A VOICE AND

A PLATFORM FOR WATER

USE EFFICIENCY AND

WATER CONSERVATION;

BRINGING A CRITICAL

PERSPECTIVE TO AN

INCREASINGLY THIRSTY

NORTH AMERICA.

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

2021 Update

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

STRATEGIC PLAN
2018–2022

In its first decade of existence, the Alliance for Water Efficiency has championed water efficiency as an essential cost-effective, long-term, reliable water resource management strategy. Through our platform of technical assistance, education, research, and advocacy, we have clearly demonstrated that working collaboratively with our stakeholders produces sustainable and quantifiable improvements in water use.

The market we serve is evolving, and threats to water availability – from population growth to climate change – are becoming more prevalent. We are challenged and energized by an environment that consistently raises the bar on the skill and vision required for success. Yet our role in advancing water efficiency as a key pillar of urban water sustainability has never been more important.

In response, we have developed this **2018-2022 Strategic Plan**. It builds on the successes of our past and hones our commitment to serving the needs of our stakeholders.

The Alliance for Water Efficiency is defining itself in the clearest way possible: as North America's leading steward of sustainable water use, ensuring that our members have access to the most effective tools and best experts, and that the water management community recognizes and openly embraces the essential need for water efficiency.

This Strategic Plan affirms the value of the path we are on and sets out a bold "Sustainable Water 2030 Vision" that will guide our decisions and activities. The Alliance is defining a future where efficient water use is the norm throughout North America.

AWE's Initiatives Include:

- **ADVOCACY**
- **AWARENESS**
- **EDUCATION**
- **POLICY**
- **RESEARCH**
- **RESOURCES**
- **TECHNICAL SUPPORT**
- **TRAINING**

We ***are*** North America's Authoritative Resource for Water Efficiency

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

WHO WE ARE

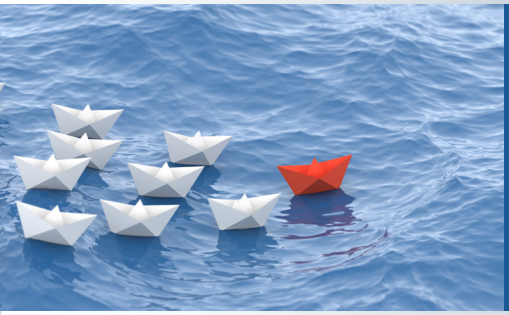
We are a unique network and forum for collaboration among diverse stakeholders – a collective of organizations and professionals who are changing the way people think about water. Driven by our shared belief that saving water and using it efficiently saves money, preserves the environment, and helps communities thrive, we work actively to achieve sustainable water use.

We exist for the purpose of advancing water-use efficiency on behalf of our communities, citizens, businesses, and environment. We convene professionals across North America – from water service providers, businesses, associations, governments, universities, NGOs, and more – not once each year, but year-round. We represent this group within the international efficiency community. We build partnerships to expand and leverage networks and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our efforts. We facilitate a platform for regional and national research, information sharing, and stakeholder collaboration, identifying issues of shared concern and collective opportunities. Our knowledgeable staff supports these efforts, providing analysis, expertise, and technical assistance.

We know that when our members succeed, so do we. We give water providers the tools and resources they need to manage water resources sustainably. We help build the market for innovation and the adoption of tomorrow's technologies and services. We provide access to opportunities and resources to help our members and partners advocate, educate, and legislate.

In early 2017, we marked a new milestone in our growth when we launched the California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) as the first state chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency.

CalWEP brings together the capabilities, resources, and networks of two of the country's leading efficiency organizations. In concert with the Alliance's mission, CalWEP will be working within California to support innovative technologies and practices, encourage effective public policies, advance research, training, and public education, and build on collaborative approaches. This new relationship will benefit all of our members and partners.



MISSION:

The Alliance for Water Efficiency is dedicated to promoting an efficient and sustainable water future.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

Our first decade has been marked by great successes. Through our battery of tools, including web resources, technical assistance, leadership in establishing efficiency-based codes and standards, research, convening of discussions at the highest levels, and political advocacy, we have helped our members and partners achieve conservation goals and system reliability while minimizing the cost footprint for consumers.

