



Strategic Plan
2014–2016
*Extended to June 30, 2017**

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

A VOICE AND A PLATFORM FOR WATER USE EFFICIENCY

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



Letter from the President and CEO

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2014-2016 Strategic Plan for the Alliance for Water Efficiency, designed to guide us in meeting a collective vision and mission for the next three years. We wanted to creatively imagine what water efficiency might look like in 2030 and beyond, and design strategic initiatives for the Alliance to help achieve it. We are at a new frontier of change: although we have made tremendous strides in past decades, it is clear that the water efficiency programs of the past will not be the water efficiency programs of the future. Our goal in developing this Strategic Plan was to design a roadmap for the Alliance to help our constituency meet the challenges of that new frontier.

This plan is a living, breathing document. Although it is intended to serve as a roadmap for our programs and activities over the next three years, we also expect it to be a dynamic, changing guide. Ours is a rapidly evolving field, and we need to be responsive to new developments as they arise.

Come join us in achieving our vision for a more water-efficient North America.

Mary Ann Dickinson
President and Chief Executive Officer

Letter from the Chair of the Board

I have the distinct honor and privilege to chair the Board of the Alliance for Water Efficiency, a dedicated group of caring individuals committed to promoting our mission and to helping the Alliance grow and prosper. The Board's work has been crucial. In our first six years we have experienced the usual challenges facing any new non-profit organization (maintaining adequate staffing and funding, succession planning) and we as a Board are very engaged in addressing those challenges. In 2013 the Board itself went through a "re-visioning" process wherein it revamped its structure and goals to better address the organization's needs.

Those organizational needs are identified in this plan: increasing our visibility and value to our key constituencies, focusing on a targeted set of programmatic areas related to our vision, and raising the funding needed to keep our programs and activities thriving. This plan is the product of a comprehensive process undertaken in 2013. We received extensive input from our members, who stretch across sectors of the water conservation community: public and private water suppliers, business and industry leaders, nonprofit advocates, local governments, and academic institutions. It was important to us that we hear from our members and affected stakeholders as to their issues, needs, and wishes for Alliance for Water Efficiency priorities. Their views have been carefully incorporated.

Carole Baker
Chair, Board of Directors

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

**Extension of Plan's period covered approved by the Board of Directors on September 9, 2015*

2014 to 2016 Strategic Plan

Our Challenge

The Alliance for Water Efficiency was formed in 2007 to provide North American leadership in water efficiency policy, research, programs, and education. We purposely assembled a wide array of stakeholders in our organization so that the programs we developed would prove useful to a broad group of constituencies, including water utilities, government agencies, business and industry, environmental and energy advocates, universities, and consultants. As we grow and mature as an organization, and to maximize the value of each membership dollar, we need to focus our activities on what is most valuable for our constituencies. We also need to broaden our North American focus to include Mexico, as since our inception we have been focusing exclusively on the United States and Canada.





Mission:

The Alliance for Water Efficiency is dedicated to the efficient and sustainable use of water.

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hat is our strategic challenge?

We recognize that the ground underneath us has been changing; the world of water efficiency has been maturing and morphing. Forty years ago, most water conservation programs were simple public education efforts, designed to remind the consumer that wasteful water behavior should be curbed. Thirty years ago, the concept emerged that reducing demand and saving water could also save on the costs of expensive new water utility infrastructure, and conservation then took a different turn. Within ten years large numbers of retrofit programs for efficient plumbing fixtures and appliances had been launched. Best practice programs were developed for water supplier implementation. Standards and codes were enacted to ensure that only efficient products were sold in the marketplace. Significant progress has been made in reducing water use, and per capita consumption has been steadily declining because of these landmark efforts.

Today's water conservation programs need to be more diverse and expansive than ever before. New meter and sensor technology has changed the way we can measure and manage water use. Non-traditional approaches to using and reusing water are increasingly being examined, including target marketing, community-based social marketing, and entirely new ways of managing consumer behavior.

Demands on North America's freshwater resources continue to grow, and the proper management of those resources now is crucial to ensuring that adequate supplies are available for the future. Water efficiency still remains the most cost-effective, immediate, and environmentally desirable means to address both short-term and long-term shortages.

Our Response

The Alliance for Water Efficiency has the expertise to assist and educate. We play a vital market-building role in the world of water efficiency -- and water issues more broadly -- through our technical expertise, membership base and profound networks. We are here to introduce newcomers to water efficiency, as well as to work with seasoned veterans to improve their conservation programs.

We stand as a North American voice promoting the efficient and sustainable use of water. We tackle the issues, educate, advocate, and assist utilities, government representatives, NGOs, grass roots environmental groups, academics, plumbing industry professionals, private sector business owners and other interested parties. Water efficiency needs vary across North America based on diverse factors, and the Alliance helps ensure that efforts are designed and implemented in a practical and effective manner to match the goals of each region.

