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## CAMPUS FACILITIES WATER CONSERVATION PLAN | ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

### Last Evaluation

06/26/2025

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### 1. Plan Purpose

Utah House Bill 121 (HB 121) directs state-owned entities, including institutions of higher education, to implement water conservation strategies, particularly relating to outdoor water use and landscape design. This plan outlines how Mountainland Technical College (MTECH) will comply with and advance the goals of HB 121 across all campuses, while promoting sustainable practices, maintaining aesthetics, and educating the campus community on responsible water use. These goals will be implemented throughout the duration of HB 121 and thereafter.

### 2. Definitions

**Xeriscape** - Landscaping designed and installed in an effort to conserve water and natural resources.

### 3. References

- Utah Division of Facilities Construction Management

Utah Division of Water Resources

Utah H.B. 121, *Health Education Amendments*

### 4. Water Use Audit and Benchmarking

Timeline: May 2023 - August 2025

- 4.1 Conduct a comprehensive audit of current water usage, focusing on irrigation systems, landscaping, and outdoor maintenance.

- 4.2 Utilize state-provided or third-party water tracking tools to benchmark water use data.
- 4.3 Identify high-use zones and prioritize areas for improvement.
- 4.4 Continued monitoring of water usage to ensure all zones are functioning within set radius and investigating problem areas for breaks or issues.
- 4.5 Coordinate with Utah Division of Water Resources for guidance and reporting.

## **5. Turf and Landscape Transition Plan**

Timeline: Spring 2024 - Spring 2027

- 5.1 No more than 20% of the grounds at each facility may be lawn or turf.
- 5.2 Replace removed turf with water-wise alternatives such as:
  - 5.2.1 Native and drought-tolerant plants.
  - 5.2.2 Mulch, gravel, and hardscape.
  - 5.2.3 Xeriscape design elements.
- 5.3 Cut basins around trees in turf areas and replace turf with loamy soil to help with water retention. Repair dry areas in turf areas by building up loam to prevent overwatering.
- 5.4 Quarterly tuning of all irrigation sprinkler heads.
- 5.5 Fertilize all turf areas regularly to maintain health and in turn, use less water.
- 5.6 Prioritize areas around building entrances, walkways, and unused open space across the Lehi, Orem, and Provo campuses.

## **6. Irrigation Improvements**

Timeline: Spring 2023 - Ongoing

- 6.1 Upgrade all irrigation systems to include:
  - 6.1.1 Hunter Hydrowise Smart Controllers with weather-based scheduling that will not water on rainy days, excessive windy days, or days cooler than 70 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - 6.1.2 Hunter Flow Meters that allow mitigation of mainline breaks, stuck valves, and broken lateral lines.
  - 6.1.3 Direct watering micro nozzles in replacement of fixed spray heads in flower beds.

- 6.1.4 Annual mulch replacement in flower beds to eliminate high flow, retain more water, and prevent erosion.
- 6.2 Implement zone-specific watering plans that follow Utah water guidelines.
- 6.3 Annual audit of the irrigation system.
- 6.4 Annual pruning of trees to remove undesirable growth and reduce unnecessary water usage.
- 6.5 Watering goals:
  - 6.5.1 Less frequent deep waterings (i.e. 3x a week vs. daily).
  - 6.5.2 Reduce outdoor water usage by 5% by FY 2023 and 25% by FY 2026 by using the FY 2020 benchmark.

## **7. New Construction and Renovation Procedure**

Effective: Immediately

- 7.1 Require all new construction and major renovations to include:
  - 7.1.1 Low-water landscaping.
  - 7.1.2 Efficient irrigation systems.

## **8. Education and Outreach**

Timeline: Spring 2023 - Ongoing

- 8.1 Send regularly scheduled energy and water conservation educational emails to students and staff.
- 8.2 Display signage near water-wise landscaping to highlight changes and water-saving facts.
- 8.3 Engage students and staff in water-wise gardening projects, sustainability events, or volunteer landscaping efforts.

## **9. Evaluation, Reporting, and Compliance**

Annual Review Each Spring

- 9.1 The Facilities Department will submit annual reports to the Utah Division of Facilities Construction and Management (DFCM) summarizing:
  - 9.1.1 Water savings achieved.
  - 9.1.2 Sod reductions completed.

- 9.1.3 Project milestones.
- 9.2 The Facilities Department will submit outdoor water use data to the Division of Water Resources by:
  - 9.2.1 October 1, 2022 - data for FY 2020 and FY 2022
  - 9.2.2 October 1, 2023 - data for FY 2023
  - 9.2.3 October 1, 2026 - data for FY 2026
- 9.3 Annual water conservation evaluations will be conducted by the Facilities Department:
  - 9.3.1 Irrigation technology upgrades (must meet efficiency standards, include rain/wind shutoff, and soil moisture sensors).
  - 9.3.2 Replacement of lawn with drought-resistant landscaping.
  - 9.3.3 Metering updates for water-consuming processes.
  - 9.3.4 Repair and optimization of irrigation systems.

## 10. Expected Outcomes

- 10.1 Reduce outdoor water usage by 5% by FY 2023 and 25% by FY 2026 by using the benchmark FY 2020.
- 10.2 Compliance with HB 121 by the end of FY 2026.
- 10.3 Increased public awareness of sustainable campus operations.
- 10.4 Long-term savings in water bills and maintenance costs.

## 10. Evaluation History

Last Evaluation
This plan was adopted by the facilities department in April of 2025.