

# Town of Wellington, CO

## Water Efficiency Communications Toolkit

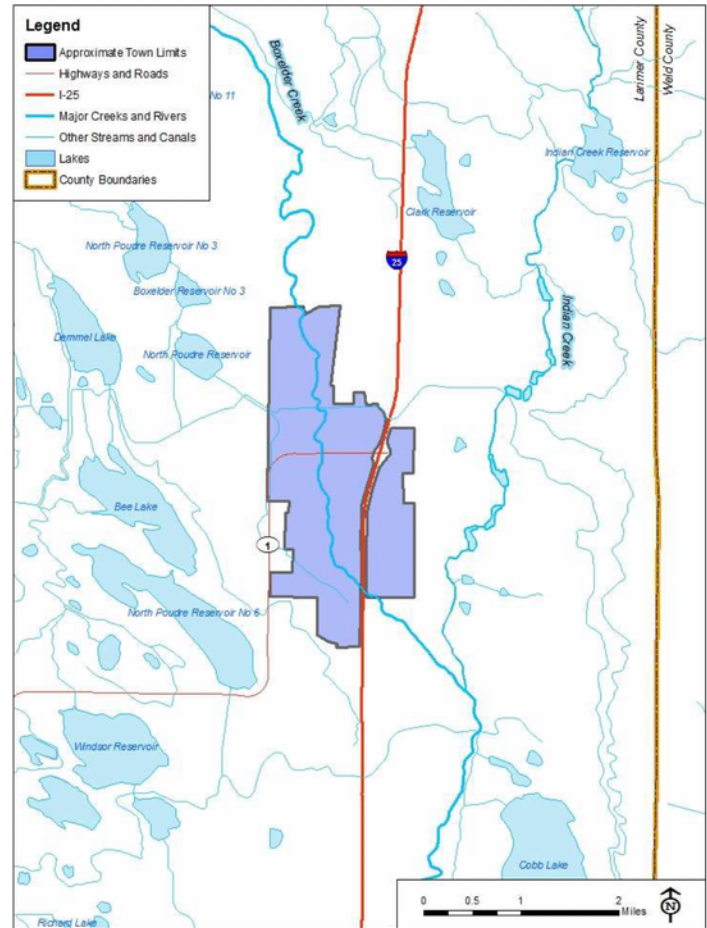


### Project at-a-Glance

#### Community Overview

- Utility/Community: Town of Wellington, CO
- Location: Wellington, CO
- Population served: 11,047
- Service area: 3.5 square miles

#### Project Partners



#### Project Benefits

- Provides Town of Wellington staff with tools, resources, and best practices they can employ to encourage their customers to become more water efficient.
- Includes a suite of short-, mid-, and long-term strategies for integrating water efficiency resources into Wellington’s current and future communication strategies.
- Offers guidance and resources around crafting messages, selecting communication channels, and tailoring content to resonate with unique demographics and perceptions of Wellington residents.

#### Project Challenges



Equity and Affordability



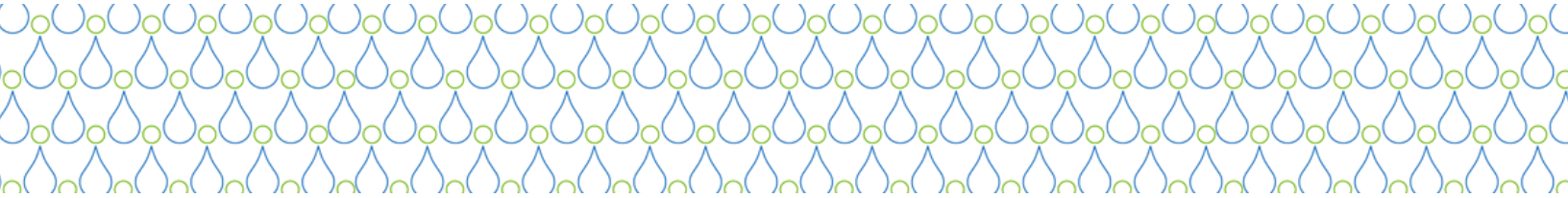
Changing Population



Lack of Reliable Water Supply

## Strategies for Success

WaterNow supported the Town of Wellington by creating a comprehensive water efficiency communications toolkit to effectively communicate water efficiency to various target audiences in their service area. This toolkit aims to empower Town of Wellington staff with the tools, resources, and best practices they can employ to encourage their customers to become more water efficient to sustain current and future generations in the face of water supply challenges and drought impacts.



## Project Spotlight

The Town of Wellington, situated at the crossroads of Colorado's Rocky Mountains and eastern plains in Larimer County, encompasses approximately 3.5 square miles and included about 11,047 residents as of 2020. Wellington has rich historical roots in Northern Colorado – dating back to the 1800's when the Town began developing agriculture and natural resources. The Town's agricultural heritage not only highlights the historical importance of water but also presents an opportunity to bridge traditional practices with modern water-saving techniques. Founded in 1902 and incorporated in 1905, the Town continues to provide a strong sense of community, and many residents are attracted to the small-town atmosphere and community spirit. The Town has seen rapid population growth since the 2000's and continues to welcome new residents and businesses each year, which has put additional stress on the existing water resources and further emphasizes the importance of optimizing its existing water supplies and systems. Understanding and addressing these local nuances will enable Town of Wellington staff to tailor their messages effectively, ensuring that water efficiency resonates with the community's values and aspirations.

