

WATER CONSERVATION MODIFICATIONS

2022 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

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Senate Sponsor: Michael K. McKell

| | | | |
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LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill modifies provisions related to conservation of water and related provisions regarding lawn or turf.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ imposes requirements related to water conservation at state government facilities and by state agencies;
- ▶ provides for incentives to replace lawn or turf with drought resistant landscaping;
- ▶ grants rulemaking authority;

- 28 ▶ requires the Legislative Water Development Commission to study water
- 29 conservation in the state; and
- 30 ▶ makes technical changes.

31 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

32 None

33 **Other Special Clauses:**

34 None

35 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

36 AMENDS:

37 **73-27-103**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 354

38 ENACTS:

39 **63A-5b-1108**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

40 **73-10-36**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



42 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

43 Section 1. Section **63A-5b-1108** is enacted to read:

44 **63A-5b-1108. Water conservation and state government facilities.**

45 (1) As used in this section:

46 (a) "Division" means the Division of Water Resources.

47 (b) "Grounds" means the real property, whether fenced or unfenced, of the parcel of
48 land on which is located a state government facility, including a public or private driveway,
49 street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, or parking garage on the property.

50 (c) (i) Except as provided in Subsection (1)(c)(ii), "lawn or turf" means nonagricultural
51 land planted in closely mowed, managed grasses.

52 (ii) "Lawn or turf" does not include a golf course, park, athletic field, or sod farm.

53 (d) "Reconstructed" means that a building is subject to construction that affects the
54 exterior of the building or the building's grounds.

55 (e) (i) "State agency" means a department, division, office, entity, agency, or other unit
56 of state government.

57 (ii) "State agency" includes an institution of higher education.

58 (f) (i) "State government facility" means a building, structure, or other improvement
59 that is constructed on property owned by the state, the state's departments, commissions,
60 institutions, or other state agency.

61 (ii) "State government facility" does not include:

62 (A) an unoccupied structure that is a component of the state highway system;

63 (B) a privately owned structure that is located on property owned by the state, the
64 state's department, commission, institution, or other state agency; or

65 (C) a structure that is located on land administered by the trust lands administration
66 under a lease, permit, or contract with the trust lands administration.

67 (2) (a) Unless exempted under Subsection (2)(b), a state agency that owns or occupies
68 a state government facility that is built or reconstructed on or after May 4, 2022, may not have
69 more than 20% of the grounds of the state government facility be lawn or turf.

70 (b) The division may exempt a state government facility from the restrictions of
71 Subsection (2)(a) if the division determines that the purposes of a state agency that occupies the
72 state government facility requires additional lawn or turf.

73 (3) (a) A state agency shall reduce the state agency's outdoor water use as compared to
74 the state agency's outdoor water use for fiscal year 2020:

75 (i) in an amount equal to or greater than 5% by the end of fiscal year 2023; and

76 (ii) in an amount equal to or greater than 25% by the end of fiscal year 2026.

77 (b) A state agency shall submit the following information to the division:

78 (i) by no later than October 1, 2022:

79 (A) the state agency's water use for fiscal year 2020; and

80 (B) the state agency's water use for fiscal year 2022;

81 (ii) by no later than October 1, 2023, the state agency's water use for fiscal year 2023;

82 and

83 (iii) by no later than October 1, 2026, the state agency's water use for fiscal year 2026.

84 (c) The division shall:

85 (i) post the information provided to the division under this Subsection (3) on a public
86 website; and

87 (ii) by rule, made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative
88 Rulemaking Act, establish a uniform measure for purposes of this section of a state agency's
89 water use.

90 (4) Except when allowed by the division, a state agency may not water landscapes at a
91 state government facility between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

92 (5) A state agency shall do the following at a state government facility:

93 (a) follow weekly lawn watering guides if issued by the division;

94 (b) manually shut off systems during rain and wind events if the landscape irrigation
95 system does not have rain and wind shutoff functions;

96 (c) implement a leak-detection and repair program for outdoor use;

97 (d) coordinate with the division to implement water efficient methods, technologies,
98 and practices; and

99 (e) at least annually:

100 (i) evaluate opportunities to update irrigation technology with devices that:

101 (A) meet national recognized standards for efficiency;

102 (B) include rain and wind shutoff functions; and

103 (C) include soil moisture sensors;

104 (ii) evaluate opportunities to:

105 (A) subject to Subsection (2), limit lawn or turf on the grounds of a state government
106 facility and replace lawn or turf with water-wise plants; and

107 (B) update facility-management technology to include metering for water-consuming
108 processes related to irrigation and mechanical systems; and

109 (iii) audit and repair a landscape irrigation system so that the landscape irrigation
110 system is operating at maximum acceptable efficiency.