In its first six years, the Alliance has accomplished a remarkable record of water use efficiency achievements. We established a worldwide presence in water efficiency policy and emerged as a leader in the water and energy nexus discussions. We launched a detailed online information resource library that is accessed by tens of thousands of users, and we developed tools and materials to assist communities in planning cost-effective conservation programs and educating consumers. We conducted and published topical, significant research on issues such as the water and energy connection, and a state scorecard on water efficiency and conservation laws and policies across the U.S. The Alliance has been at the forefront of major changes for water efficiency in the standards and codes arena. Our voice is a credible and respected voice for water efficiency, as evidenced by the hundreds of organizations that

have joined the Alliance as members. Here are some of our accomplishments.

Advocacy for National Water Efficiency Policy

- **Congressional Testimony.** We have testified twice before Congress, in 2009 and 2012, drawing attention to the need for federal parity for water efficiency policy and funding.
- **Jobs Research.** We published *Transforming Water: Water Efficiency as Stimulus and Long Term Investment*, an analysis documenting the new jobs and economic benefits of water efficiency investments.
- **Better Standards, Codes, and Green Building Specifications.** Our advocacy has resulted in a number of significant changes, including new baseline water-use reduction mandates in LEED, water efficiency requirements in two new national green codes, and important clarifications in plumbing product and appliance standards.

State-of-the-art Water Efficiency Tools

- **Free online resources.** We built a comprehensive web site with a Resource Library of detailed information on water efficiency products and programs, a calendar of events, regular news reports, and a legislative watch page.
- **A better planning model.** We built a “water conservation tracking tool” to assist utilities and communities to plan the most cost-effective water efficiency program options tailored to their customer base and usage patterns.

Research into Critical Issues

- **Water-Energy Nexus.** In 2011, we published the *Blueprint for Action*, a summary of needed water-energy research and programs, and in 2012 a report on *Water and Energy Nexus Research*.
- **State Policies.** In 2012, we conducted a comprehensive inventory of all 50 US states and published the *State Scorecard*, which ranks the states as to their level of water efficiency policy.



- **Water Conservation and Revenue Loss.**

In 2012, we brought together 30 leading utility finance managers, rate experts, regulators, and advocates to discuss the issues surrounding declining demand nationwide. This discussion produced new thoughts on how water rates could better reflect true long term costs and provide revenue stability for water utilities.

- **Conserved Water and Stream Flow.**

When conserved water can be left in-stream it is a clear benefit to the environment, but there are numerous legal and political obstacles. In 2011, we published a detailed review of these issues in the Colorado River Basin.

- **Plumbing Research.**

We are proud partners in the Plumbing Efficiency Research Coalition, and a 2012 study was published on the issue of drain line transport of solid waste in commercial buildings.

A Smarter National Water Consumer

- **Home Water Works Web Site.** In 2012, we launched this site, specifically designed to educate the residential consumer, complete with a detailed Water Use Calculator.

- **Consumer Media Campaign.** In 2013, we launched a national campaign based on the concept of “Never Waste” and using a cleverly imprinted water bottle as a unit of measure to communicate the amount of water wasted by the average consumer.

Alliance for Water Efficiency

Strategic Direction 2014-2016

Our Fifteen-Year Vision: Water Conservation in 2030

Water efficiency and conservation have changed significantly in the past decade. Numerous developments have occurred in technology and best practice programs. Important developments like efficiency-oriented building codes, accurate plumbing fixture testing, reduced prices for consumers, more sophisticated measurement, and efficient product labeling have all dramatically improved consumer response to water efficiency goals. The U.S. and Canada now have a WaterSense® product label to match the success of ENERGY STAR®, and these labeled high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and appliances have significantly transformed the consumer marketplace and largely dominate current product sales. As a result, indoor water use has been reduced substantially.

What then should the conservation priorities be in the next fifteen years? A main priority has to be reducing outdoor water use, which remains poorly understood, largely unregulated, and ripe for innovation and improvement at the consumer, landscape contractor and designer levels. (This priority on outdoor water use management parallels important efforts that are already underway in the agricultural sector. While the Alliance is focusing now on the urban water use sector, a future emphasis on agricultural water efficiency is envisioned down the road.) Secondly, the connection

between water and energy continues to grow in importance and awareness, as communities, states/provinces and federal government work to transition to a clean energy economy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and remain proactive in addressing potential impacts from climate change. Building resilience to the effects of climate change requires looking at water efficiency through a new lens, and considering its relationship to other resources. Third, all water needs to serve multiple uses and potable water use must be maximized through efficiency, reuse, and recycling. Fourth, utility distribution systems need to be managed optimally to reduce leakage and non-revenue water through progressive methods such as pressure management, more accurate metering, and hydraulic modeling. Fifth, water needs to be priced to the consumer to encourage conservation and to reduce new capacity costs for the utility. The Alliance's services and expertise are poised to both understand the efficiency challenges related to these new frontiers in water use, and to produce actionable solutions that water suppliers and consumers can implement.



