



Water Efficiency Grant Program

Environment Committee Informational Item



November 14, 2023 | Henry McCarthy

Agenda



Overview



Past & Present Programs



Program Recognition



Evaluation & Future

Program Overview



The objective of this grant program is to improve water efficiency in the metro region.

- Program has existed since 2015
- Met Council has been awarded funding by the Minnesota Legislature for water demand reduction
- Funding is available to cities and townships served by a municipal water supply system.
- Municipalities design and operate their own program



grant program web page



Program Overview continued

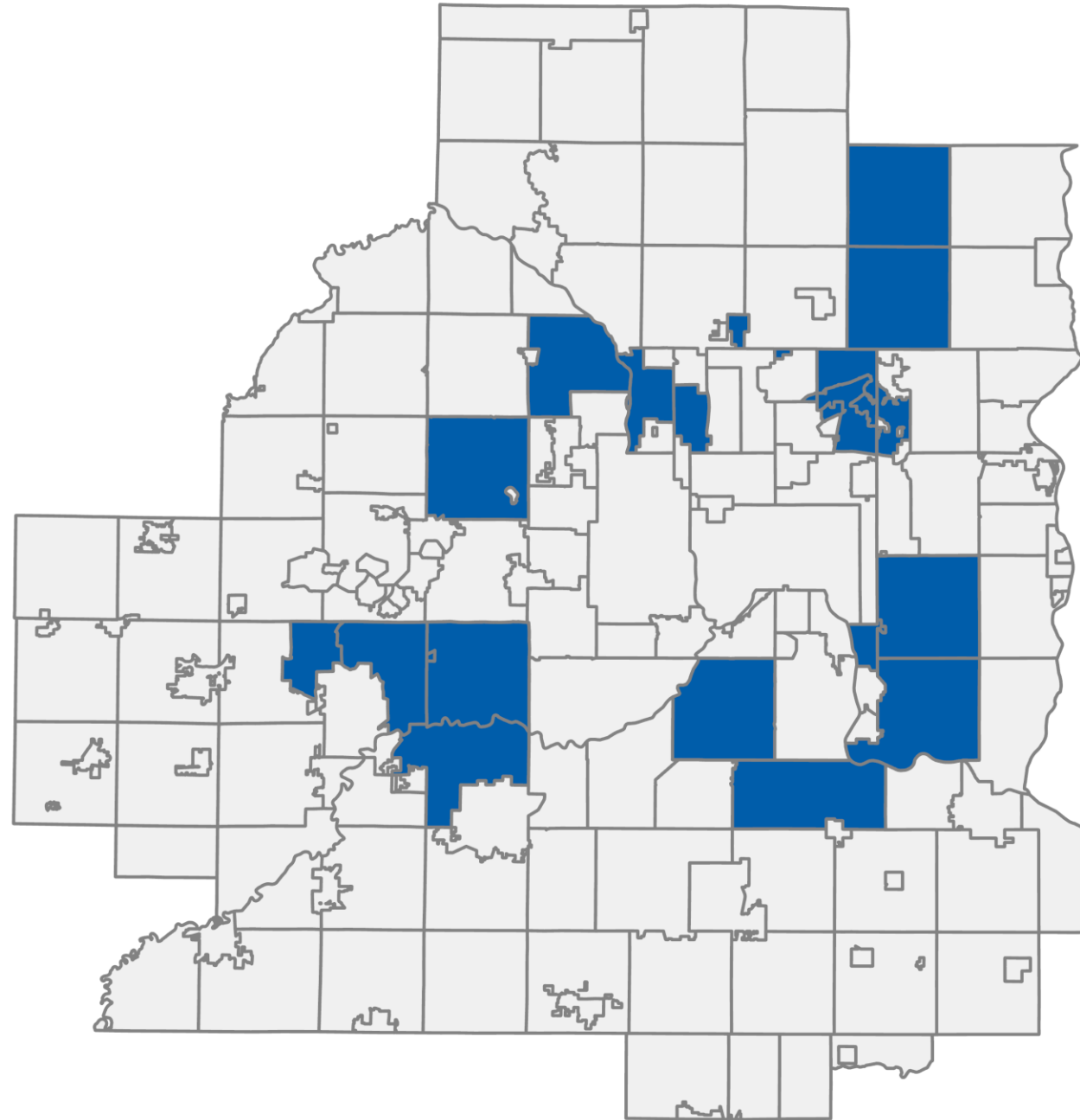


Current eligible expenses include:

- **Toilet replacement**
- **Irrigation controller replacement**
- **Irrigation spray sprinkler body replacement**
- **Irrigation system audit**
- **Clothes washing machine replacement**
- **Residential dishwasher replacement**

