SEWER	11.65
STORM DRAIN	5.60
STREET FEE	7.71
PARKS FEE	2.95
PUBLIC SAFETY	2.60

CITY OF MEDFORD SUBTOTAL: 30.51

MEDFORD WATER COMMISSION CHARGES - (541) 774-2430 - www.medfordwater.org

SITE CT	METER READING	CALCULATED	CHARGE
WATER	0000553	3	8.87
DEPOSIT	07/22/09		80.00-

MEDFORD WATER COMMISSION SUBTOTAL: 51.33-
CURRENT MONTH TOTAL: 20.82-

Timely Tips:
Sprinkle what's needed
For your garden to grow
To determine how much
Call 541-774-2480

When you water too much
There's also more to pay
And sprinkling too long
Overwhelms our soils of clay

Your Water Usage Profile:
Log on to MWAC's Web site (medfordwater.org)
for a detailed overview of your usage

It's easy to pay with Auto Pay!
See enrollment form on reverse side

Pay an Annual Estimated Payment of 435.25
and Receive a 3 1/2% credit of 15.79

See other side for more information

MEDFORD UTILITY BILL
c/o MEDFORD WATER COMMISSION
200 S. Ivy St. - RM 177
Medford, OR 97501

(CLOSING)
ACCOUNT#: [REDACTED]
SERVICE ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
CURRENT DUE DATE: JUL 27, 2010
PREV OLS BILLING: 38.61
PAYMENTS/CREDITS: .00
ADJUSTMENTS: .00
CURRENT MONTHLY TOTAL: 20.82-
TOTAL DUE: 17.79

Medford Water Commission
200 S. Ivy St. - RM 177
Medford, OR 97501

Pay an Annual Estimated Payment of 435.25 and receive a 3 1/2% Credit of 15.79

Learn from the Trials and Successes of Others



- Without a crisis, you have luxury of learning from what others have done; don't have to blaze the trail
- Be prepared for curtailment "just in case." Have a plan and consider what has been successful – or unsuccessful – elsewhere. Examples:
 - When odd/even watering days work – or don't
 - Incorporate rate increases *during* curtailment to inspire conservation and meet revenue needs; many examples of unhappy customers when increases are imposed later

Seize Opportunities When They Arise

- May have to adjust priorities and move quickly. Examples:
 - Retrofits associated with unanticipated construction projects
 - Implementation during favorable political or management climate
- State mandates can sometimes be your friend; use them to help further your objectives
- Future high cost infrastructure projections can provide impetus for conservation



Address Potential Arguments Before They are Raised



- 💧 Convincing management and boards:
 - Show why a conservation rate structure is *fair* and correlates with costs
 - Explain how a regulatory proposal won't result in excessive hardship
- 💧 Selling customers on conservation actions:
 - Don't ignore negative history (Example: notion that efficient toilets don't work)
 - Address potential rationale for not conserving (Example: large property is excuse for high consumption)

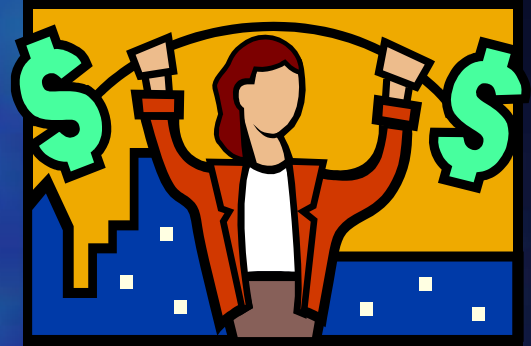
Facilitating Staff Growth on a Budget



- 💧 Seasonal employees, including college students, can be good resources; competent and low cost
- 💧 Encourage seasonal employees to return multiple years, especially for tasks with high training needs
- 💧 Sharing an employee with another division can be a means of easing into staff additions

Cost / Benefit Analyses ; Don't Get Discouraged

- 💧 When utility costs are low, few programs may “pass” a cost/benefit analysis
- 💧 May have to accept payback times for the utility that are longer than typical business models
- 💧 Some utilities base implementation decisions more on these analyses than others



Cost / Benefit Analyses ; Only One Gauge of Value

- Programs can have great PR value; positive impression on customers or just raise awareness. Difficult to quantify, but still beneficial
- Some programs can have educational value for staff (such as irrigation audits), building knowledge base and credibility



Stay Optimistic !



- 💧 Set goals, but keep expectations reasonable
- 💧 Move on from failures; sometimes you'll need to just give up, other times you may want to set aside to bring up again down the road.
- 💧 Assess your activities from time to time and celebrate your successes.



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Questions?

Comments?

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