3.7 Provide Education on Responsible Water Usage

10 Points | 20 Points | 30 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2025. The previous version of this action is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow.

Objective

Educate and empower all businesses and residents to reduce their water use.

What to Do

Note: Water conservation and watershed protection are different educational topics. Points may be eligible for the latter under the Provide Watershed Education action.

1. Implement a responsible water usage campaign targeting local residents and/or businesses. This campaign should go above and beyond current campaigns required to attain the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Be sure to identify a target audience (e.g., all residents, low- to moderate-income residents, local businesses, multifamily property owners) and tailor your outreach to the audience. Your campaign must include at least 3 events (virtual or in person) that have already taken place; these 3 events must have taken place within a total span of 1 year. The full campaign must have occurred within the last 3 years to be eligible for credit. Promotion for events does not count as an event. **(10 points per campaign, 30 points maximum)**

   Examples of responsible water usage campaigns include campaigns to promote:

   - Efficient irrigation of lawns, gardens, or other green space
   - Installation of low-flow water fixtures in homes and businesses
   - Drought-friendly practices in the home

   Submit: A completed worksheet 1, and at least one example of educational materials disseminated, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the “Partners” box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality’s role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from your public works and planning and zoning departments could be helpful in implementing this action.

In addition, your inland wetlands commission, conservation commission, or local water-focused organizations

could help implement this action.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- State Funding Readiness Project

- Coca-Cola Foundation Community Support Grants, Rolling Deadline

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents, General Information

- State of Connecticut, "Water Status"
- CT Department of Public Health, "Water Conservation"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "Water Conservation"
- CT Audubon, "Conserve Water"
- Project Wet (Water Education Teachers)
- US Department of Energy, "Net Zero Water Building Strategies"
- Alliance for Water Efficiency, "Home Water Works"

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- Connecticut Water
- Regional Water Authority
- Aquarion Water Company
- The Metropolitan District
- American Water Works Association, Connecticut Section
- Alliance for Water Efficiency

Why This Matters

Less than 1% of the Earth's freshwater is readily accessible for human use. Many people use more water than they need without knowing it. The average American family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day. Excess water often strains sewage systems and contaminates groundwater as dirty water seeps from the sewage system and into the ground. Contaminated groundwater pollutes swimming water and soil, resulting in low quality food crops grown in area gardens or farms.

Benefits

Inform residents about how they might be using more water than needed for any given task, and how they can cut the waste without sacrificing comfort or performance.

Empower and motivate people to conserve water with information about relatively simple and cheap methods. By employing these easy practices, like shortening showers or dumping leftover ice on plants instead of down the drain, residents can save money and make a difference.

Responsible water usage keeps water in aquifers, reservoirs, streams, rivers, etc., where it can support aquatic habitats and be available for produce growing. This also better prepares the state and communities for future droughts, by having more of this invaluable resource in reserve, and by making responsible water usage the norm, rather than an emergency measure.

CT Success Stories

- Southbury - May 2022 Certification