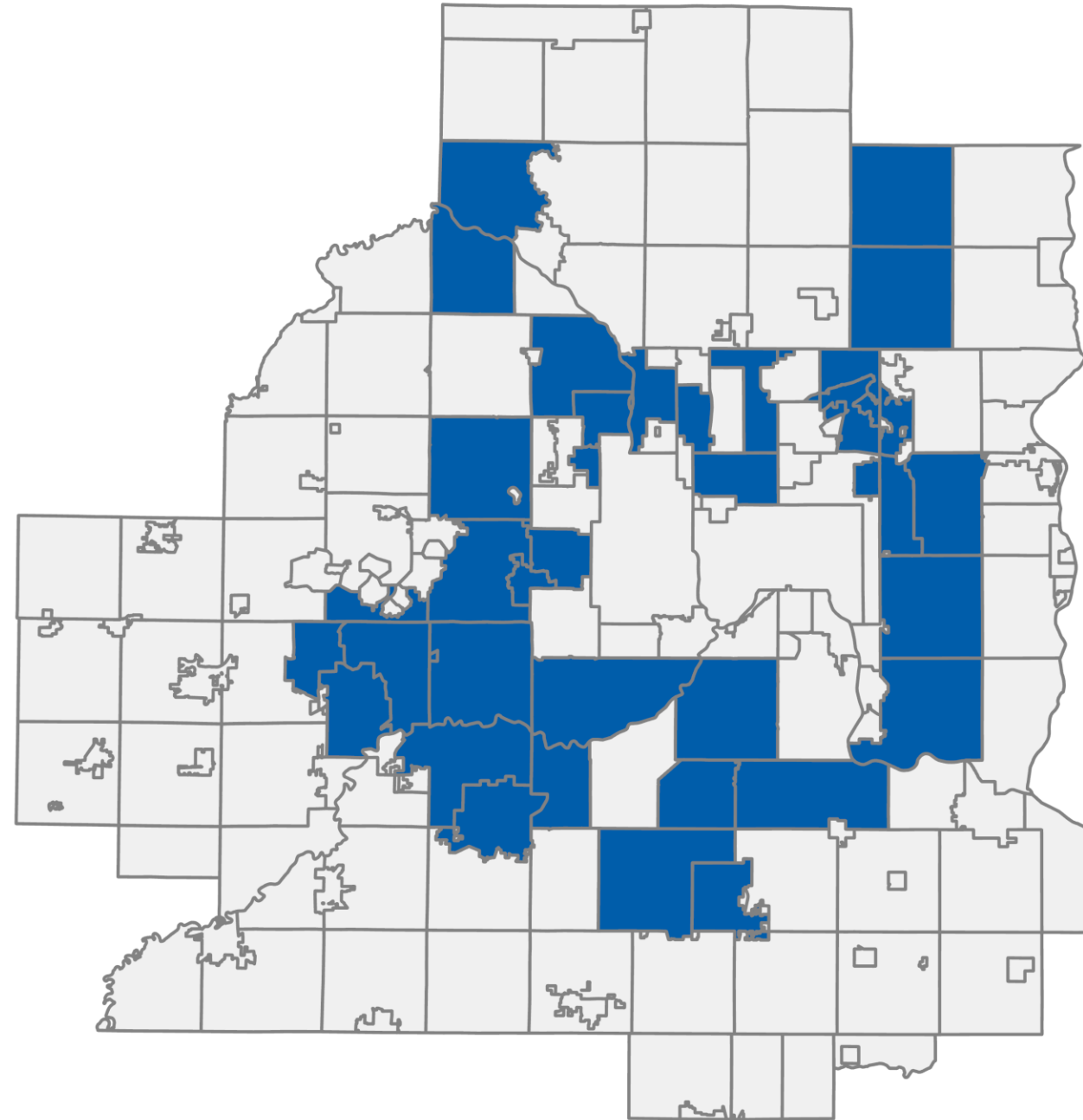
Grant Program History: 2015 - 2017

- \$500,000 appropriation
- 19 participating communities



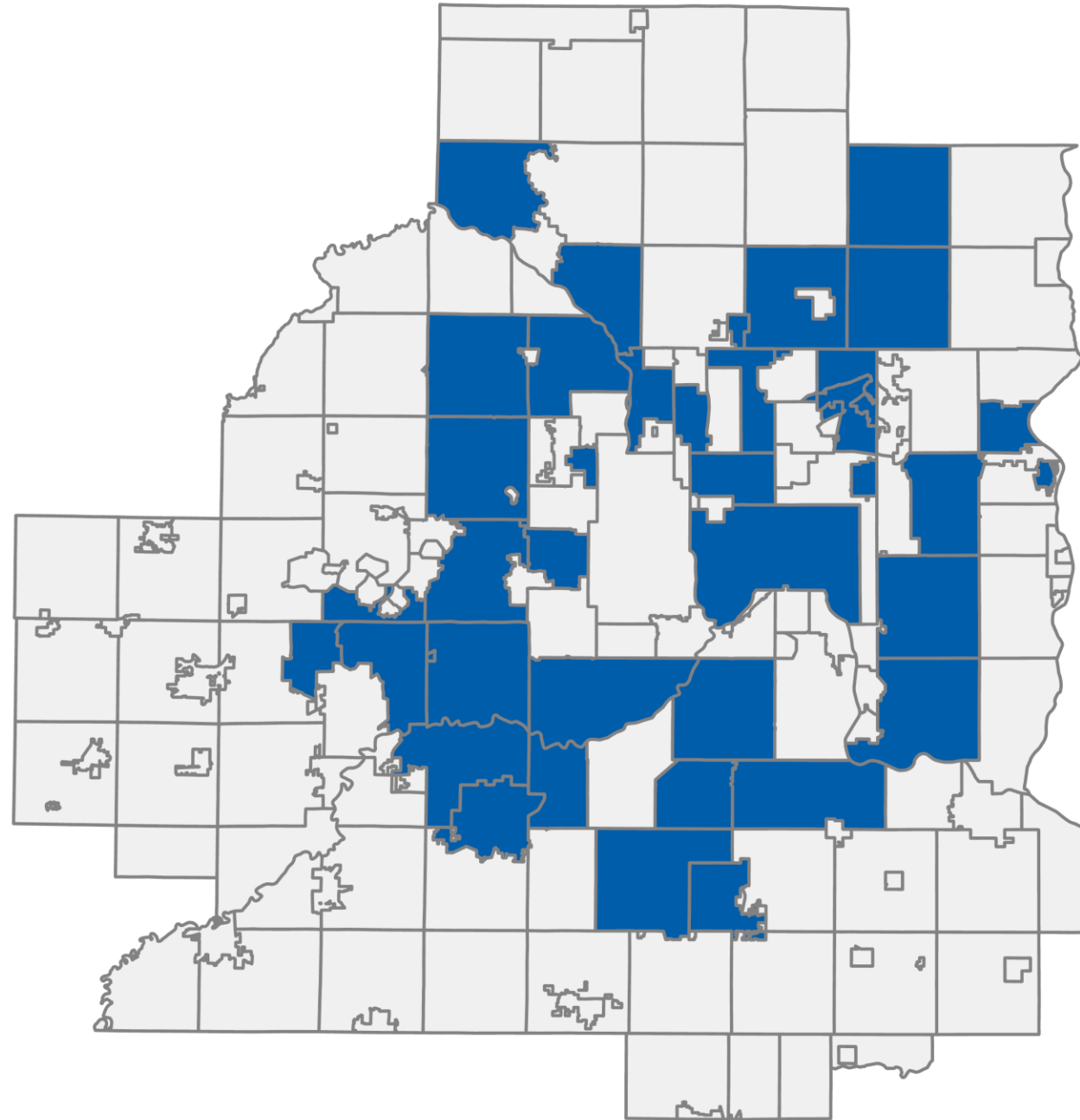
Grant Program History: 2019 - 2022

- \$750,000 appropriation
- 37 participating communities (17 returning)



Current Grant Program: 2022 - 2024

- \$1,250,000 appropriation
 - \$250,000 went towards an equity pilot project with Saint Paul Regional Water Services
- 37 participating communities (32 returning)



Current Grant Program: 2022 – 2024 Continued

Program activity: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

WaterSense				Energy Star	
Toilets Replaced	Irrigation Controllers Replaced	Irrigation Spray Sprinkler Bodies Replaced	Irrigation System Audit Conducted	Clothes Washers Replaced	Residential Dishwashers Replaced
1,149	1,038	95	113	567	487

