



In 1992, the City of Kamloops retained Urban Systems to review the water demands facing the community and recommend options for managing these demands. Following in-depth analysis of water demand characteristics, two options were formulated. The first involved an extensive program of capital improvements aimed at bolstering the community's water supply, storage and distribution capabilities. The second involved making better use of the water resources currently available. The second option – demand management – was recommended and accepted by City staff and Council. This represented the birth of the City's WaterSmart program.

The early years of WaterSmart concentrated on raising public education and awareness within the community regarding the wise use of water resources. Activities such as in-school education programs, displays at special community events and an extensive media program characterized the initial phases of WaterSmart. In addition, considerable effort was directed toward the management of demand by large water users in the community, including the City itself. Urban Systems was involved directly in designing and carrying out a wide range of related activities. Many partnerships were formed during this process, including a strong relationship with BC21 PowerSmart which saw the City awarded special recognition for its WaterSmart program in 1996.

Through the later 1990s, additional effort was directed toward the investigation of universal water metering as a potential means of further managing water demands. Urban Systems was retained by the City to undertake benefit:cost analyses of universal water metering, and to identify other possible advantages and disadvantages of such a program.

Estimating the capital value of the WaterSmart program is a difficult task. The value of WaterSmart lies in the millions of dollars of water and sewer capital projects which have been scaled down and/or deferred as a result of WaterSmart. Kamloops has been held up as a leader and pioneer in the field of water demand management in British Columbia, and many communities around the province have based their programs on the WaterSmart model.

client
City of Kamloops

project
WaterSmart

services
Planning and Management Services

year
1992 – present

file
7.0500.0077.01

