

Water usage and conservation

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This paper investigates the literature on water usage and conservation in the State of Utah. According to the literature, the United States government gives a comprehensive report on water usage, sources and conservation in every five years. The report covers agricultural consumption, industrial use and the consumption in thermoelectric generation. In addition, the report usually details the sources of water as well as the conservative measures that can be used to protect them. In 2000, the State of Utah consumed 4.2 billion gallons of water each day. Irrigation is the largest consumer of water in the State of Utah, taking up to 79% every year. It's basically due to the fact that the state depends on irrigated agriculture for food production. In fact, the amount of water used for irrigated agriculture has been increasing over the years. According to the literature, this steady increase can be attributed to drought conditions in most parts of Utah, as well as the increasing industrialization. The major sources of water in Utah include lakes, streams, rivers as well as underground water.

A greater percentage of this water comes from surface sources, most of which is used for industrial and agricultural purposes. However, the state depends on underground water for its drinking supplies, especially in the urban areas. Underground water is generally viewed to be of a higher quality and, therefore, directly used as it does not require much treatment.

According to statistics, the State of Utah ranks among the top ten states that depend on ground water for their drinking supplies. In most cases, the municipal is forced to look for alternative sources of water, including recycling. It's because agriculture takes most of the surface water while household supplies take almost all the underground water supply.

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This explains the strain that the state has on its water resources (Jackson and Stevens 1981). There is a general awareness that ground water is not as readily replenished as surface water. Thus, focus has shifted considerably to the conservation of ground water as compared to surface water. The Central Utah Water has the primary responsibility to manage and supply water to the residents of the state. In order to ensure proper conservation of water, the state has greatly focused on building of reservoirs in order to collect water in anticipation of drought conditions. Thus, agricultural fields hardly run out of surface water to the extent that it may be necessary to use ground water in the fields.

According to the literature available, there is a project that conveys water from the Utah Lake to the regions surrounding Utah Lake Region Basin. It's basically meant to ensure steady supply of water to the farms as well as the industries around the region. In addition, it enables the authorities to conserve the surface water and treat it in order to make it fit for human consumption. Apart from the large scale conservation units, the state government greatly encourages indoor conservation of water to boost public supplies. According to literature, conservation is not only in terms of storage and recycling, but also in terms of economic use. For instance, there has lately been a great emphasis on installation of low water use fixtures and fixing all the possible leaks in the water supply system.

These projects are mostly undertaken in public institutions like hospitals and universities. Indeed, they have greatly helped to ensure adequate conservation of water in Utah (Arnow 1984). In conclusion, water remains the most important natural resource to the residents of Utah because they

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occasionally experience rather severe droughts. Thus, the state government has put up measures to promote economic usage to ensure constant supply.