Estimated annual gallons saved – ***nearly 40 million!***

Two-Part Pilot Project with SPRWS

Toilet Efficiency Program

- \$100,000 in funding
- No-cost toilet replacement
- Equity focus

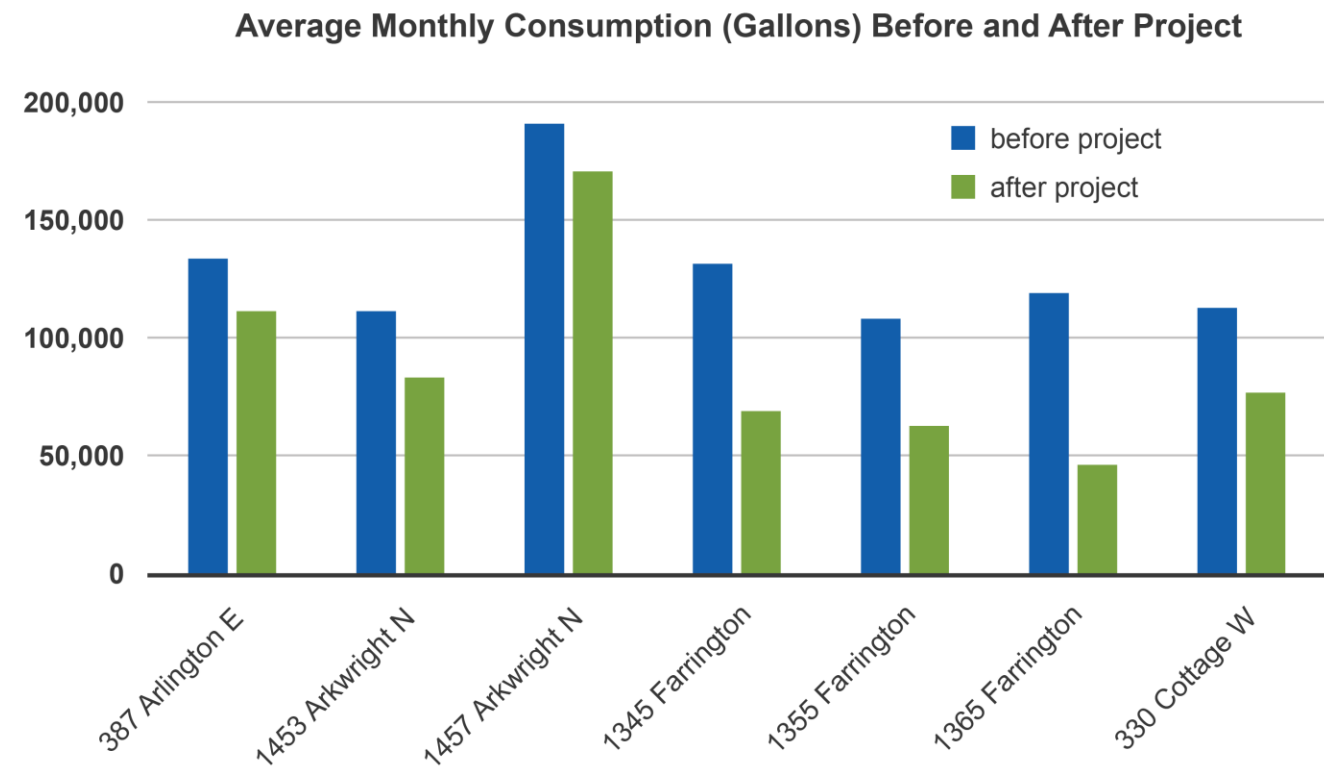
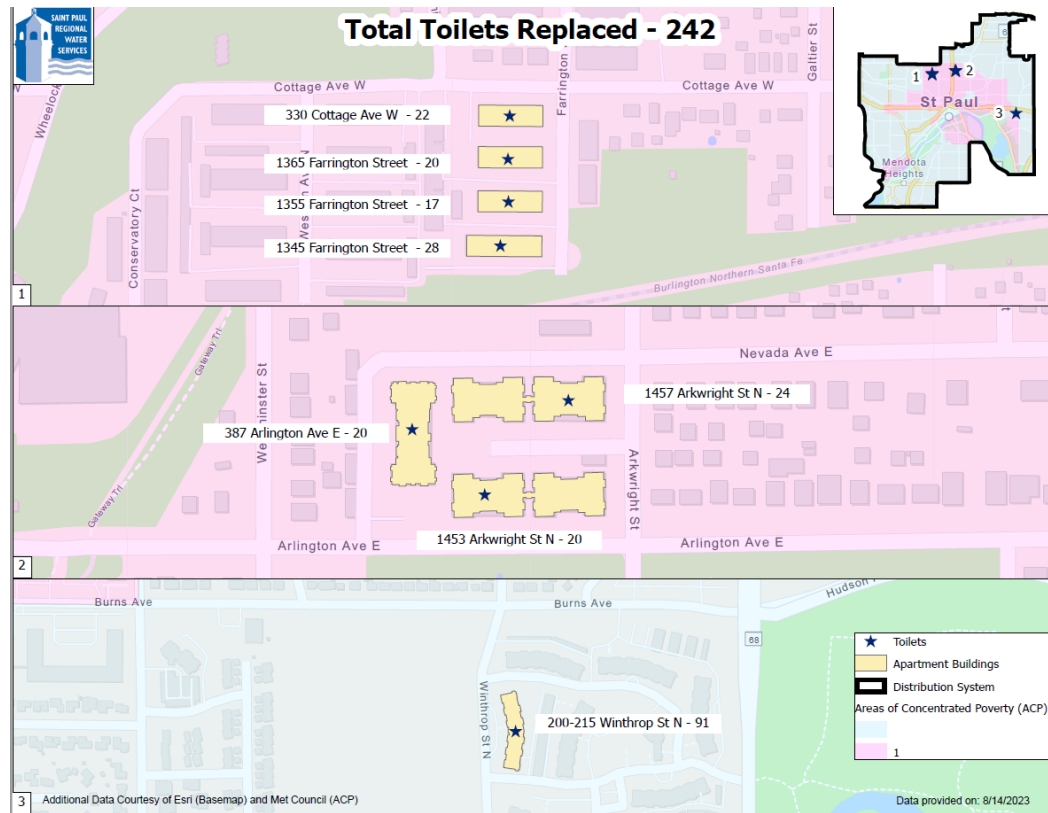
Leak Audit Program