The Town of Wellington remains committed to addressing their community's intricate water and wastewater infrastructure demands. It has a variety of water efficiency programs and services available to both their residential and business customers. These programs include, but are not limited to, advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and leak detection, updated landscape and irrigation standards, outdoor watering restrictions, and various customer facing programs such as: showerhead exchange program, toilet leak detection tabs, free irrigation audits, Garden in A Box, waterwise yard workshops, free rain garden installations, and more. The Town also shares indoor and outdoor water savings tips through its website. Town staff would like to communicate Wellington's unique water supply challenges appropriately and objectively to their residents and businesses, and ultimately empower their customers to further engage in their water efficiency program offerings.



*Photo Credit: Town of Wellington*

WaterNow worked closely with Town of Wellington staff to understand local community needs. The project produced a tailored water efficiency communications toolkit that aims to enable Wellington staff to effectively message the importance of water efficiency practices in a way that resonates with the community's unique values and aspirations.

Through a multi-phased approach, WaterNow:

**Phase 1:** Developed a baseline understanding of existing water conservation and outreach / engagement efforts, through a review of the Town's current planning documents, water efficiency efforts and programs, and marketing and outreach materials. WaterNow also conducted informational interviews with four staff members to gain a better understanding of the Town's past and current water conservation goals, programming, and outreach efforts.

**Phase 2:** Developed and conducted a survey to better understand how community members learn about and engage with the Town's water efficiency programs. WaterNow and the Town also hosted a virtual focus group with stakeholders from Wellington homeowners' associations (HOAs) to engage and raise awareness of the various water conservation and efficiency efforts the Town has to offer and understand HOA perspectives on water efficiency through a robust discussion.

**Phase 3:** Conducted research to identify strong national outreach programs and campaigns focused on water use efficiency and conservation, and held informational interviews with two Colorado communities to learn about their strategies and best practices for creating successful outreach campaigns and engaging with their customers.

**Phase 4:** Developed and finalized the water efficiency communications toolkit with input from Town staff.



## Project Impacts

WaterNow developed a [Water Efficiency Communications Toolkit](#) to provide the Town of Wellington staff with a comprehensive guide to effectively communicate water efficiency practices to various target audiences in their service area – from the residential community to homeowners' associations and schools and businesses. The information and strategies presented in the toolkit aim to offer town staff a wide variety of customizable resources to raise awareness about the importance of water efficiency and encourage uptake of water efficiency strategies within the community.

The toolkit offers guidance and resources around crafting messages, selecting communication channels, and tailoring content to resonate with the unique demographics and perceptions of Wellington residents. It focuses on sharing resources around the value, importance and benefits of water efficiency practices, and highlights water efficiency tips, best practices, resources, and case studies around indoor and outdoor water use. The toolkit also outlines potential short-, mid-, and long-term strategies for integrating these resources and approaches into Wellington's current and future communication strategies. Implementing a water efficiency communications strategy will help Wellington lower demands on utility treated water, as well as related stormwater, wastewater, and non-potable irrigation systems, which will benefit from the long-term supply of the Town and larger region.

### The Wellington Way: Wise Water Actions

**Every drop, Every person, Everyday**



**Wise:** Every Drop, Every Person, Everyday let's make WISE water choices – efficiency increases value and longevity

**Water:** Embrace WATER as a treasure – taking small steps for big impacts

**Well-bring:** Contributing to the WELL-BEING of our community by protecting our water quality and availability

**Worth:** honor and uphold the WORTH of water now and into the future by choosing water efficiency



## Lessons Learned

The project team identified several key lessons learned for communities looking to embark on similar water efficiency communications efforts:

- Garnering support from Town decision makers is crucial for the successful uptake of water efficiency practices and widespread community behavior change.
- Undertake a thorough stakeholder engagement process early on in the project, to hear and address their unique concerns and feedback on the proposed effort.
- Develop messaging content and strategies that can be tailored to various target audiences and updated as time goes by and conditions change.
- Tailor outreach strategies to reflect and protect staff bandwidth – for instance, developing evergreen messaging that can be created ahead of time and customized and shared when appropriate, or identifying potential synergies between water conservation messaging and other Town efforts and priorities.

**SPRING WATERING TIPS FOR A HEALTHY LAWN**

**LAWN WATERING GUIDE**

MAY	JUN	JUL	SPRAY	AUG	SEP	OCT
2 cycles of 6 minutes	2 cycles of 8 minutes	2 cycles of 9 minutes		2 cycles of 8 minutes	2 cycles of 7 minutes	2 cycles of 6 minutes
2 cycles of 16 minutes	2 cycles of 18 minutes	2 cycles of 20 minutes	ROTOR	2 cycles of 18 minutes	2 cycles of 16 minutes	2 cycles of 16 minutes

**WATER AT NIGHT BETWEEN 8 P.M. AND 8 A.M. FOR MAXIMUM ABSORPTION**

*Wellington Lawn Watering Guide*

Lawns are often a household's largest water consumer. With limited treated water (potable) available during peak demand, when you limit your outdoor water use, the focus can remain on the quality of indoor drinking water.

By making sure your sprinkler system runs efficiently and only gives your lawn what it needs, you can have a healthy lawn while cutting down on your water consumption.

One of the best ways to keep your yard healthy while using water efficiently is to implement the cycle and soak method between the hours of 8 p.m. and 8 a.m.

Watering in increments gives soil time to soak up the necessary water and allows water to travel further into the soil where the grassroots create a healthier lawn.

**The Board of Trustees will consider re-adopting water restrictions for the months of May-October.**

**WATER, REST, WATER**



Scan for more water saving tips!



**TOWN OF WELLINGTON**