

# SOAP Action Update

## Water Conservation at Snohomish County Jail



### Conserving water also saves energy!

Jails use a lot of water to meet occupant needs for drinking, showers, toilet flushing, laundry, cooking, cleaning, space heating, and more. In fact, Snohomish County's two jails use a little over 153 million gallons per year – about the same volume as 232 Olympic size swimming pools! Heated water is even more resource intensive, as it requires energy to raise the temperature of water.

Snohomish County completed several water conservation measures at the jail, including the installation of low-flow water fixtures, a new Ozone laundry system, and controls on toilets and showers. These retrofits were completed in the fall of 2012 and, as a result, the County is conserving nine million gallons of water each year – that's enough water to fill 13 Olympic size pools. Water conservation measures at the jails reduced consumption by approximately 7%, and saved the County an estimated \$107,384 per year.

Water conservation is important to meet a variety of current and future needs, including: fresh water for drinking, domestic uses, agricultural and industrial uses, transport, preservation of aquatic habitat for fish and other species, electricity generation, and more. Local climate change impacts, such as reduced snow pack, likelihood of summer drought, and changes in precipitation patterns, also threaten our regional water supply and Pacific Northwest natural resources<sup>1</sup>. For more information about how you can help conserve water, visit these websites:

- [Environmental Protection Agency - Conserving Water](#)
- [Cascade Water Alliance](#)
- [Alliance for Water Conservation](#)

<sup>1</sup> University of Washington Climate Impacts Group; <http://cse.washington.edu/cig/res/rc/rckeyfindings.shtml>

## environmental goals

Snohomish County is working to achieve the energy and resource conservation goals established in our internal Sustainable Operations Action Plan (SOAP) for government operations. Conserving water and energy at the County jail is one example of how we are taking action to achieve our SOAP Goals and Objectives, namely:

- **Goal 3:** Conserve Resources and Use Renewable Energy Technologies
- **Objective 3L:** Reduce energy and water use through equipment upgrades, procurement and construction practices, and Resource Conservation in County operations
- **Objective 3M:** Reduce potable water use in County facilities by 1.25% per year by 2017 against 2007-2009 average baseline.

## environmental benefits

Water conservation retrofits at the Snohomish County jail has.....



Saved nearly 9 million gallons of water. The size of 13 Olympic-sized swimming pools.



Saved more than 40,000 therms of natural gas because the water saved is water that does not need to be heated.

## economic case

By taking action to achieve Snohomish County sustainability goals, and saving water at the jails, the county realizes an economic benefit as well.

- **\$107,384** is saved per year from reduced water and water heating expenses.