

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

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Sprinkler's Guide to the Galaxy:

*Engaging Customers to
Sustain Water Savings*

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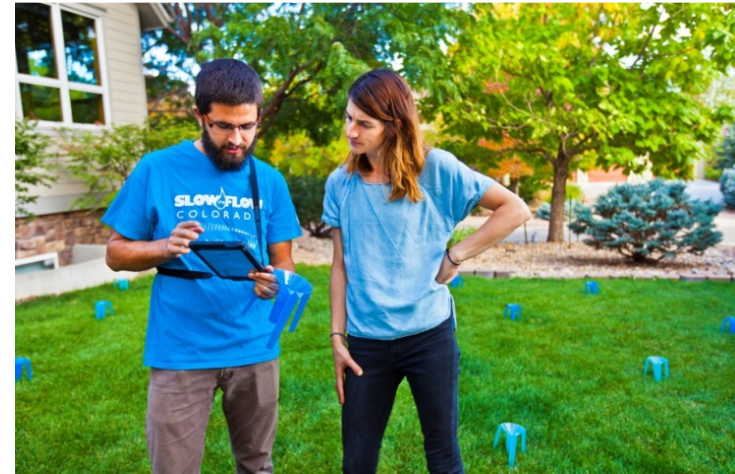
Center for ReSource Conservation

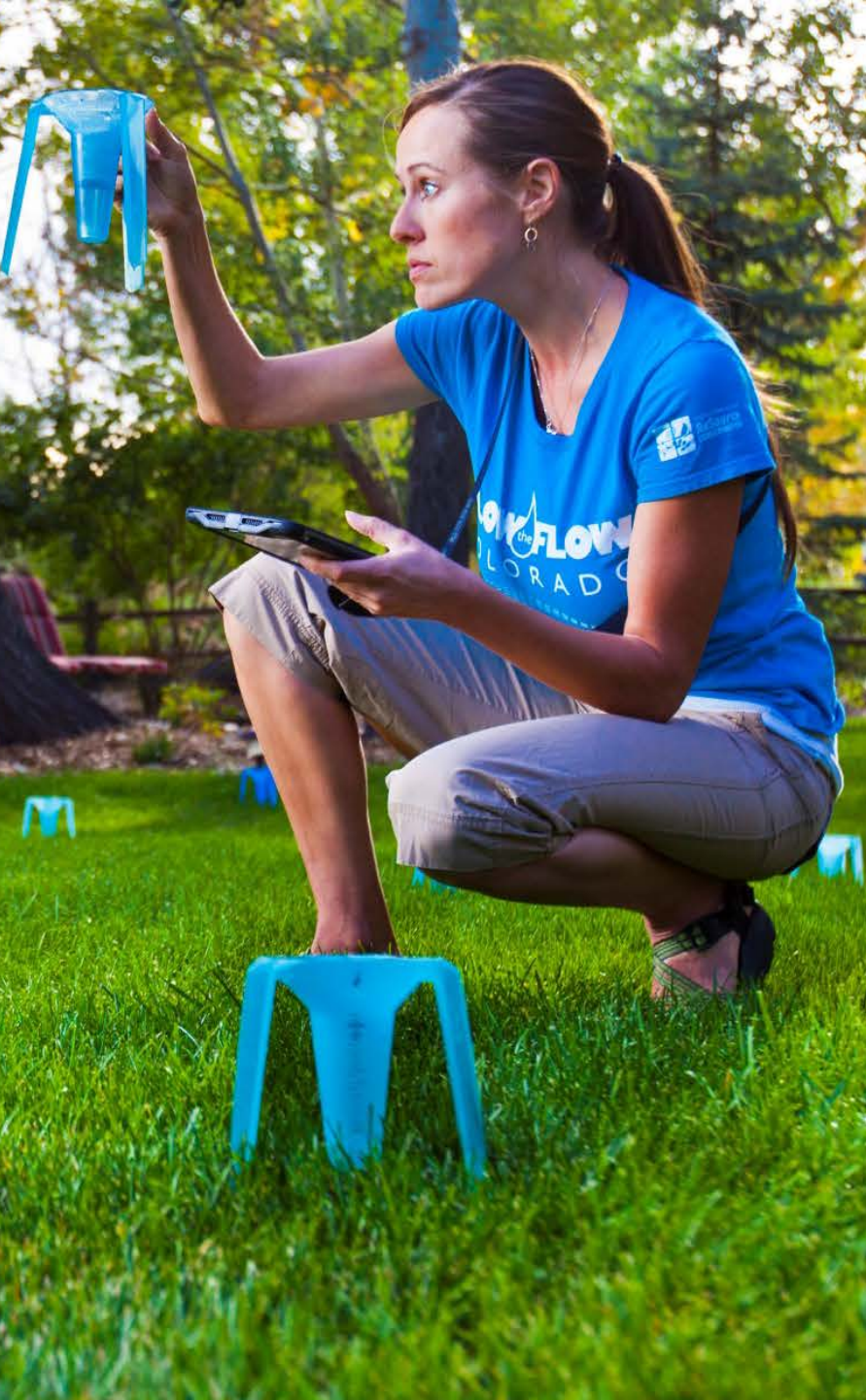
CRC Mission: Putting conservation into action