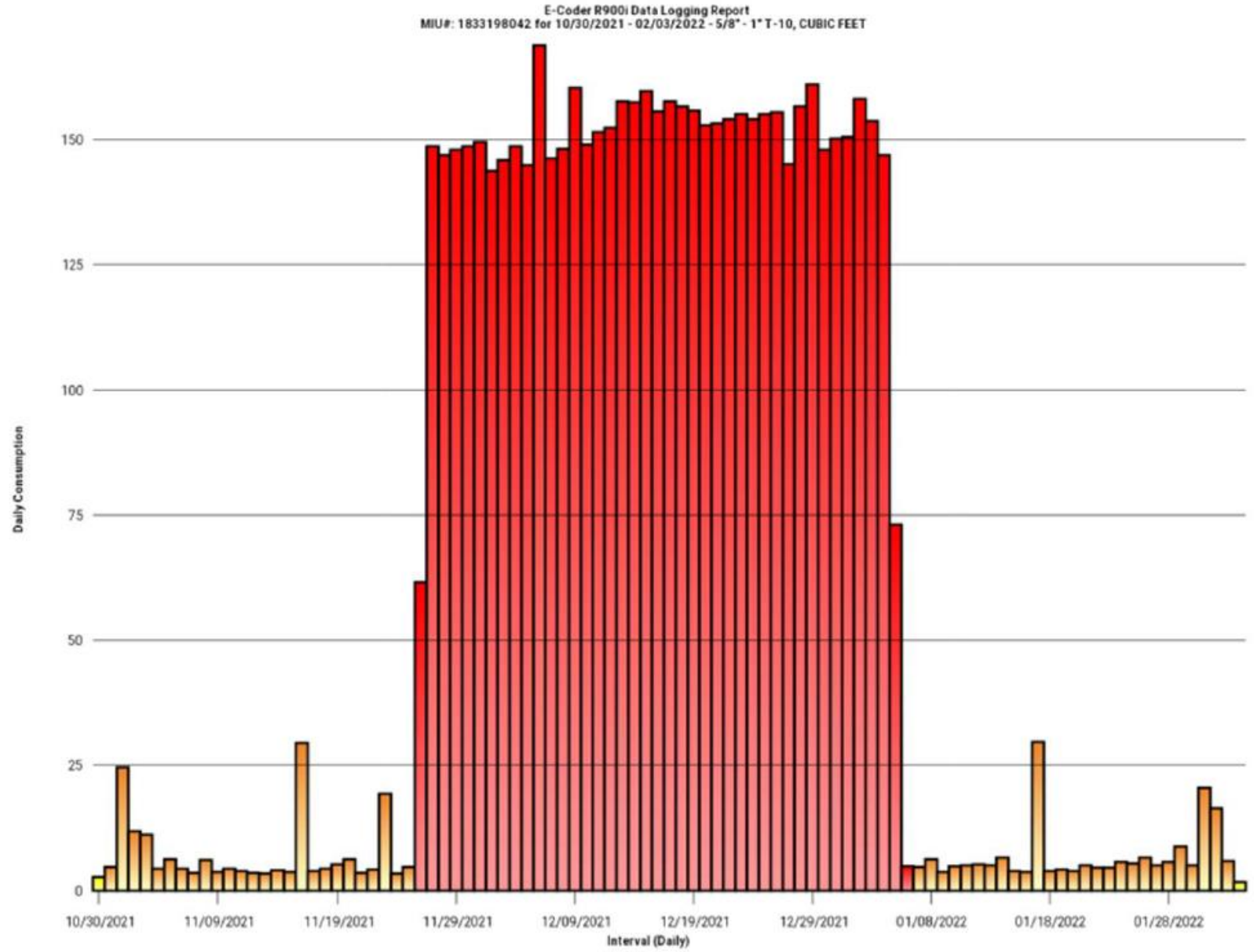
- \$150,000 in funding
- Purchase and installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) collectors
- Equity focus

