

Reinvigorating Toilet Programs With an Emphasis on 1.06 gpf Toilets

2015 PNWS-AWWA Section Conference

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Overview

- **Saving Water Partnership**
- **Toilet programs – historical & current**
- **2014 assessment**
- **Reinvigoration strategies**
- **Outcomes thus far**
- **Next steps**

Saving Water Partnership

- **Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)** implements a regional conservation program
- **SPU + 18 of our wholesale customers**
- **Water sold by SWP members: 93 mgd in 2014**
- **www.SavingWater.org**

Saving Water Partnership



Saving Water Partnership:

Cedar River Water & Sewer District
City of Bothell
City of Duvall
City of Mercer Island
City of Renton
Coal Creek Utility District
Highline Water District
North City Water District
Northshore Utility District
Olympic View Water & Sewer District
Seattle Public Utilities
Soos Creek Water & Sewer District
Water District Number 20
Water District Number 45
Water District Number 49
Water District Number 90
Water District Number 119
Water District Number 125
Woodinville Water District

History of Toilet Programs

- **Single family (SF), multifamily (MF), commercial for over 15 years**
- **Rebates** (including famous “Toilet Round Up”)
- **Free toilets**
- **Direct installs**



Current Programs

- **SF Regular:** Rebate 1.06 gpf (\$75)
- **MF Regular:** Rebate 1.28/1.06 gpf (\$75/\$150)
- **SF Low Income:** Free direct install 1.28 gpf
- **MF Low Income:** Free toilet & \$100 for installation
- **Commercial:** Rebate 1.28/1.06 gpf (\$75/\$150)

2014 Assessment

- **Cause of slowdown?**
- **Still market potential?**
- **Strategies to reinvigorate programs**

Causes of Slowdown

- 1. Lack of awareness (customers & retailers)**
- 2. Customer wariness about super-efficient toilets**
- 3. Lack of availability of 1.06 gpf models (esp. box stores)**
- 4. Confusion related to MaP**
- 5. Program structure changes**
 - Reduced rebate level
 - Eliminated SF 1.28 gpf rebate

Market Potential – Yes!

- **Still getting applications where existing toilets are 3.5+ gpf**
- **Number of program participants is much lower than customer base**

Reinvigoration Strategies (Research)

- **Surveyed other utilities offering 1.06 gpf**
 - Few utilities offering; cutting edge; CA, CO
 - Terminology varies: Combos of MaP, Premium, WaterSense, HET, ULFT
 - Use of MaP list varies; some made own list
 - Availability is challenging; better at independent retailers
 - Number of rebates is low

Reinvigoration Strategies

(Problem #1)

- **Problem #1: Lack of awareness**
(customers & retailers)
- **Solution: Pro-active marketing**
 - Retailer visits to educate staff
 - MF mailer; postage-paid return application
 - SF low income (connection to rate discount)
 - ✓ Postage-paid return mailer
 - ✓ Follow up phone calls

Reinvigoration Strategies

(Problem #2)

- **Problem #2:** Wariness about toilets
- **Solution:** Gauge satisfaction
 - Surveyed past rebate participants
 - Multiple questions on product satisfaction
 - 90+% of customers think new toilets work better
 - 100% satisfied with & would recommend new toilet
 - Will promote results in near future

Reinvigoration Strategies

(Problem #3)

- **Problem #3:** Availability of 1.06 gpf
- **Solution:** Work w/ retailers to improve
 - Clarify which retailers carry models
 - Encourage more retailers to carry models
 - Develop & market retailer list
 - Labor intensive, but critical

Reinvigoration Strategies

(Problem #4)

- **Problem #4: Confusion related to MaP**
 - MaP 101
 - Issues with MaP
 - Our Solutions

MaP 101

- **MaP = Maximum Performance**
- **Testing to document water use and solids removal; started in 2003**
- **Identifies the best performing HETs**
- **Criteria for MaP Premium list:**
 - Must be WaterSense (which is EPA)
 - Plus flush at maximum of 1.06 gpf (20% less than WaterSense)
 - Plus remove more solid waste (70% more than WaterSense toilets)

Issues with MaP

- **Website can be difficult to navigate**
- **MaP Premium list can be overwhelming**
 - **Contains many models only available in Canada**
 - **Contains many models only available to contractors**
 - **Provides more detail than many customers need**
- **Confused by term “MaP”**

Our Solutions

- **Terminology:** “Premium WaterSense”
 - Do not use “MaP”
- **List:** Created our own “short list”
 - Only models available locally (or easily ordered)
 - Simplified organization (alphabetical rather than flush type)

Outcomes Thus Far

- **SF regular:** still struggling; biggest issue is lack of product availability
- **SF low income:** huge turnaround
- **MF regular:** too soon to tell
- **MF low income:** may be close to market saturation

Next Steps

- **Develop & promote case studies**
- **Continue customer surveys**
- **Promote customer toilet satisfaction**
- **Reconnect w/ distributors/installing promoting to MF owners**
- **Continue working w/ retailers on availability (esp. box stores)**

Questions?

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www.SavingWater.org