



Alliance  
*for* Water  
Efficiency

**Strategic Plan**  
2009 to 2013

# Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

A VOICE AND A PLATFORM FOR WATER USE EFFICIENCY

AND WATER CONSERVATION, BRINGING A CRITICAL NEW PERSPECTIVE TO AN  
INCREASINGLY THIRSTY NORTH AMERICA.



A large, stylized blue letter 'W' graphic that serves as the first letter of the first paragraph.

With increasing demands on water resources across the United States and Canada, the need for water conservation has never been greater than it is today. Even in historically water-rich regions, such as the Great Lakes and the southeastern U.S., water resources are facing previously unknown stresses. Both indoors and out, our desire for more water continues to grow.

Limiting increases in water use entails multiple approaches that involve industry, business, water suppliers, government, and the public at large. Not only must industry develop more efficient water-use equipment and must government be able to enact more stringent codes and standards, but the marketplace must also be willing to support and adopt technological changes.

These changes cannot take place coherently without an overseeing organization, thus defining the need for the Alliance for Water Efficiency, now in only its second full year of existence. This strategic plan for the Alliance has two overriding goals: to expand the membership base and fund-raising efforts, thus ensuring viability well into the future, and to “stand as the leading clear, authoritative, and effective voice for water efficiency and water conservation.” These efforts will take the educational efforts of the Alliance to the seats of government, the shelves of retailers, the world of sprinkler heads and smart controllers, government agencies, water utilities, universities, and the Internet.

Perhaps the single greatest strength of the Alliance for Water Efficiency is its diverse Board of Directors and members. Representatives from the plumbing industry, the landscape industry, government, universities, environmental advocacy organizations, water agencies, and consultants give voice to a range of needs and opinions. The Board is working as a cohesive, direction-setting body, capitalizing on shared values. The result of that commitment to collaboration and respect is an organization willing to listen and flex to stay strong and effective.

A graphic of blue water ripples that curves across the bottom of the page, partially overlapping the text.

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

## Results of AWE's First-Year Efforts

In its very first 2007 to 2008 Strategic Plan, the Alliance defined a number of high-priority start-up goals. It quickly and successfully achieved all of the near-term goals and either accomplished or made significant progress on its longer-term goals.

1. As part of its aggressive membership and fund raising effort, the Alliance raised one million dollars in charter sponsorships, and it developed a body of literature, including print materials and generic speaker support materials.
2. The Board agreed upon and the Alliance published a Statement of Guiding Principles. These principles appear on the back page of this Strategic Plan.
3. The Alliance completed and launched its own website and a web-based clearing-house of water conservation information, partially supported by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
4. Representatives from the Alliance sit on a number of national committees related to plumbing codes, plumbing standards, and green building specifications. Partial support for these efforts came from grants from the EPA and the Turner Foundation.
5. Facing a challenge common to all new organizations, the Alliance continues to define itself and rise to new challenges. These continuously evolving functions include influencing codes and standards, providing useful, practical information to a broad swath of stakeholders, providing targeted training on water efficiency programs and practices on water conservation, influencing market transformations as water conservation and efficient equipment continue to become part of everyday life, and being involved in product research and labeling.

With the acceptance of this new Strategic Plan, the Alliance has challenged itself to build on its past successes and work even more aggressively to protect our water resources through wise and efficient use.

## Creating This Strategic Plan

The exercise of creating this 2009 to 2013 Strategic Plan began in October 2008 with a meeting open to the full membership of the Alliance. Approximately 70 people attended, engaging in a spirited and wide-ranging discussion of the importance and role of the organization.

Following that initial open-ended meeting, the full membership received a survey designed to help target their priorities for the organization. The results of the survey showed an interesting lack of clarity: virtually everything deemed important at the membership meeting also showed to be important in the survey. In other words, the survey confirmed a broad range of items deemed important, but it did not provide a great deal of help in actual priority setting.

In response to this lack of clear direction, the Alliance sent a more specific survey to the members of the Board of Directors. Yet again, the survey results confirmed the broad and aggressive agenda of the Alliance, but it did little to establish clear priorities.