In our vision for 2030, the water-efficient North American consumer will be living in a household with smart metering both indoors and out, a dashboard with real-time information on combined water and energy use, maximum use of gray water, and more thoughtfully-designed landscapes with smart irrigation solutions, such as irrigation fixtures managed by sensors focusing on actual plant water needs. The commercial and industrial water consumer will be fully recycling their process water, water and energy will be optimized together, and no potable water will be wasted to drains. Storm water will be a resource for water supply and not a waste stream. More water will be retained onsite in all customer classes for reuse for non-potable purposes.

This strategic plan will provide the roadmap for the Alliance for Water Efficiency's role in achieving this vision. Not all of it is within our power. But our actions can help realize significant changes. And as we move into this new frontier in the urban sector, we also must be mindful of the significant role of agricultural water efficiency; involvement in this sector's efficiency initiatives is critically important and must eventually be included in the Alliance's priorities.



Guiding Principles

These Guiding Principles were adopted by the Alliance for Water Efficiency Board of Directors in 2007. They continue to be just as relevant today as the Alliance moves into new frontiers of water efficiency.

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.

- Significant opportunities exist for increasing water efficiency and water conservation.
- Everyone has a responsibility to use water efficiently and not waste water.
- Saving water helps save money and reduces future water supply and infrastructure costs.
- Saving water helps save energy and reduces climate change impacts.
- Maintaining the sustainable, natural function of our water resources is essential to their continued use for all living things in this and future generations.
- Water efficiency and conservation best management practices are essential to restore impaired water resources.

- Water efficiency and conservation are fundamental resource planning tools and should be considered equally with other means of meeting our water needs.
- Cost-effective water efficiency and conservation options should be maximized prior to developing new sources of water.
- Water supply and water/wastewater services should be priced at full cost of development, treatment, and distribution, including depreciation.

In all its efforts, the Alliance will strive to:

1. Engage all stakeholders involved in resource efficiency issues.
2. Actively build and promote productive and positive relationships among stakeholders.
3. Promote increased scientific rigor for analysis and verification of water efficiency and conservation programs.
4. Develop and promote water-conserving best management practices that increase the efficiency of water use.
5. Promote strong water efficiency codes, uniform standards, incentives and policies.
6. Promote the inclusion of the best available water efficiency technology, designs and practices in all green building programs.
7. Stand as the premier source of information on water efficiency and conservation programs, products, and policies.
8. Achieve climate neutrality.
9. Urge the Alliance membership to commit to practicing these principles in their own organizational activities

2014-2016 Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1:

Provide advocacy leadership for the water efficiency community, and serve as the leading clear, authoritative, and effective voice for water efficiency policy.

Strategy 1: Develop a set of clear messages and “talking points” to support members’ local advocacy efforts on water efficiency policies, standards, and codes.

Strategy 2: Provide ongoing outreach to governmental offices requesting assistance.

Strategy 3: Build key relationships at the federal, state and provincial levels to help increase understanding of water efficiency issues.

Strategy 4: Lead the development and implementation of new water efficiency policies.

Strategy 5: Integrate water use efficiency into energy efficiency efforts in federal, state/provincial and local legislation, policy and practice.

Strategy 6: Seek to influence standards and codes through targeted, specific policy advocacy efforts.

Strategy 7: Actively promote the U.S. EPA WaterSense® program.

GOAL 2:

Provide foundational support for the water efficiency community.

Strategy 1: Maintain definitive web-based resources for high-quality water efficiency information, research and programs.

Strategy 2: Provide high-quality technical assistance to our membership.

Strategy 3: Convene forums for stakeholders with common interests.

Strategy 4: Explore training opportunities for water efficiency.

Strategy 5: Educate the consumer.

GOAL 3:

Conduct research on water efficiency issues of critical importance.

Strategy 1: Conduct research into water conservation rate options that are consistent with the need for stable revenue collection.

Strategy 2: Explore the cost-effective potential of alternative water resources.

Strategy 3: Explore continuing opportunities to link water and energy.

Strategy 4: Help drive data collection on outdoor water use.



GOAL 4:

Improve the Alliance brand.

Strategy 1: Develop strategies to raise the Alliance's profile and to cement our brand among current and potential members, foundation funders, and corporate sponsors.

Strategy 2: Develop a refined and targeted value proposition that presents compelling reasons for membership in the Alliance.

Strategy 3: Develop and maintain an active Internet and social media marketing presence and campaign.

GOAL 5:

Develop a reliable and sustainable financial base to accomplish our core work.

Strategy 1: Continue to grow the membership program through strategic recruitment and sales practices focused on priority stakeholder segments.

Strategy 2: Capture additional revenue to fund programs outside of dues, including subscription projects, grants and partnerships.

GOAL 6:

Build and sustain the organizational capacity for the Alliance to be an effective and sustainable leader.

Strategy 1: Recruit and support board leaders who provide critical talent and leadership.

Strategy 2: Develop the professional staff capabilities needed to meet our mission.

Strategy 3: Develop plans and structures that ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of our work.

Strategy 4: Develop financial and other systems to ensure thoughtful management of resources.





Alliance
for Water
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THE MISSION OF THE ALLIANCE FOR WATER EFFICIENCY
IS TO PROMOTE THE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF WATER.