

Water Conservation Policy in an Arid Metropolitan Region:

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ABSTRACT

Using the 1980 Groundwater Management Act as a starting point, this poster documents shifts in residential water conservation policy that have resulted from the implementation of the Act's three consecutive management plans in the Phoenix Active Management Area (AMA). A combination of historical and geographical methods is used to examine water conservation policy trends in the ten most populous municipalities in the greater Phoenix region. Information on residential water conservation policies and programs across municipalities is evaluated using GIS maps, a water conservation policy typology, qualitative information from interviews, and historical narrative. While GIS maps document chronological changes and geographic patterns in water conservation policy, the water conservation typology (created from municipal web pages and policy documents) summarizes policy efforts aimed at reducing regional water demand through regulations, incentives, and information-based approaches. Additionally, information obtained from eight interviews with water conservation specialists (interviews with reps from Mesa and Avondale are forthcoming) reveals the perceived success of these policy tools. Collectively, the typology, maps, interviews and historical research document periods of greater and lesser attention to conservation, acknowledge shifts in the types of policy tools used to reduce water demand over time, and demonstrate geographic patterns in conservation policy within the greater metropolitan region.