

WHAT IS THE DISTRICT
DOING TO CONSERVE
WATER?

HOW CAN RESIDENTS
HELP?



ANSWERED BY:
CANDACE SCHAIBLE
USU Extension-Iron County
Horticulture and Conservation



Iron County Water Stewards

Answering Community Questions

Get to Know Your H2O: Central Iron County Water Conservancy District appreciates questions submitted by community members about the Pine Valley Water Supply Project and local water needs. As part of its role as steward of water in Cedar Valley, the District is working with a group of experts, community members and elected officials to help prepare viable solutions for the future and to respond to community questions and concerns about emergent water issues.

This week's question from the community is answered by Candace Schaible, Professional Practice Extension Assistant Professor of Horticulture and Water Conservation for the Utah State University Extension, who works closely with the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District.

Question: What is the District doing to conserve water? How can residents help?

Answer: Through my work in horticulture and water conservation for the Utah State University Extension, I've partnered with the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District on a variety of projects, including residential summer water checks, a Localscapes class, and the fifth-grade water fair.

As far as conservation is concerned, one of my recent focuses has been a "demonstration street," where homes in a new subdivision have participated by landscaping their properties in beautiful and water-wise ways. My efforts include educating residents about how they can personally conserve while still creating a beautiful landscape with a variety of plants. Three of the nine demonstration landscape plans are available here (more coming soon): <https://www.usudemonstrationstreet.com/>.

As more residents have become aware of the importance of conservation, the District has also been doing large-scale projects to improve the health of our underground aquifer, such as recharge projects. Through partnerships with the Extension and a variety of other organizations it has also participated in projects for agricultural conservation and wastewater reuse. Detailed information on its projects is available at www.cicwcd.org.

Iron County is one of only six counties that fall below the state average of 240 gallons of water used per person, per day. The Utah Division of Water Resources recently designated Iron County at an average 223 gallons of water use per person, per day. Only San Juan, Salt Lake and Utah counties use less per person.

The District guides its conservation activities to meet the State's Regional Conservation Goals of 19 percent consumption reduction by 2030, 24 percent reduction by 2040, and 28 percent reduction by 2065. In 2020, water consumption in Cedar Valley had reduced by 18 percent since 1995.

That being said, we can all do better. Here are some things residents can do to help.

Those interested can take a Localscapes class that teaches how to landscape in our Utah climate using a five-step method: Central Open Shape, Gathering Areas, Activity Zones, Paths, and then Planting Beds. The USU Extension in partnership with the District is offering an in-person, Iron County specific, course on April 6-7. Residents should register now on www.cicwcd.org/localscapes to ensure their spot.

USU Extension also partners with the District to provide free water checks each summer for local residents. We will send a trained irrigation technician to your home to evaluate the efficiency of your lawn's irrigation system. After a few tests, we leave you with a customized irrigation schedule for your lawn. On average, half of the program participants we help are overwatering, applying 47 percent more water than the lawn requires.

Our local entities also partner with the state on rebate programs through www.utahwatersavers.com for smart irrigation controllers and waterwise toilet rebates, and the state offers a weekly lawn-watering guide through www.slowtheflow.org.

While conservation alone will not provide all the water Cedar Valley needs, current programs prove to be an economical source. Through research from SUU and USU we have learned the largest savings in the basin will come from agricultural water optimization. Using water more efficiently is a long-term solution and strategy for water security. Homeowners can save water by following recommendations of USU Extension, the State of Utah, and water conservancy districts throughout the state.

Several special interest groups have recently moved their focus to Cedar Valley water and have been spreading misinformation. The Central Iron County Water Conservancy District was created by a vote of Cedar Valley residents more than two decades ago. It has consistently been dedicated to developing and stabilizing the valley's water supply through conservation, recharge, reuse, and importing of water for the benefit of all current and future water users in the region. The District utilizes scientists, experts and professionals to understand the valley's underground aquifer and to determine responsible solutions for the community as it strives to meet local water challenges. For reliable information on the Pine Valley Water Supply Project specifically and the Cedar Valley's water situation in general, please visit <https://cicwcd.org/>. For more detailed information about the Pine Valley Water Supply Project and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, please visit <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/1503915/570>.