In response to these results, the Board took two bold steps. It encouraged the Alliance staff to exercise restraint and wisdom as it aggressively follows opportunities that arise, as long as they fit well within the mission and will benefit the Alliance in the long term.

It also focused this strategic plan on two overriding goals:

- To continue building membership to build a reliable financial base for core endeavors, and
- To direct all endeavors toward the Alliance's ability to "Stand as the leading clear, authoritative and effective voice for water efficiency and water conservation."



# 2009 *to* 2013 Strategic Plan

## Strategic Goal 1

**Strengthen and build membership and funding partners to establish a reliable financial base for core endeavors.**

### OBJECTIVE 1

Raise \$250,000 in additional membership dues over and above the 2008 level of membership.

#### **Tactics:**

1. Direct that each member of the Board of Directors will work to bring in at least \$10,000 in new memberships.
2. Provide Board members with fundraising support, including a customizable presentation, speaking points, handout materials, and contact information.
3. Investigate the hiring of a consulting firm for the purpose of increasing membership and membership funding.
4. Organize a stakeholder event for AWWA 2010 in Chicago.

### OBJECTIVE 2

Increase membership and membership funding in California by means of an aggressive personal outreach effort.

#### **Tactics:**

1. Organize a series of events for President and CEO Mary Ann Dickinson, Board Chair Carole Baker, and Board Member Tim Brick in California in 2009 to visit water agencies across the state and encourage their membership in and support of the Alliance.

## Strategic Goal 2

**Stand as the leading clear, authoritative, and effective voice for water efficiency and water conservation.**

### OBJECTIVE 1

Lead the development and implementation of national water efficiency and conservation policies and codes.

#### Tactics:

1. Ensure that the nation's codes, standards, and green building programs and policies reflect up-to-date water efficiency technologies and practices.
2. Provide ongoing outreach to executive and congressional offices in Washington, including an annual briefing on Capitol Hill for legislators and policy makers.
3. Secure equal access funding for water efficiency to ensure that water conservation is the first strategy of choice—the first item in a ladder of priority actions—when assessing water supply projects.

## Strategic Goal 3

**Develop new initiatives in water efficiency.**

### OBJECTIVE 1

Integrate water use efficiency into climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

#### Tactics:

1. Support and develop awareness opportunities related to the linkages between water and energy.
2. Develop statistics related to embedded energy for water supplies across the United States and Canada.
3. Provide leadership in the development of policies that link water, energy, and climate change.
4. Provide support to educational efforts related to the connection between energy and water, with an emphasis on helping build an understanding that reducing water use also reduces greenhouse gases.
5. Post information related to carbon reductions resulting from water efficiency on the Alliance website.
6. Ensure that water conservation programs are included in legislation regulating carbon trading.
7. Work collaboratively with leading organizations to promote carbon offset strategies for water efficiency.
8. Develop strategies and programs designed to change behaviors related to climate change.

### OBJECTIVE 2

Develop a North American gray water policy.

### OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a benchmarking initiative for North American industries to enable comparison of water consumption rates in the same sector.

### OBJECTIVE 4

Develop metrics for determining water footprints and water footprint neutrality.

# Strategic Goal 4

Continue expanding AWE research, technical outreach and support.

## OBJECTIVE 1

Build a comprehensive conservation savings planning and evaluation model.

### Tactics:

1. Beta test the model in the spring of 2009.
2. Work with utilities to utilize the model and incorporate the results into their water resource planning efforts.

## OBJECTIVE 2

Maintain a high standard of excellence in research and technical assistance.

### Tactics:

1. Analyze the job impact and water savings of water efficiency and water conservation actions.

## OBJECTIVE 3

Promote the development and funding of water efficient product testing and labeling programs.

### Tactics:

1. Continue to support EPA's WaterSense program.
2. Support efforts to ensure that water-using products achieve their advertised levels of efficiency.

## OBJECTIVE 4

Continue to train North American utilities on pursuing cost-effective water conservation strategies.

### Tactics:

1. Conduct at least one training workshop in 2009 in conjunction with interested cities and partners to help pursue aggressive, cost-effective water-loss management strategies for North American utilities.
2. Conduct at least one training workshop in 2010 to help water utilities and governing bodies adopt more modern, service-based, budget-based rate structures.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Continue to explore marketing outreach opportunities through leveraged relationships with professional trade publications.

