



NEWPORT NEWS WATERWORKS - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Caring for the environment helps Waterworks produce safe, high-quality drinking water. Keeping reservoirs and watersheds free from pollution allows us to meet strict public health standards. But environmental stewardship is also important because we care about our future generations.

In 2005, Newport News Waterworks established, along with other City departments, an Environmental Management System Team. The team identifies ways to increase environmental sensitivity and decrease environmental impacts. The team's efforts have, among other things helped the Harwoods Mill Treatment Facility earn the "Exemplary Environmental Enterprise" Award from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.



RESOURCE CONSERVATION

We actively manage 12,000 acres of watershed properties throughout the Peninsula to increase protection of our reservoirs. Our Natural Resources Division manages tree stock, monitors the watershed for encroachment and activities that could cause environmental harm, such as spills or illegal dumping, and monitors water resources and collects samples for testing. They also build and manage stormwater facilities to treat runoff from development.

Conservation also means leak prevention maintenance to the network of 41,500 valves and 1,700 miles of pipes that serve the Peninsula.

Finally, Waterworks conducts outreach to its customers about the need for using water wisely. This is done on a local as well as a region-wide basis through various forms of media.

RECYCLING

Waterworks has recycled paper and cardboard since 1997 and thus far this has recycled over 1 million pounds of material and resulted in saving nearly 10,000 trees and almost 4 million gallons of water.

Today we recycle a lot more than just paper and cardboard. We recycle aluminum cans, bottles, batteries and aerosol cans at all our facilities. In our vehicle shop, the Environmental Management System Team has expanded recycling to include ferrous metals, aluminum and steel, motor oil, tires, antifreeze, and auto batteries.

Waterworks also recycles organics and water. Since 1994 Waterworks has recycled organic materials wrung out during the water treatment process. This material is applied to the land rather than taken to a landfill. Each day, during removal of the organics, we recycle about 2 – 3 million gallons of water to the reservoirs.



ENERGY & FUEL CONSERVATION

Using energy efficiently at Waterworks runs the gamut from implementing a no-idling policy to encouraging carpooling to save gasoline. It means finding opportunities to conduct business through conference calls and webinars to reduce the need for driving to meetings.

Other energy reducing strategies have ranged from installing motion sensors in facilities so lights are turned off when not needed, to running pumps strategically to use less electricity from Dominion Virginia Power for distributing water throughout the Peninsula.

Efforts also include reducing turf at facilities to cut back on the time and fuel needed to cut grass and replacing larger engines with smaller engines to increase fuel economy.

For more information about Waterworks environmental stewardship programs, please call 926-1000.