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**DIVERSIFY YOUR WATER CONSERVATION PORTFOLIO:
THE CITY OF SANTA FE'S WATER CONSERVATION JOURNEY**

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ABSTRACT: Water conservation programs are not built overnight. Drought prone areas have been leaders in water conservation out of necessity. Drought is a motivating factor for local governments to enact water conservation programs. However, a reactionary approach is not always beneficial to the community nor is it well received. The City of Santa Fe Sangre de Cristo Water Division built the water conservation program in incremental steps and as a result created a long term successful water conservation program. Since 1997, the program has expanded and diversified to include education activities ranging from children to adult, rebate programs, the use of media for outreach, and leading by example. Several types of media are used: radio advertisements, newspaper articles, water bill inserts, distribution of literature via information racks located throughout the City, distribution of promotional items and participation in community events. Additional outreach efforts include large exterior bus ads, television commercials, and promotional commercials in local movie theaters. Water conservation education occurs on several levels and typically contains a central message. The Sangre de Cristo Water Division sponsors in-school learning units, teacher training, adult education classes, brochures, and other public outreach. The City has enacted ordinances allowing Water Division customers to receive rebates for retrofitting water conservation devices in an effort to maximize water efficiency and to conserve the present and future water supply. A demonstration garden at the Water Division features rainwater harvesting techniques including a recycled water feature powered with solar. The garden consists of several areas designed behind a theme (e.g., desert rose garden, shades of purple, high desertscape, and "zero-scape") and incorporates efficient irrigation including a weather based controller. The key performance measure of any municipal water conservation program is determined by the per capita water use. City of Santa Fe Sangre de Cristo Water Division customers reduced their water use by 42 percent from 1995 to 2009. The dedication to conserve water has been extraordinary, with per person usage dropping from 168 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) in 1995, to 98 gpcd by the end of 2009. These low per capita per day water use statistics are among the lowest in New Mexico and the Southwestern United States.

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