CRC History: 501(c)(3) nonprofit social enterprise; founded in 1976 by a group of citizens concerned about our dependence on non-renewable resources

Program Areas: Waste Diversion, Energy, & **Water Conservation**

Water Programs: Landscape Change, Education. Turf Removal, Fixture Retrofits, Indoor/Outdoor Audits





Slow the Flow

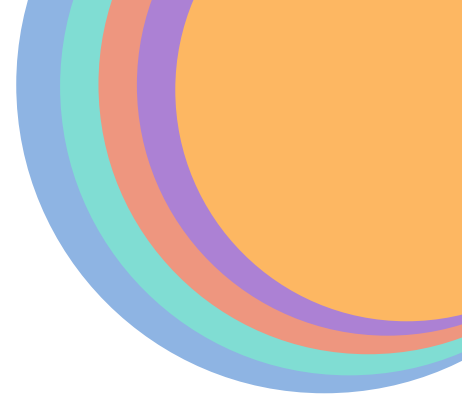
Free Irrigation Audits



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Slow the Flow

Overview



- Started in 2004 with 1 utility, now in over 20 water districts
- Reaching over 1,500 homeowners per year
- Free irrigation audits to customers of participating water utilities
 - Visual Inspection
 - Efficiency Tests
 - Custom watering schedule recommendation
 - Educate homeowners on how to program their control clock
- Average savings of 5,000 gallons per customer