Two-Part Pilot Project with SPRWS: Toilet Replacements

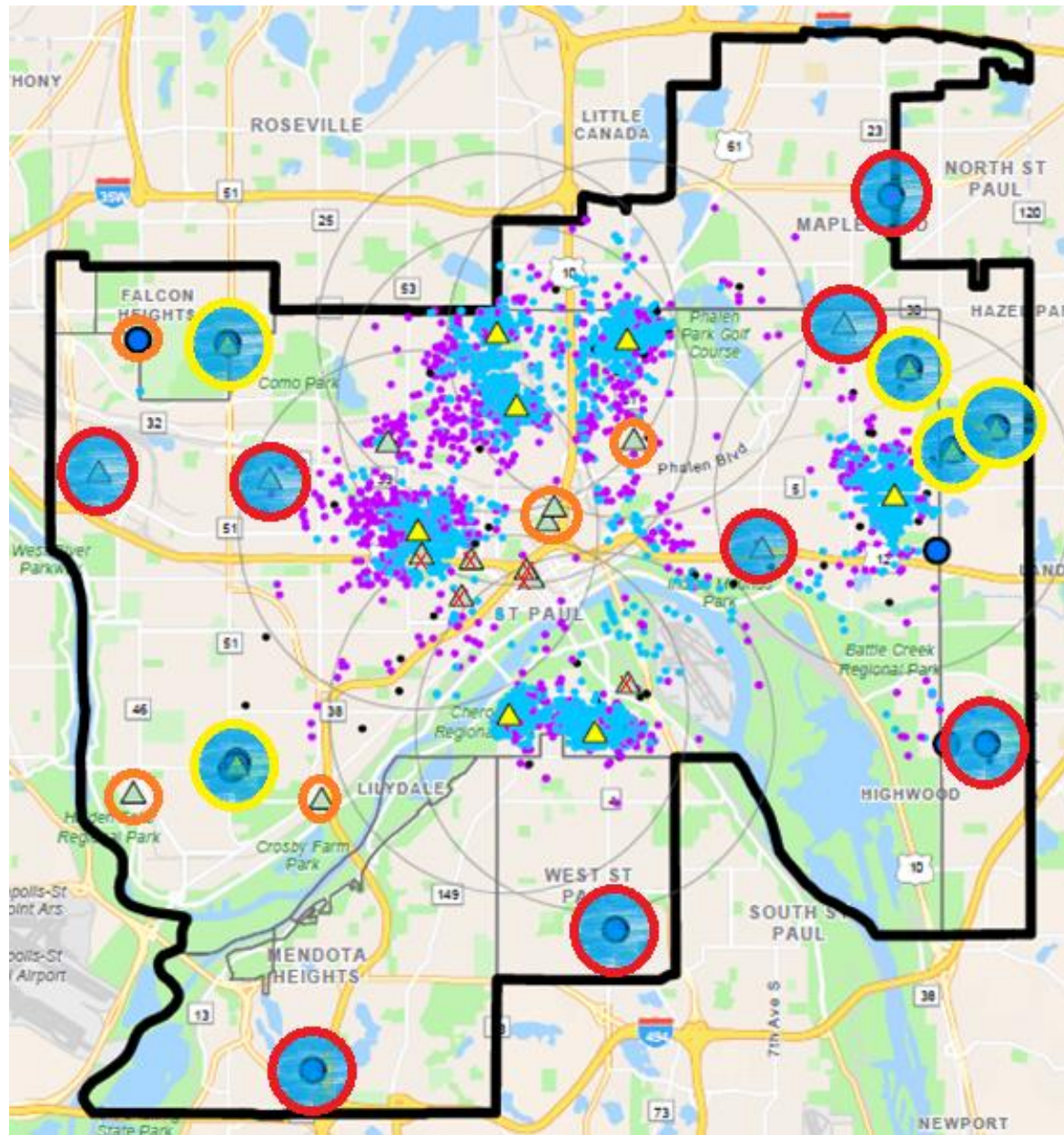
Toilet Replacements

- 242 toilets replaced (\$413/toilet = parts + labor)
- Estimated savings of 3.4 million gallons/year
- 40 gallons/day/toilet replaced
- Estimated savings: \$7/unit/month = \$84/year





Two-Part Pilot Project with SPRWS Continued



Installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure

- SPRWS currently has 12 AMI collectors installed (Met Council grant covered ~7 collectors)
 - Approximately 12,000 accounts

	Actual V3 Reads from Installed Collectors
	Actual V4 Reads from Installed Collectors
	Proposed Collector Locations January 2024 + Anticipated Area of V3 Reads
	Locations of September 2023 Installed Collectors + Anticipated Area of V3 Reads
	Potential Additional Collector Locations Tanks or PHA
	Proposed Area for Register Replacement Prioritization in 2023-2024 Starting in NW Corner (Lauderdale). Working East to 35E and South to 94. Skipping all Blue areas (V3 Already Caught by Current Collectors)

