

Mini Case Study: City of Georgetown

1. Please describe your water service area by demographics (i.e. population served, age of properties, average seasonal water use, lot sizes).

The City of Georgetown's total, both current and future, service area serves 456 square miles which includes 159,745 people, and 59,168 connections. The connections are made up of the following categories: 55,411 Residential, 1,266 Commercial, 30 Industrial, and 292 Institutional. In 2023, the average daily water use was 26.28 million gallons per day (MGD), and the peak usage was 45.67 million gallons. While some older homes exist within the city limits, a significant portion of our service area comprises newly developed residential properties, with an average lot size of 8,930 square feet.

2. Which drought tool that you use do you consider the most effective? Why?

Enforcing irrigation regulations has become the most effective strategy during drought conditions. Given that irrigation constitutes the highest water consumption during droughts, field/AMI enforcement and the fine system hold significant importance. Frequently, customers may be unaware of their irrigation schedule or the fact that their systems are running on the wrong day(s). Sending courtesy notifications serves as an effective educational tool as over 70% of customers adjust their system after receiving the courtesy letter. Additionally, we've implemented a tiered system for residential and non-residential violation fees, which escalates depending on the drought stage and the frequency of violations.

3. What is the response you get from your customers or community, when using this tool?

Many customers who are found in violation are not happy they have received notification and/or a fee added to their service account. Often, they deny ever having their system running. However, after our staff guides them on locating extra programs or addressing controller issues, customers typically understand the situation and appreciate the assistance.

4. How long has it been in effect?

Over the past year, we have our updated fee schedule and introduced an automated AMI violation finder. Before that, field enforcement had been consistently utilized for the preceding three years.

5. Anything else you'd like to add – something different you are thinking of implementing this upcoming, what you have determined you will not utilize again, etc.

Moving forward, our strategy involves holding more events and classes aimed at educating customers about drought and the changing conditions in Central Texas. We will continue emphasizing that turfgrass may not always be the best choice for our region and promoting the benefits of native plants in landscaping. Additionally, we want to establish new standards

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for non-residential properties, emphasizing greater on-site reuse for irrigation and other water purposes.