Slow the Flow: Impact

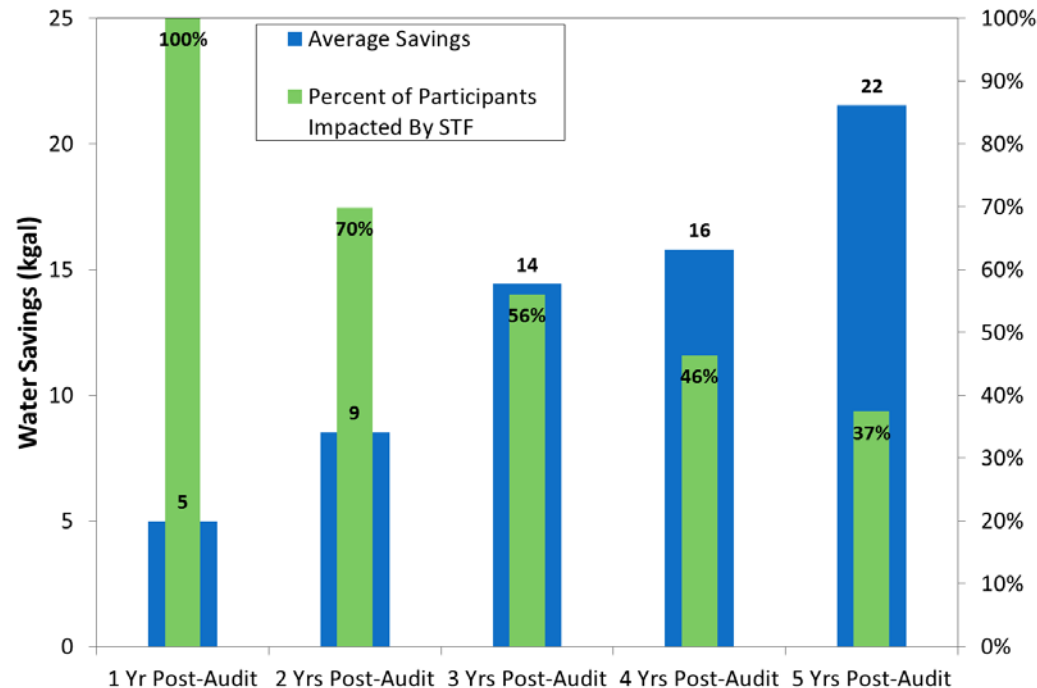
2017 at a glance

- Over 2,000 residential audits completed
- Estimated savings of over 10 million gallons
- Since 2004, nearly 110 million gallons of water saved



Impact Analysis Study

- Peer reviewed study of our audits
- Analyzed 2,100 water bills at least 2 years pre- and post-audit
- Found average savings of 5,000 gallons
- Impacted participants decreased over time



A photograph of two blue plastic cups on a green lawn. The cup in the foreground is in sharp focus, showing its three legs and the rim. The cup in the background is blurred. The grass is vibrant green and appears to have some dew or water on it.

Slow the Flow: Post-audit engagement



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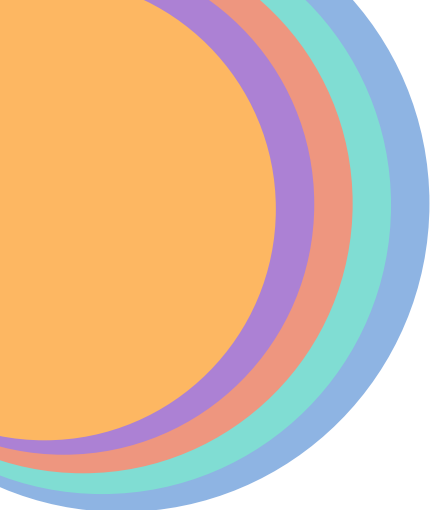
The Challenge

- Number of participants impacted by audits decrease over time
- Large swings in irrigation due to weather, leading to inappropriate watering schedules
- Participants need to make well-informed decisions to sustain savings
- Limited post-audit communication built in to the program

Attempted Solution

- Piloted post-audit follow-up phone calls in one water district
- Limited response rate (phone tag)
- Time-consuming
- Difficult to scale up
- Needed a different method of engagement





The Colorado Sprinkler Guide:

Helping you keep your grass green, no matter what the weather brings!

- Tested bi-weekly e-newsletter April 2016
 - More time-effective
 - Reaches more people
 - Consistent messaging
- Opt-in only
 - Ensures active readership
- Goal to keep customers engaged with their sprinklers and prevent overreaction to weather



Colorado Sprinkler Guide | August 25th



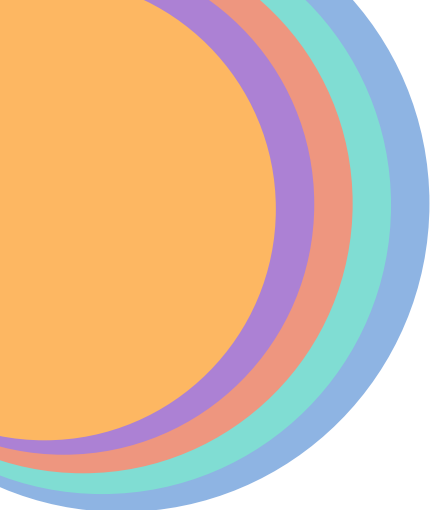
**WEEKLY WATERING
RECOMMENDATION**

2 Days Per Week

Based on the weather for the past two weeks and the forecast for the next two weeks, we recommend watering 2 days per week for the next **14 days**.