111 Section 2. Section **73-10-36** is enacted to read:

112 **73-10-36. State incentives to use drought resistant landscaping.**

113 (1) As used in this section:

114 (a) "Division" means the Division of Water Resources.

115 (b) (i) Except as provided in Subsection (1)(b)(ii), "lawn or turf" means nonagricultural
116 land planted in closely mowed, managed grasses.

117 (ii) "Lawn or turf" does not include a golf course, park, athletic field, or sod farm.

118 (c) "Owner" means an owner of private land where a water end user is located.

119 (d) "Water end user" means a person who enters into a water contract to obtain water
120 from a retail water provider for residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional use.

121 (2) (a) Subject to a \$5,000,000 aggregate annual cap, the division may provide an
122 incentive to an owner to remove lawn or turf from land owned by the owner and replace the
123 lawn or turf with drought resistant landscaping.

124 (b) If the division provides an incentive under this section, the division shall provide
125 the incentive in the order that an application for the incentive is filed.

126 (c) To be eligible for an incentive under this section, the owner shall at the time the
127 owner applies for the incentive:

128 (i) have living lawn or turf on the land owned by the owner that the owner intends to
129 replace with drought resistant landscaping;

130 (ii) be in good standing with a retail water provider so that the owner has no unpaid
131 water bills; and

132 (iii) participate voluntarily in the removal of the lawn or turf in that the removal is not
133 required by governmental code or policy.

134 (d) An owner may not receive an incentive under this section if the owner has
135 previously received an incentive under this section for the same property.

136 (e) The division may not provide an owner an incentive under this section in an amount
137 greater than 50% of the cost of replacing the lawn or turf with drought resistant landscaping.

138 (3) The division may make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
139 Administrative Rulemaking Act:

140 (a) establishing the process by which an owner obtains an incentive under this section;
141 and

142 (b) defining what constitutes drought resistant landscaping.

143 Section 3. Section **73-27-103** is amended to read:

144 **73-27-103. Duties and powers of commission.**

145 (1) The commission shall consider and make recommendations to the Legislature and
146 governor on the following issues:

147 (a) how the water needs of the state's growing agricultural, municipal, and industrial
148 sectors will be met;

149 (b) what the impact of federal regulations and legislation will be on the ability of the
150 state to manage and develop its compacted water rights;

151 (c) how the state will fund water projects;

152 (d) whether the state should become an owner and operator of water projects;

153 (e) how the state will encourage the implementation of water conservation programs;

154 and

155 (f) other water issues of statewide importance.

156 (2) The commission shall consult with the Division of Water Resources and the Board
157 of Water Resources regarding:

158 (a) recommendations for rules, criteria, targets, processes, and plans described in
159 Subsection [73-10g-105\(3\)](#); and

160 (b) the scope of any request for proposals that may be issued by the Division of Water
161 Resources and Board of Water Resources to assist in creating the rules, criteria, targets,
162 processes, and plans described in Subsection [73-10g-105\(3\)](#).

163 (3) The commission shall support community efforts to develop a unified, state water
164 strategy to promote water conservation and efficiency that:

165 (a) is consistent with Section 73-1-21;

166 (b) is created with the aid of stakeholders including water conservancy districts created
167 under Title 17B, Chapter 2a, Part 10, Water Conservancy District Act;

168 (c) includes model ordinances or policies consistent with the unified, statewide water
169 strategy that may be adopted by political subdivisions; and

170 (d) respects different needs of different political subdivisions or geographic regions of
171 the state.

172 (4) The commission may:

173 (a) form one or more working groups from the membership of the commission to
174 consider and study the issues described in this section; and

175 (b) meet up to six times per calendar year without approval from the Legislative
176 Management Committee.

177 (5) (a) In addition to supporting community efforts to develop a unified, state water
178 strategy to promote water conservation and efficiency under Subsection (3), the commission
179 shall study water conservation in the state on public and private land including:

180 (i) the management of water resources in the state; and

181 (ii) programs and policies to promote water conservation in the state that also protect
182 and support existing water rights.

183 (b) The commission shall report the commission's findings under this Subsection (5),
184 including any proposed legislation, to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment
185 Interim Committee by no later than the 2022 November interim meeting of the Natural
186 Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee.