



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 2, 2021

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Help Out in a Drought

Customers asked to use 10% less water to protect fish habitat

ANACORTES — Due to seasonal low water flow conditions in the Skagit River, the City of Anacortes and Skagit Public Utility District water customers are being asked to voluntarily reduce their water use by 10%.

The Washington State Department of Ecology has established minimum instream flows for the Skagit River. These minimum flow levels fluctuate throughout the year and are designed to protect fish habitat.

The Skagit River is a primary source of water for Anacortes and Skagit PUD. When the water in the Skagit River falls below certain levels needed to protect fish habitat, Anacortes and the PUD are required to notify customers to conserve water.

HOW CAN WATER CONSERVATION HELP SAVE FISH?

The more water people use or waste, the less there is for fish in rivers and streams. Conserving water helps increase the instream flow of water in rivers and streams, especially during the dry summer months and other low-flow periods. An instream flow is simply the minimum amount of water required in a stream or river to safeguard fish habitat. Increasing the instream flow helps fish swim upstream and down, improves spawning habitat, and protects other wildlife and our future water resources.

Although every year is different, there are generally two times a year when we anticipate the Skagit River falling below instream flow levels — once in late winter/early spring and again in late summer/fall.

WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO TO HELP?

We're taking this opportunity to remind our customers that it's always prudent to conserve our resources, whether water or any other limited source. Everyone can do their part in conserving this vital resource by reducing their water consumption. We're asking every customer to voluntarily save 15–20 gallons of water per day.

- Here are some simple water-saving ideas customers can use at home:
- Take a sprinkler break. Grass doesn't have to be bright green year-round. It's natural for it to turn brown during summer's hottest months.
- A leaky toilet can waste hundreds of gallons a day. Check for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank and waiting 5 – 7 minutes to flush. If color shows up in the bowl, you have a leak!
- Don't run the washer for just one shirt or dish. Save water, energy, and money by waiting to wash until you have a full load.
- The average shower is eight minutes. Consider switching to a 5-minute shower, which can cut water use by almost half.
- Turn the water off while you brush your teeth! If you leave the water running, you can end up using as much as four gallons each time you clean your teeth.

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