A snapshot of a few of our efforts and successes includes:

POLICY ADVOCACY

- **Net Blue: Supporting Water Neutral Growth:** an initiative in support of sustainable community growth that includes model ordinances and that guides communities through approaches to offsetting demand.
- **Standards and Codes:** our ongoing active voice in ensuring that water efficiency and conservation stay in the forefront as codes and standards evolve.
- **On-Site Recycling Policy:** a collaborative initiative to develop forward-thinking policy changes focused on state-level water reuse and recycling standards that can incentivize users to deploy on-site treatment technologies.
- **Reforming Tax Policies:** our effort to remove the taxation of water efficiency and distributed infrastructure rebates, similar to that which occurs for energy efficiency incentives.
- **Water Efficiency and Conservation State Scorecard:** an ongoing five-year assessment of state-level laws governing water efficiency and conservation. Including state-level water loss laws in the United States.
- **Water Efficiency Funding in Federal Infrastructure Legislation:** our effort to get Congress to take the nation's water crisis seriously by including significant water efficiency funding in infrastructure legislation.
- **Removal of Barriers to Debt Financing Efficiency Programs:** our effort to create clarity around strategies to successfully debt finance efficiency programs and pursue possible paths to amend the rules that govern accounting practices.

RESOURCES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- **Water Conservation Tracking Tool:** an easy-to-use and powerful tool that allows water service providers to evaluate the water savings, costs, and benefits of water conservation programs.
- **Commercial Kitchens Guide:** a best-practices resource for facility managers that provides tools needed to improve water and energy efficiency in restaurants and commercial kitchens.
- **Financing Sustainable Water:** a suite of tools, including a handbook, a sales forecasting and rate model, and educational offerings to help water service providers develop and implement rate structures that balance revenue, resource efficiency, and fiscal sustainability.
- **Cooling Technology Study: Cooling Tower Estimating Model:** a collaborative approach to help AWE members create, or optimize, cooling tower water efficiency programs.
- **Learning Landscapes: Outdoor Water Efficiency and Conservation Lessions:** our effort to promote water conservation literacy among the next generation of water customers.

- **Sustainable Landscapes: A Utility Program Guide:** a guide that leverages the insights, lessons, and considerations gathered in the Landscape Transformation Study to provide actionable information for utilities beginning or enhancing outdoor water efficiency programs.

RESEARCH

- **Demand Hardening Assessment:** an analysis of the effects of long-term investments in demand management on actual demand, especially in areas with aggressive conservation programs and during droughts.
- **Transforming Water:** a position paper examining the economic benefits and impacts of water efficiency investments.
- **Managing Drought: Learning from Australia:** a report assessing conservation strategies developed during Australia's decade-long drought.
- **Assessment of Water Affordability and Conservation Potential:** an assessment that evaluates water affordability and water conservation potential at the census tract level and the role water conservation can play in lowering customer bills.
- **A Review of Connection Fees and Services Charges by Meter Size:** research to better understand water connection fees and recurring service charge variability by meter size across major metropolitan areas in the United States.
- **Life-Cycle Water Intensity Rate Summary: Evaluating Cotton-based vs. Pürlin Man-made Fiber Sheets:** an evaluation that compares the life-cycle water intensity rates associated with using cotton-based sheet sets vs. using 100% man-made fiber sheet sets – specifically Pürlin sheet sets – in the hospitality industry.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- **Water: What You Pay For:** an animated video that builds awareness of the people, pipes, plants, and power that keep safe water flowing.
- **Never Waste:** a national campaign and suite of consumer marketing materials that helps communities encourage consumers to reduce water waste.
- **Home Water Works:** a consumer-facing website providing conservation tips and a state-of-the-art calculator for estimating home water use and possible conservation improvements.
- **Good Question: Why Are My Water Rates Going Up?:** an animated video that seeks to communicate the impact of water conservation on rates, by explaining how conservation can help keep utility costs and customer water rates lower over time.

WHERE WE ARE GOING: OUR 2030 VISION

As we move into our next decade, we face expected and unanticipated challenges. Droughts, while historically common, are becoming increasingly severe, a challenge further exacerbated by population growth. Conservation, when successful, can affect water provider revenues and have unintended water quality consequences in buildings and water distribution systems. To address these challenges, we have developed a four-element vision to support sustainable water management.

Our **2030 Vision** describes a world where communities, businesses, and ecosystems have the water they need to thrive. It is a world in which water is properly valued in every form, and proactively, efficiently, and sustainably managed throughout the entire cycle - from the water provider to the tap and back into our waterways.

