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WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Exposition Offers Solutions to States' Water Woes

Report: 36 U.S. states could face water shortages by 2013

LAS VEGAS (July 2) – Faced with the combined effects of climate change and increased customer demand, the number of states facing water shortages could exceed predictions laid out in a U.S. Government Accountability (GAO) study.

To help meet those challenges, water officials from across the country are encouraged to attend the second WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Exposition (WSI), slated for October 7-9 in Las Vegas.

“Although most people identify the desert Southwest with drought and water shortages, the fact is, water scarcity is an issue in all regions of the United States,” said Doug Bennett, the conference’s strategic relations coordinator and Conservation Manager for the Southern Nevada Water Authority. “To meet this challenge, anyone who has a role in water management and conservation should consider attending WSI, the largest water efficiency conference of its kind in the world.”

According to the GAO’s 2003 study, “Freshwater Supply: States' View of How Federal Agencies Could Help Them Meet the Challenges of Expected Shortages,” water managers in 36 states anticipated local, regional or statewide shortages within 10 years, even under average water conditions.

However, ongoing drought conditions in areas of the country unaccustomed to water shortages—such as Florida and metropolitan Atlanta—as well as depletion of the Great Lakes, coupled with the effects of climate change, have accelerated water scarcity issues throughout the country.

States in the Pacific Northwest, the northern Rocky Mountains and the Upper Great Plains, as well as Alaska and Hawaii, anticipate shortages on a regional level. Eastern Seaboard, New England and the Southern states are forecasting localized water shortages.

“The challenge of water scarcity on a national level is growing at a much faster rate than most water professionals anticipated,” Bennett said. “That’s why we encourage them to attend WSI, where they can learn and share ideas and experiences in the realm of water efficiency, and can apply that knowledge at home.”

WSI features a comprehensive slate of professional sessions, as well as an expo hall with the latest in water efficiency products.

“Early bird” conference registration is available through July 9 at a discounted rate of \$330, via the conference’s Web site, www.WaterSmartInnovations.com. After July 9, full conference registration will increase to \$390. WaterSmart Innovations will be held at the South Point Hotel and Conference Center, at the south end of the famed Las Vegas Strip.

About WaterSmart Innovations

Presented by the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) WaterSense Program, WaterSmart Innovations is a non-profit event that serves to broaden knowledge of innovations in urban water efficiency and water conservation including products, programs and outreach. More information is available at www.WaterSmartInnovations.com.

Other organizations collaborating with the SNWA and the EPA on WaterSmart Innovations include the American Water Works Association, Alliance for Water Efficiency, Audubon International, GreenPlumbers USA, International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, International Center for Water Technology, Irrigation Association and California Urban Water Conservation Council. The partnering organizations have a combined 72,000 members.

Major commercial conference sponsors to date include Rain Bird Corp., Caroma, MWH, Parsons, Ewing Irrigation, AECOM Inc., Black & Veatch, Water Management, Inc., Hunter Industries, Inc., Niagara Conservation and Brown & Caldwell.

For more information, visit www.WaterSmartInnovations.com.

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