This recommendation is only applicable to the watering schedule you received from your Slow the Flow sprinkler inspection. If you no longer have the watering schedule from your inspection, please call us at 303-999-3824 or email water@conservationcenter.org and we will send you the schedule again.

August 25th | Fall Lawn Care



The Sprinkler Guide's structure

Weekly Watering Recommendation

- How many days to water based on the weather forecast
- Only compatible with the recommended schedule from Slow the Flow

Body Article

- Usually about sprinklers or lawn care
- Helps homeowners maintain sprinkler efficiency
 - Ex: DIY fixes to sprinkler problems, information about smart controllers, fertilizing and aeration recommendations

Fun Fact

- Used to provide context about the article
 - Ex: “What is ET?” “Did you know that June is Colorado’s rainiest month?”
- Also used to cross-promote other CRC programs

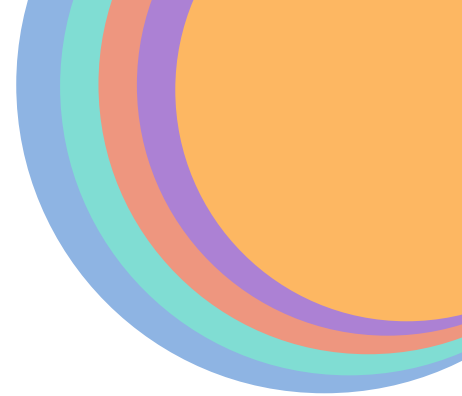


The Results

- 846 homeowners have signed up since the initial roll out in spring of 2016
 - Nearly 25% of all audit participants in that time period
- Average email open rate of 70%
 - Much higher than industry average of ~20%
- Will have to wait for 2017 Impact Analysis of 2016 customers for specific savings

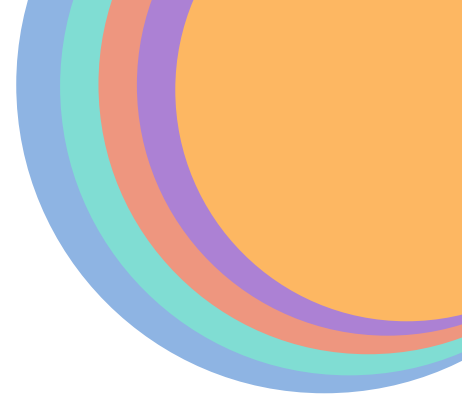


Customer Feedback



- Trustworthy. 95% of survey respondents said they either "Often" or "Always" followed the Weekly Watering Recommendation.
- Accessible information. 100% of respondents found the material in the Colorado Sprinkler Guide to be clear and understandable.
- Great for cross-promotion. 53% went on to look at or participate in other CRC programs.

Customer Quotes



- “Love the weekly recommendations. No guess work, hear from the experts.”
- “Excellent information I likely would not have found elsewhere.”
- “I get many emails--too many. I am always culling, but I don't plan to ever cut this one out. Great info, timely, interesting. Thank you!”





Limiting Large Swings

Participants were asked how many days per week they would have watered in the hot and dry season without the Colorado Sprinkler Guide

- 50% would have watered **more frequently** than our recommendations
- 16% would have watered **5-7 days per week**



**WEEKLY WATERING
RECOMMENDATION**



Conclusion

- Maintaining number of impacted customers unsustainable without consistent customer engagement
- Engagement over the phone too time intensive, but bi-weekly emails are consistent and well received.
- Our simple recommendations make it easy for homeowners to continue to save water and avoid over reacting to weather



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