The Vision elements below provide a framework for our decision-making and the work we conduct. Its elements provide the thread that holds this Strategic Plan together and keeps it coherent. They are:

EFFICIENCY FIRST

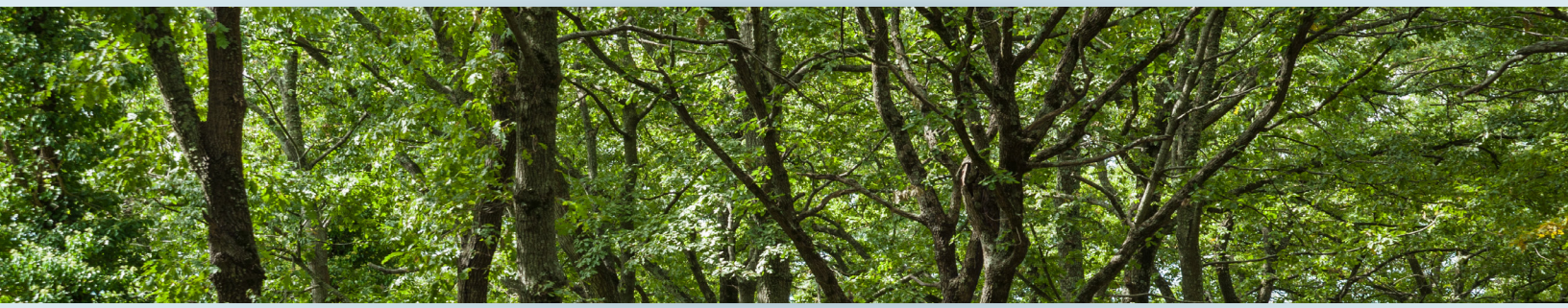
Homeowners and businesses are smart water users, empowered by awareness of the value of water, real-time information, and technologies that help them save indoors and outdoors.

Efficiency and conservation can often provide the first, best, and most cost-effective choice for ensuring reliable water supplies. Smart water users know the value of reliable water. Real-time information keeps them informed, and technologies provide the tools they need to use water efficiently both indoors and out.

WATER-SMART FEDERAL, STATE/ PROVINCIAL, AND LOCAL POLICIES

Governments adopt and implement policies to use limited water supplies more sustainably.

Policy is a powerful tool to promote sustainable water use. Lawmakers and regulators have the tools and information to develop and implement thoughtful and cost-effective water efficiency programs and policies.



We are a partnership organization. We will succeed with the help of our members and partners, and we will measure our success by the success of our members and partners.

SUSTAINABLE WATER RATES AND FISCALLY HEALTHY WATER SYSTEMS

Price signals inform customers of the value of water, and financially resilient water providers can deliver reliable, safe, and affordable water service.

Well-designed, equitable efficiency-oriented rate structures can play a key role in maintaining access to safe, reliable, and affordable water for all, with those who use more paying more. Fiscally sound water providers will be able to maintain their systems without tying up capital in unneeded infrastructure or abandoned assets, and ratepayers will get a fair shake by paying no more than necessary for our most important resource.

INTEGRATED, SYSTEMS-BASED APPROACH

Water efficiency is addressed in the context of a broader, systems-based perspective.

Water efficiency is viewed as an inseparable part of the full water delivery system to achieve the goals of maximizing savings, promoting the appropriate use of alternative supplies, reducing strains on water resources, and preserving potable water for where we need it most.

In addition to these four elements of our Vision, this Strategic Plan includes two additional goals, two that look inward rather than outward: **Providing foundational support to the water efficiency community, and building and nurturing the necessary organizational capacity to ensure the continuation of our leadership position in pursuit of this Vision.**

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

NOTE: This Plan will remain flexible throughout the planning horizon. The following Goals and Objectives will drive the enactment of the Plan.

GOAL 1

Efficiency First

Develop programs embracing efficiency as the first, best, most cost-effective choice for homeowners and businesses, helping them become smart water users, empowered by awareness of the value of water, real-time information, and technologies that help them save indoors and outdoors.

Objective #1

Increase the total number of communities that have best-in-class conservation programs by ensuring that community leaders are equipped with the tools and education they need to succeed.

Objective #2

Contribute to the development of water efficiency performance metrics to help professionals better define success in sustainable water management.

