

Water Quantity Advisory Committee Meeting

January 12, 2015, 1pm

What do we have consensus on so far?

- Our target customer will be households with full-time occupancy, will use modern and efficient fixtures and appliances, and will have a fixed household size.
- Compliance and enforcement efforts should be at the bank level instead of the customer level.
- Customer usage data will be based on the metering program. There will be daily, annual, and peak time readings and allotments. Enforcement will only be done for significant outliers (households using significantly more than allotted.)
- Our current agreed upon range is somewhere between 150-350 gallons/day per household.
- Metric is gpd/house
- Lawn size will be used as a surrogate for other types of outdoor landscaping (crops, shrubs, trees, etc.)
- Lawn size of 500 sq. feet should be offered (may include conditions)
- We will offer an indoor only package in addition to indoor and outdoor packages.

We still need resolution on the following:

- How to handle geographic differences (UKC, LKC) in outdoor usage.
- How much should be allotted for lawn sizes? What is the customer expectation?
- We need to tighten up the indoor usage range to a final number.
- Number of recommendations
- We need to put our final recommendation into a package for presentation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Household size data presentation:

- Erin Moore reviewed a map of census areas and the percentage of households with 1-2 person households, 3-4 person households, 5+ person households in each area. Also on the map was the projected building over the next 10 years, and the current county-owned water bank areas.

Spreadsheet presentation:

- The spreadsheet contains key assumptions:
 - Upper County vs. Lower county outdoor use is different due to climate and length of growing seasons
 - Indoor consumptive use is different than outdoor consumptive use; this has an effect on the longevity of the water bank. Using consumptive use based on current upper county Ecology rule.
 - Spreadsheet uses 200 gallons per day as a starting point, but this can be changed
 - Assumption of price for base package at \$3,000 (eventually will be determined by county and the purchase of other water rights)
- There are several packages to consider for upper county and lower county:
 - Each package contains different lawn sizes
 - The package shows non-consumptive use numbers so people understand their actual usage allotments
 - Different packages show how long the bank would last. (The total capacity of the current water bank hasn't yet been confirmed.)

Discussion of spreadsheet/packages:

- Will we always have 30% as indoor consumptive use? This could be changed if there is scientific evidence to change. This is the county's responsibility to provide additional information. It is Ecology's decision on whether or not to change. Consumptive use has to do with soil and climate. Dungeness has 10% consumptive use, but they aren't as dry and have different soils.
- If bank size goes down, bank longevity also goes down.
- Where does the water come from to wash cars, for example? It wouldn't have enough of an impact to make a difference on usage.
- More packages will make things more complicated and lead to more administrative costs.
- Do we need to have different packages for upper and Lower County? Currently, the water banks are mostly in Lower County. If we don't, Upper County users would be subsidizing lower county users.
- Lawn size options discussion:
 - All agree that ½ acre lawn is not a reasonable option—too expensive.
 - 500 square feet of lawn is not much, it is only incidental use
 - What if people take trees out? Should they get credit? There is a court case that says no.
 - People may be able to purchase other water for outdoor use, although water will become less and less available, and isn't available everywhere currently. Currently, other water banks are only selling ERUs, not water specifically for outdoor use.
 - People who have access to irrigation will likely only need indoor use only package. But not all parcels have access to irrigation water, although most parcels in Lower County will. Many in Upper County won't have irrigation.
 - If they have irrigation available, should we even offer outdoor packages? What happens in a drought year? Does the county have a way to determine accurately if irrigation is available or not? What if you are assessed irrigation, but it isn't available or you don't have it yet? It would be more about if a parcel is currently served by irrigation.
 - What if they don't have irrigation? Should they be able to purchase an indoor only package?
 - We live in a dry area, people should be expected to conserve water and not have huge lawns.
 - Lawns are more important to people in Lower County compared to Upper County. The landscape and natural vegetation are different.
 - People coming from the west side are used to gardens
 - All agree that package A & B definitely should be offered (no outdoor use, and 500 square feet of lawn). Package A is only offered to folks with irrigation available. People without irrigation could only purchase Package B.
 - 80%+ of people in Upper County have purchased a package similar to B (500 square feet of outdoor use.)
 - We could have a tiered option: everyone purchases indoor package, then purchase what they want for outdoor use.
 - Offering more options may lead to other water banks going away.
 - The committee could request that the county document their decision legislatively to create a more stable ongoing program and to prevent future commissioners from changing the policy.

- What about adding a smaller amount of outdoor water to package A?

What we've decided (or come close to consensus on):

- Package A is for parcels with irrigation available.
- Package B is for parcels without irrigation available.
- Package C & D: For places with no other water bank available. Or should these even be offered?

Average recommendation based on survey at beginning of meeting: 271 gallons/day

Agenda for Next Meeting

1. Resolve majority/minority opinion on lawn size.
2. Resolve upper/lower county water duty.
3. Calculate de minimus non-irrigation quantities (car washing, window washing, dog watering) for discussion
4. Resolve indoor use quantity

The next CAC meeting will be Tuesday, February 17th, 2015 at 1:00pm in the Nanum Room at the Kittitas County Fairgrounds.