

Commercial

WaterSaver Restaurant Program

Water Conservation Program



The Challenge

There are more than 3,000 restaurants in San Antonio, from great Tex-Mex and barbecue, to the finest in elegant dining.

San Antonio Water System identified this business sector as a prime opportunity for water savings with a few simple equipment changes. We partnered with the San Antonio Restaurant Association to expand our reach.

The Solution

The WaterSaver Restaurant program was launched in 2004. To date, 1,230 - or nearly 40 percent - of the restaurants in the San Antonio area have joined this program, which is credited with saving 175 million gallons of water every year.

To be certified a WaterSaver Restaurant, three requirements must be met:

- All pre-rinse spray valves must provide no more than 1.6 gallons of water per minute.
- All toilets must flush no more than 1.6 gallons per flush.
- All ice machines must be air-cooled.

Restaurants that join the program are entitled to free spray valves and toilets (including installation) and a 50 percent rebate toward the upgrade of ice machines to meet these standards.

Pre-rinse spray valves: Old, inefficient pre-rinse kitchen sprayers use 2 - 6 gallons of water per minute. When replaced, the savings for water and wastewater is estimated at 100 - 300 gallons per day.

Toilets: High-flow toilets use 3.5 - 7 gallons of water per flush. Restaurants replacing these with ultra-low flow toilets save 80 gallons of water per toilet per day.

Water-cooled ice machines: Water-cooled ice machines use up to 170 gallons of water to produce 100 pounds of ice. When replaced with efficient air-cooled ice machines, the same amount of ice is produced with only 20 gallons of water.

A Brief History of the Program

When the WaterSaver Restaurant program began, SAWS chose to hire a private contractor to heavily market the program and manage installation of new equipment. This was done in an attempt to maximize program participation.

To date, the program has yielded more than 2,200 spray valve replacements, 680 toilet replacements and 1,230 WaterSaver certifications.

Total annual water savings associated with the successes of SAWS WaterSaver Restaurant program equal 175 million gallons per year.

The WaterSaver Restaurant program is one of the most successful SAWS conservation programs.