Objective #3

Advance the adoption of high-quality, cost-effective efficiency programs targeting indoor and outdoor water use in commercial and industrial sectors.

Objective #4

Assist communities with the delivery of high-quality customer education campaigns and programs that help consumers choose efficiency.

While our work has helped bring indoor water use down, significant potential remains in the outdoor sector. Through our Outdoor Water Savings Research Initiative, **WE ARE LEADING EFFORTS** to fill data gaps, assemble best practices, and educate communities on effective outdoor conservation program design.

Through new tools, education, and a groundbreaking research project related to efficient Cooling Technologies, **WE ARE HELPING PRACTITIONERS** understand and target untapped water savings in the commercial and industrial sector.

Conservation Quickstart: **WE ARE LAUNCHING** a new program of educational resources and technical tools designed to ensure that communities that are at the beginning of their conservation journey and those that are already leaders in the field are building and implementing best-in-class programs.

GOAL 2

Water-Smart Federal, State/Provincial, and Local Policies

Partner with government at all levels to adopt and implement policies to use limited water supplies more sustainably.

Objective #1

Be North America's authoritative resource and voice calling for water efficiency policies, programs, and investments.

Objective #2

Support the development of water efficiency policies and funding at the federal, state, provincial, and local levels.

Objective #3

Lead the development and implementation of standards and codes that embody strong water efficiency requirements.

Policy advocacy is a core pillar of our work. In the years ahead, we will focus on preserving and growing the EPA **WATERSENSE**® program, as well as helping states and provinces enact stronger efficiency policies.

Smart, resilient development is vital to meeting challenges like climate change and population growth. AWE's **NET BLUE** initiative helps community leaders pursue water-neutral growth without straining resources.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 3

Sustainable Water Rates and Fiscally Sound Water Systems

Support the development and adoption of efficiency-oriented rate structures to ensure that financially resilient water providers are able to deliver reliable, safe, and affordable water service today and into the future.

Objective #1

Assist communities in designing, adopting, and communicating rates that balance resource efficiency, revenue stability, affordability, and long-term fiscal health.

Objective #2

Promote conservation as a cost-effective, first source of supply to avoid unneeded system expansions.

GOAL 4

Integrated, Systems-based Approach

Provide resources to help ensure that water efficiency is addressed in the context of a broader, systems-based perspective.

Objective #1

Encourage and build collaborative opportunities between water and energy providers to optimize energy and water savings.

AWE's **FINANCING SUSTAINABLE WATER** initiative has spurred national dialogue on the need for more effective and equitable water rates. We will continue to provide new case studies, updated tools, and ongoing education opportunities in support of practitioners.

As AWE's avoided cost analyses in Arizona and Colorado have demonstrated, long-term efficiency drives down utility costs and keeps customer rates low. **WE WILL CONTINUE** to conduct research and education that demonstrates that efficiency should come first.

Objective #2

Develop and promote resources that increase understanding of the benefits and risks of expanding alternative water sources and systems, such as graywater, rainwater, and stormwater.

Objective #3

Assist water service providers as they work to adopt best practices and policies that reduce water loss.

Objective #4

Promote the adoption of smart technologies to leverage big data opportunities for efficiency and to inform and empower customers.

GOAL 5

Provide Foundational Support for the Water Efficiency Community

Objective# 1:

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

Objective #2:

Provide high-quality technical assistance to our membership.

Objective #3:

Convene forums for stakeholders with common interests.

Objective #4:

Conduct research on water efficiency issues of critical importance and share results with our members.

Objective #5:

Help drive data collection on water use, including the adoption of smart technologies that inform and empower customers.

WE WILL HELP water professionals pursue efficient and updated water systems by providing tools for stronger water loss control programs and guidance around new technologies and data-driven approaches, like Advanced Metering Infrastructure.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 6

Organizational Strength

Build and nurture organizational capacity to ensure that AWE will continue to be an effective leader and advocate.