Met Council wins WaterSense Award



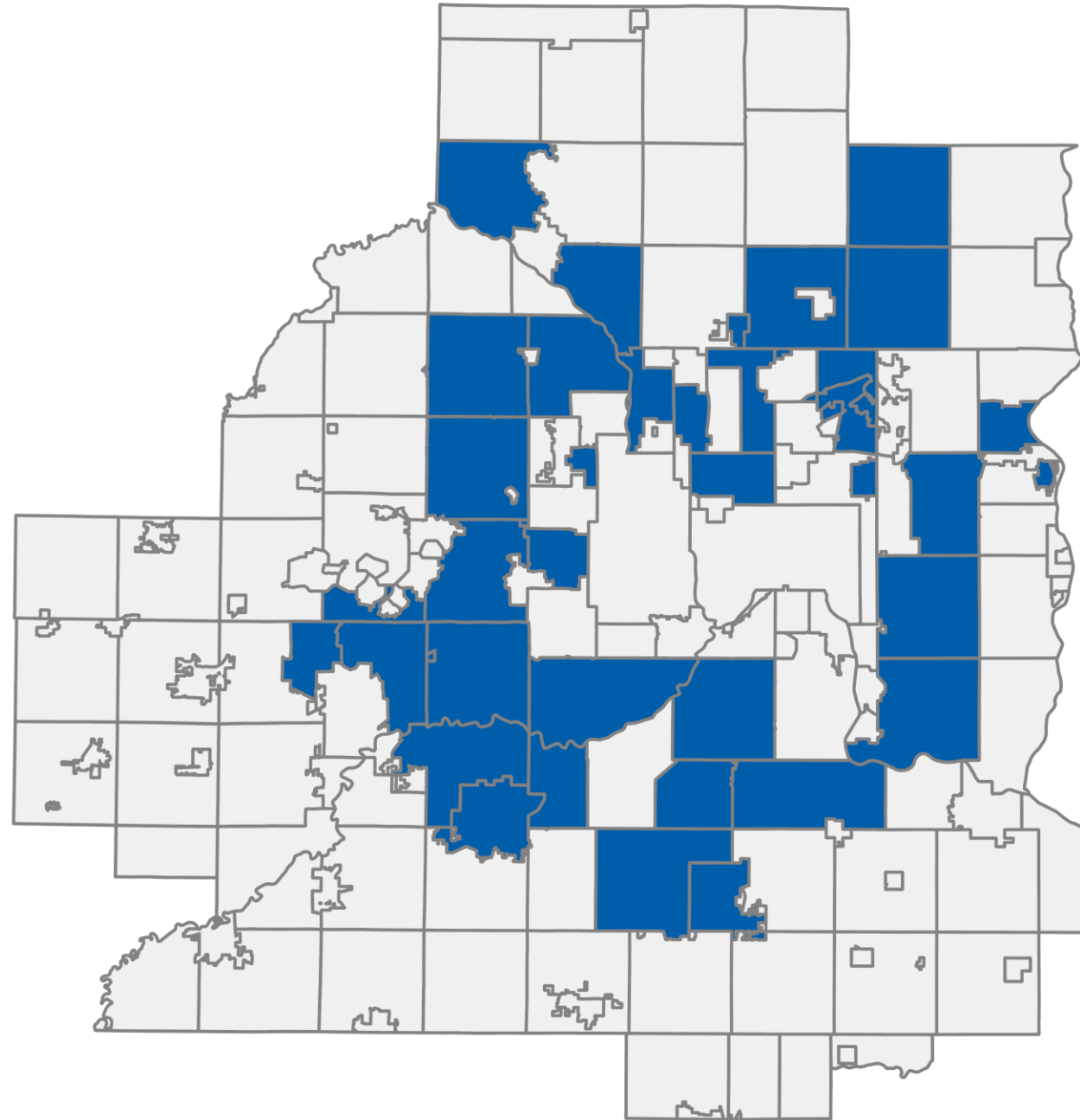
Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products

- Met Council also won a WaterSense Excellence in Strategic Collaboration Award in 2021

<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-awards>

Program Feedback Survey

- How has the program been going for participating communities?
 - Issues?
 - What's working well?
 - Ideas for the future?