## OBJECTIVE 6

Continue to work with members, stakeholders, and EPA on a plumbing research coalition.



## Strategic Goal 5

**Expand the role of the Alliance for Water Efficiency to include agricultural water use.**

### OBJECTIVE 1

Research the North American issues of agricultural water efficiency.

#### Tactics:

1. Convene a brainstorming session to develop a strategy for agricultural water use by the conclusion of the summer of 2009, and include major agriculture representation in this and all future discussions.
2. Develop a work plan for the agricultural water efficiency component and consider adding a representative of agriculture to the AWE Board of Directors.

## Strategic Goal 6

**Support and, if necessary, lead efforts to increase consumer awareness related to the efficient and sustainable use of water.**

### OBJECTIVE 1

Develop a set of consumer informational web pages as part of the Alliance web site to promote consumer water efficiency and conservation. Include information on reducing the carbon footprint of water.

### OBJECTIVE 2

Develop a design for a North American media campaign with uniform messages and graphics that may be adapted by local utilities or used to support a widespread media effort.

### OBJECTIVE 3

Pursue opportunities with media outlets (such as National Geographic) for outreach related to the sustainable and efficient use of water.



### MEASUREMENT METRICS FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Dollars obtained for water efficiency as a direct result of AWE activity
2. Total MGD saved as a direct result of AWE activity
3. Number of general technical assistance requests and percent increase over time
4. Number of speeches and percent increase over time
5. Number of documents posted on the website and percent increase over time
6. Number of web site page visits and percent increase over time
7. Number of downloads from website and percent increase over time
8. Number of discussion forum posts and percent increase over time
9. Dollars of grant/special project funding and percent increase on an annual basis
10. Number of annual members
11. Percent increase in annual membership over time in dollars
12. Percent increase in annual membership over time in numbers
13. Percent retention of annual membership over time in dollars
14. Percent retention of annual membership over time in numbers

# Guiding Principles

The Alliance for Water Efficiency is committed to promoting the efficient and sustainable use of water. Conserving water and using water efficiently is critical to ensuring that water resources are available now and in the future to support healthy economies, ecosystems, communities and individuals.



P.O. Box 804127  
Chicago, IL  
60680-4127

**OFFICE**  
(773) 360-5100

**TOLL-FREE**  
(866) 730-A4WE

**FAX**  
(773) 345-3636

1. Significant opportunities exist for increasing water efficiency and water conservation.
2. Everyone has a responsibility to use water efficiently and not waste water.
3. Saving water helps save money and reduces future water supply and infrastructure costs.
4. Saving water helps save energy and reduces climate change impacts.
5. Maintaining the sustainable, natural function of our water resources is essential to their continued use for all living things in this and future generations.
6. Water efficiency and conservation best management practices are essential to restore impaired water resources.
7. Water efficiency and conservation are fundamental resource planning tools and should be considered equally with other means of meeting our water needs.
8. Cost-effective water efficiency and conservation options should be maximized prior to developing new sources of water.
9. Water supply and water/wastewater services should be priced at full cost of development, treatment, and distribution, including depreciation.
10. In all its efforts, the Alliance will strive to:
  - a. Engage all stakeholders involved in resource efficiency issues.
  - b. Actively build and promote productive and positive relationships among stakeholders.
  - c. Promote increased scientific rigor for analysis and verification of water efficiency and conservation programs.
  - d. Develop and promote water-conserving best management practices that increase the efficiency of water use.
  - e. Promote strong water efficiency codes, uniform standards, incentives and policies.
  - f. Promote the inclusion of the best available water efficiency technology, designs and practices in all green building programs.
  - g. Stand as the premier source of information on water efficiency and conservation programs, products, and policies.
  - h. Achieve climate neutrality.
  - i. Urge the Alliance membership to commit to practicing these principles in their own organizational activities.

[allianceforwaterefficiency.org](http://allianceforwaterefficiency.org)



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**THE MISSION OF THE ALLIANCE FOR WATER EFFICIENCY  
IS TO PROMOTE THE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF WATER.**