Objective #1

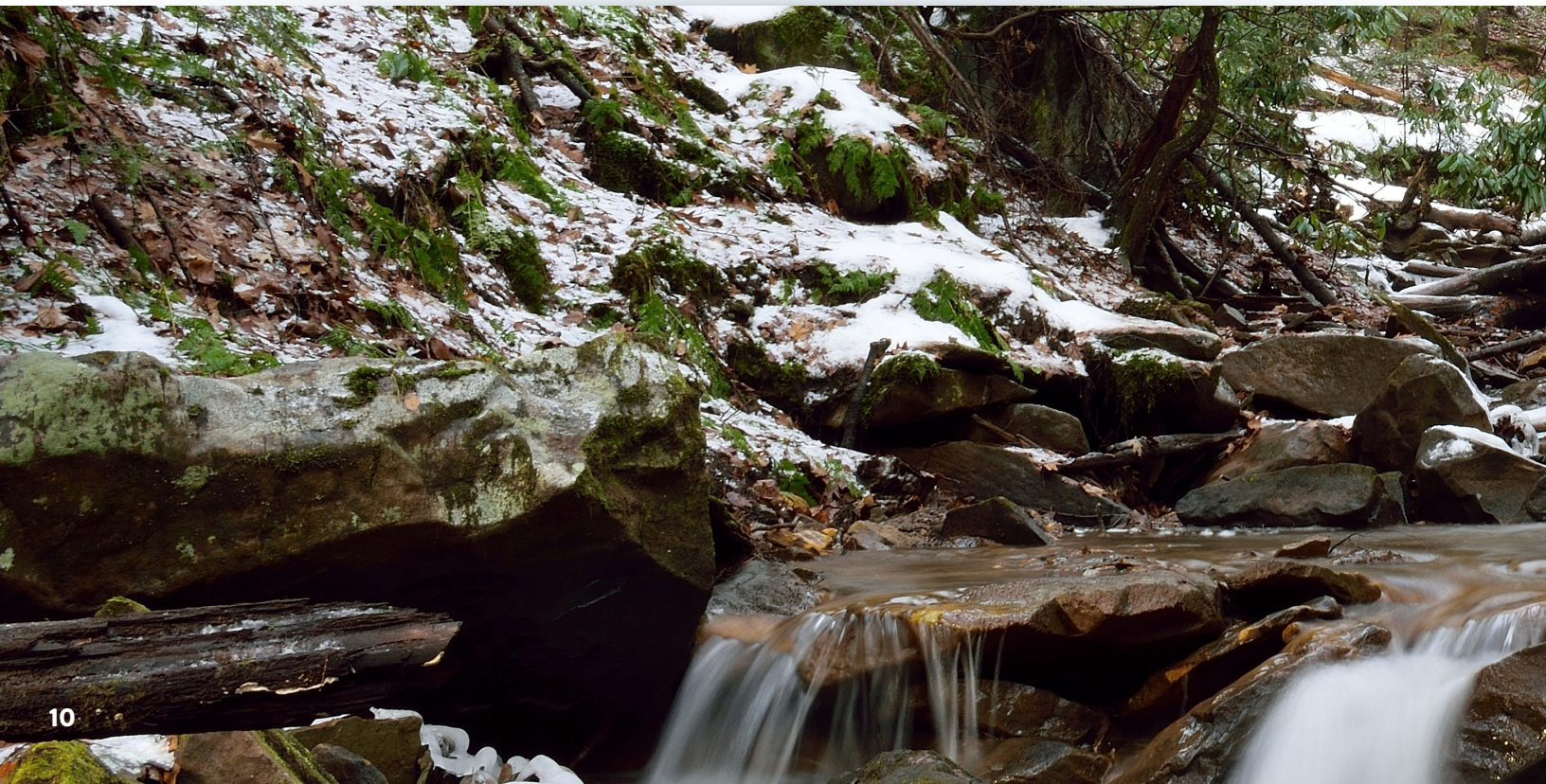
Develop staff and internal systems to ensure AWE has the ability to accomplish its mission.

Objective #2

Increase the impact of our work by ensuring accuracy and consistency in our research, resources, and policy recommendations.

Objective #3

Continue to build awareness and financial support that enables the Alliance to deliver results.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AWE's Board of Directors adopted these **Guiding Principles** in 2007. They continue to be as relevant and important today as ever.

- Significant opportunities exist for increasing water efficiency and water conservation.
- Everyone has a responsibility to use water efficiently and not waste water.
- Saving water saves money and reduces future water supply and infrastructure costs.
- Saving water helps save energy and reduce 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 the full cost of development, treatment, and distribution, including depreciation.

IN ALL ITS EFFORTS, THE ALLIANCE WILL STRIVE TO:

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

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Program Planner

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.

Alliance *for* Water Efficiency

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