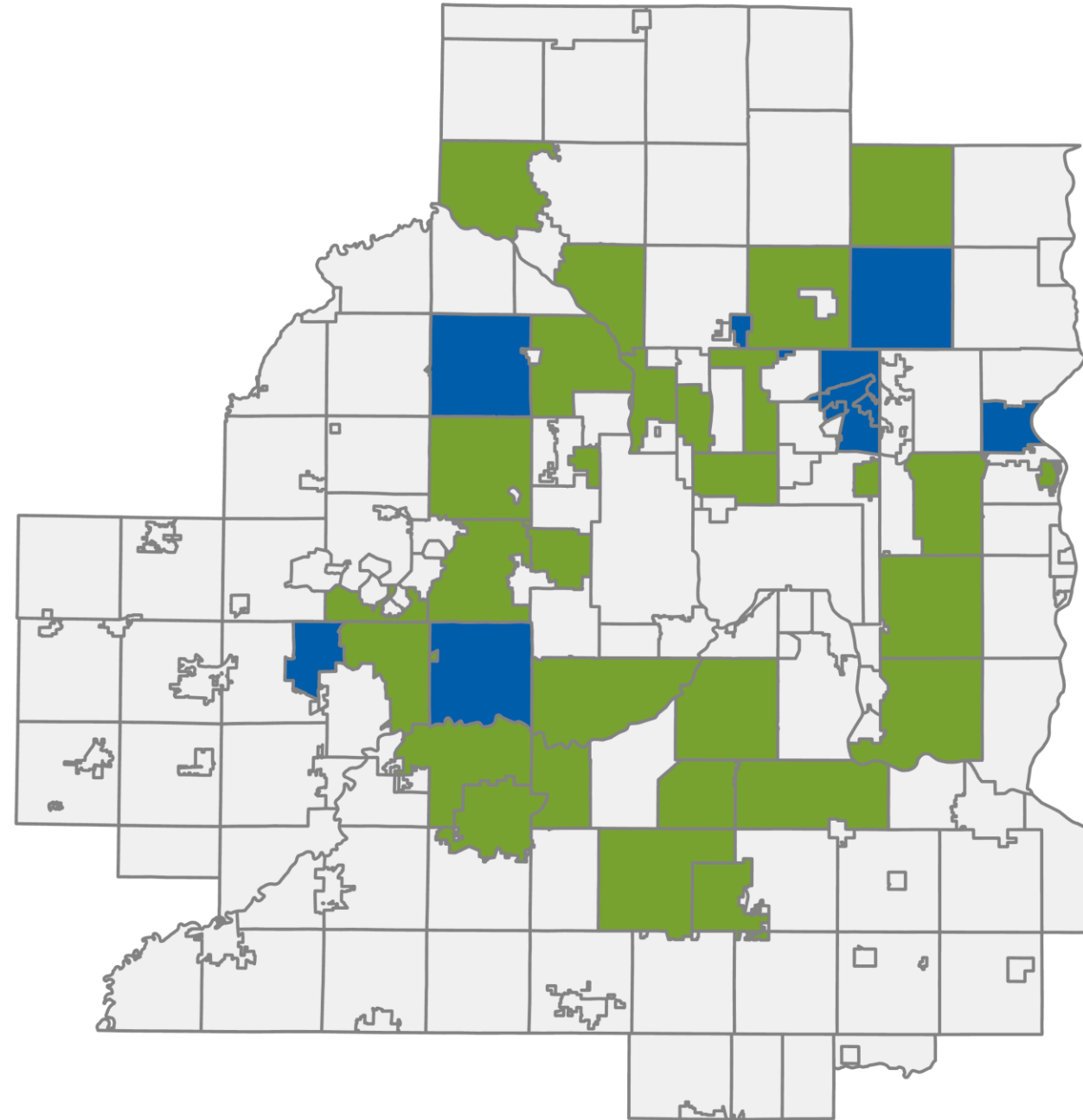
Program Feedback Survey Continued

Great response rate!

- 32 total responses from 29 unique communities

Gathered responses on:

- Reporting methods
- Verifying device eligibility
- Potential devices to add to program
- Incorporating equity into the program
- Areas of success, areas for improvement



Survey Results 1

The following EPA WaterSense and/or DOE Energy Star devices are not currently part of the program. Would you like to see any of them included in a future Water Efficiency Grant Program?



Survey Results 2

What is one area of the program in which the Met Council could make improvements?

*Perhaps some explanation on the **database search tools** for verifying eligibility of items.
This was a bit of a learning curve since I did not realize how the database worked.*

*It would be great to get some **quarterly feedback** (once compiled) about the
program overall to see the difference it is making.*

*Seems to be working well. **More funding would be welcome as we spent all funds.***

*Include an **automatic calculation of water saved** in the form. Seems most base it off EPA
Water Sense estimates. Why not make it easier by just including that as a drop down?*

***On-line reporting system**, but the current set-up works.*

Survey Results 3

What is one part of the program in which the Met Council is doing particularly well?

*The program has **well-defined rules for product eligibility** and overall has an **easy reimbursement to our city.***

***Quarterly reporting requirements are right amount** and can coincide with our utility billing.*

*We appreciate the Met Council allowing the **flexibility for programs to be created by the grantee.***

Regular reporting and prompt reimbursement.** Met Council staff is **quick to respond to questions.

*I appreciate that **additional devices** were included in the program this cycle.*

*We appreciate the **80% reimbursement** vs. 75% in previous years*

Planning for the next program

2024 - 2026

- \$1,500,000 appropriation
- Grow the number of program participants
- Add showerheads to list of eligible expenses
- Develop program improvements to make device verification, reporting, and reviewing easier for communities and staff
- Add equity component
- Community application process beginning in early 2024





Thank you

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<https://metro council.org/Wastewater-Water/Planning/Water-Supply-Planning/Grants/Water-Efficiency-Grant-Program.aspx>

