

## 1.5 Getting the Most Out of the Guide

The BMP Guide is designed for several uses and for a diverse audience of water resource planners and managers throughout the state. It has sufficient detail to be useful in the state water planning process, which is implemented at the regional level. The Regional Water Planning Groups are encouraged to review the BMPs and to consult with WUGs in their region that have an identified future need for water to determine which BMPs are appropriate and which BMPs the WUGs intend to utilize or are already using for conservation program planning and implementation. For planning purposes water conservation best management practices are not limited to those listed in this guide.

The Task Force acknowledges that the efficient use of water as a natural resource is an important planning objective and an economical means of operation and recommends that water user groups of all types evaluate the BMPs for use in their area. The first step for a municipal, agricultural or industrial water user is to review the Applicability section in a BMP to determine if the BMP is appropriate for their use. For those water users with stakeholders, a stakeholder involvement process is a valuable means of getting feedback on priority BMPs and on specific elements within a BMP which have broad support. In municipalities, stakeholders include customers and representative interest groups which have shown an interest in water issues in the community. Such groups may include representatives from neighborhood and business associations, technical groups, academics, environmentalists, and city departments. A number of the municipal BMPs recommend developing such stakeholder groups as a part of implementing the specific BMP. The Task Force also recognizes that stakeholder groups can be helpful in the initial selection of best management practices to be included in a Conservation Plan.

Industrial WUGs should consider employees from all affected departments, customers, suppliers, and regulators and impacted water users, including agricultural or municipal interests, as potential stakeholders. Depending upon the size of the business and the proposed BMPs, the process can be either formal or informal. The industrial WUG can also use the guidance included in the Employee Programs BMP as part of the process of selecting the appropriate BMPs. For those industrial WUGs that are already implementing an Environmental Management System the stakeholder process may be defined and can be used to help pick the appropriate BMPs. In the industrial setting, executive management support is essential for success and should be sought early in the planning process.

Agricultural WUGs at the farm level may include employees, suppliers and regulators among potential stakeholders. A valid input process may be an informal survey of individuals to solicit input for choosing the best BMPs. For political subdivisions of the State of Texas that deliver irrigation water to agricultural users, the stakeholder group may include representatives from agricultural and water conservation organizations, municipal, and rural water supply entities, and local, state, or federal governmental agencies.

In writing a Conservation Plan it is important for the WUG to follow state, local and, in some cases, federal guidelines which may include requirements for certain plan elements such as a utility profile and seasonal demand. Such requirements are often specific to the WUG, the type

of water demand, and the political boundaries in which a WUG operates. Texas has numerous groundwater districts, river authorities, and irrigation districts all of which have specific authority and the potential for unique requirements within their area or operation. The BMPs are designed to be used as a resource in developing that part of a water conservation plan where specific measures, the schedule and scope of implementation, and the anticipated savings and costs are addressed.

Each BMP was prepared through research of literature and with the insight and experience of Task Force members, Board staff, and technical consultants to provide information based upon real world results of conservation program implementation. Because of the information accumulated in the development of the Guide, each BMP can serve as a program guide as well as a planning tool. Conservation program managers wishing to use the BMPs in program delivery should pay close attention to the Implementation, Schedule, Scope, and Documentation sections. Each of these sections contains information which can assist existing conservation programs as well as new conservation efforts to increase their effectiveness. Each BMP also includes a reference section with additional resources to assist conservation practitioners in delivering high quality programs with real water savings.

The BMP also has information that can assist managers, auditors and policy makers in evaluating the impact of conservation programs. The Documentation, Determination of Water Savings, and Cost Effectiveness Considerations sections are provided to assist in program evaluation. Each section of BMPs, municipal, industrial and agricultural, has a Cost-Effectiveness Chapter, which provides tools for doing cost-benefit analysis by each of the major types of WUGs.

The Task Force presents this Guide as a tool for advancing the practice and effectiveness of water conservation in Texas. The insights distilled in the enclosed BMPs come from years of conservation practice by the Task Force members. That same experience leads the Task Force to view this as a living document, with the recognition that further implementation of conservation practices will bring new insight, more study will provide new information, and new technology will improve savings. The Task Force members encourage conservation managers, planners, practitioners and policy makers to give feedback to the Texas Water Development Board about the BMP Guide in the hopes that it will be updated regularly over the years ahead.