

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**September 10, 2024**

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**SUBJECT: IRRIGATION ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE**

Being good stewards of our water resources is one of the Water Utility's guiding principles and a top focus area. One of the many ways the Water Utility promotes the efficient use of water is through our water conservation programs and an irrigation ordinance.

To promote water conservation, the City Council adopted an irrigation ordinance in 2007 prohibiting watering between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., the time of day when evaporation is at its highest. The City Council revised that same ordinance in 2014 to incorporate a no more than twice per week watering schedule for all customers.

Through the MyH2O program, the Utility collects hourly usage data and can track daily and hourly consumption trends by customers. Analysis of the data from this summer shows that approximately 15,000 of our customers each week are not following the ordinance by watering on the wrong day, more than two days each week, or between the hours of 10a and 6p - when irrigation is prohibited.

In an effort to change customer behaviors, the Utility now sends water advisory postcards, emails and text messages to customers who are using more than 500 gallons of water per hour during restricted times, an amount indicating irrigation system use rather than hand-held hose watering, which is allowed on any day under the ordinance. These communications notify customers of their irrigation outside of the times prescribed by ordinance and remind them of the watering schedule. An example of these communications is attached. More than 79,000 post cards have been mailed to customers, and 4,000 emails and 16,000 text messages have been delivered this summer. These communications direct customers to our conservation website at www.savefortworthwater.org to provide additional information and watering tips. The goal of these communications is to achieve voluntary compliance with the ordinance.

If voluntary compliance is not achieved through educational efforts, the ordinance provides the ability to lock out service and charge fees to customer water bills. These fees are \$25 for the first offense, \$50 for the second offense, and \$75 for the third offense followed by a citation for those who still do not comply. To-date, these fees have not been applied to any customer. However, they remain an option for future violations especially in the hot summer months where irrigation usage is high. The Utility plans to use consumption data obtained through MyH2O, rather than visual observation of the violation, to enforce the ordinance on dedicated irrigation meters. Use from these meters is strictly limited to irrigation usage by predominately commercial customers. Data from this summer indicates approximately 31% of all violations City wide occurred on commercial irrigation meters.

Irrigation remains a significant factor influencing water consumption and the waste of water. This proactive approach will help ensure the Utility can meet future demands and promote more sustainable water usage on an ongoing basis.

For more information, contact Chris Harder, Water Director, at 817-392-5020.

David Cooke
City Manager

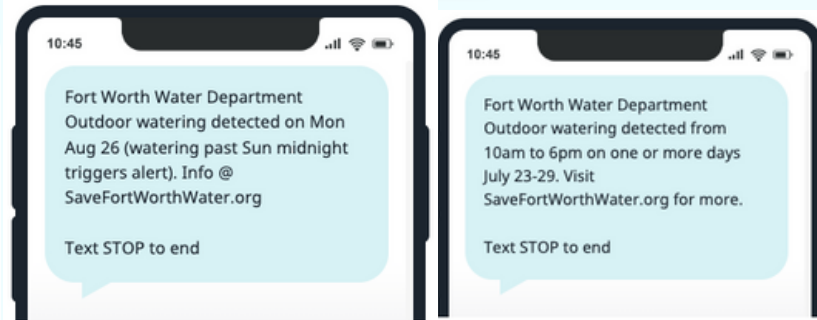
CONTENT ENGAGEMENT

Watering Violations

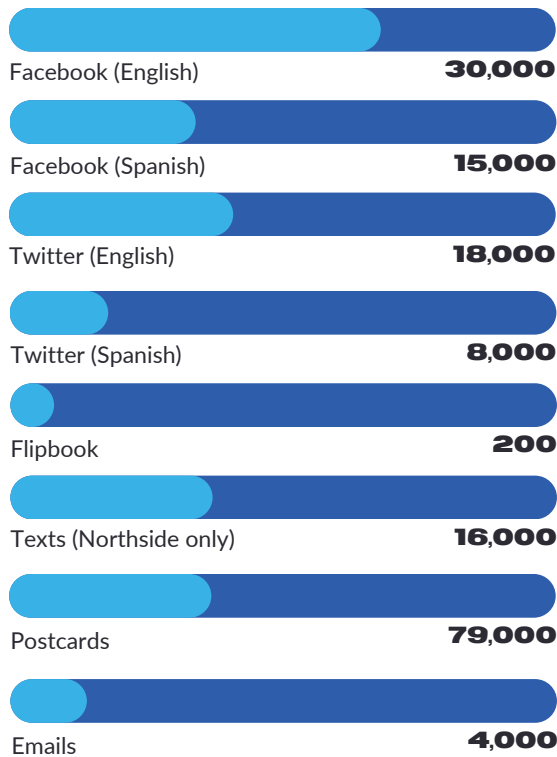
Our outreach efforts for addressing watering violations have been extensive and multi-faceted, aimed at ensuring community awareness and compliance. From July-August 20th, we conducted a comprehensive communications plan that included 80+ posts across various platforms, resulting in a total reach of over 170,000.



Example Texts



Social Channel Reach



Example Postcard

WATER CONSERVATION NOTICE

Remote water metering has detected high consumption for the account registered to this address.

The City of Fort Worth has a strict year-round water conservation ordinance. Violating the Lawn and Landscape Irrigation Conservation Ordinance may result in a fine if not immediately corrected.

Watering more than 2x per week

Watering on a Monday

Watering Wrong Time

Watering When Raining/Freezing

Watering Hard Surfaces

8/20/2024-8/26/2024

KNOW YOUR WATERING SCHEDULE

MONDAY
No watering with sprinklers or irrigation systems

TUESDAY & FRIDAY
Non-residential sites (apartments, businesses, parks, common areas)

WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY
Residential addresses ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, 8

THURSDAY & SUNDAY
Residential addresses ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, 9

NO WATERING BETWEEN 10am AND 6pm

For ordinance and irrigation advisory information visit: <https://www.SaveFortWorthWater.org>

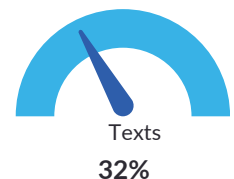
Total posts on social media:

86

Total reach:

170,000+

Text vs. Social Media Engagement



Customers are over 14x's more likely to engage with a text message than with a social media post.