



2025

Water Resources Plan

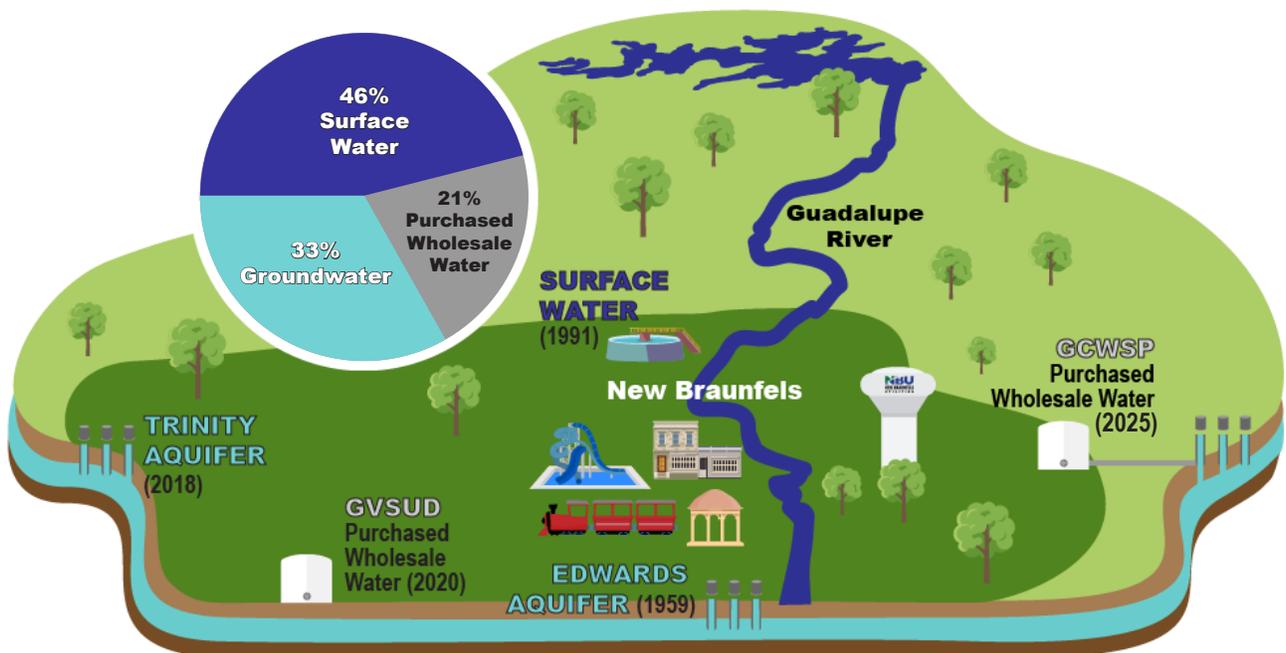
Clean, accessible water is essential to our way of life, permeating everything we do. Population and economic growth are driving increased demand for water, while high-quality, reliable water supplies are harder to find. In recent years, local rivers, streams, and aquifers have experienced low water levels, with some springs feeding the Comal River reduced to a trickle or drying up entirely at certain times during the year. Canyon Lake was recently at a historical low level. Amid one of our region's most challenging droughts, with water demand continuing to rise, it's more important than ever to become better watershed stewards.

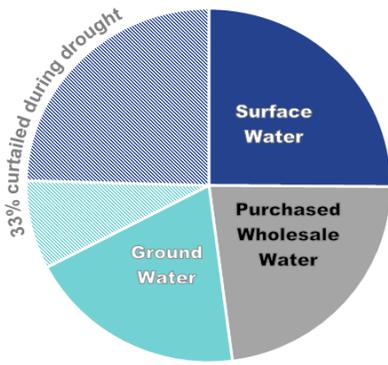
NBU has a Strong and Diverse Water Resources Portfolio

New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) has worked diligently to develop a diverse inventory of water sources to provide resilience in uncertain conditions and to meet water demands now and into the future. When NBU assumed operation of the New Braunfels water system in 1959, the Edwards Aquifer was the City's sole water supply and the primary water source for the region. However, chronic overuse and drought have placed the aquifer and associated springs in jeopardy. Additionally, relying on a single water source was a significant risk due to the lack of a backup supply. To reduce reliance on the aquifer and meet growing demand, in 1991, NBU added surface water from the Guadalupe River and Canyon Lake to its water portfolio. NBU has continued to diversify its supplies since. Today, the Edwards Aquifer makes up only 17% of NBU's water supply portfolio.

NBU's mix of sources can provide our community with more than 54,500 acre-feet of water per year (AFY), which is more than 48 million gallons of water per day. The sources include:

- Groundwater from the Trinity and Edwards Aquifers,
- Surface water from the Guadalupe River and Canyon Lake, and
- Purchased wholesale water from the Green Valley Special Utility District (GVSUD) and Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's (GBRA) Gonzalez-Carrizo Water Supply Project (GCWSP).





Some of NBU's water is unavailable during droughts (curtailed). However, 30,774 AFY or over 27 million gallons of water per day remains available during droughts and is projected to exceed demand for many years to come. To provide additional water during droughts, NBU is currently testing Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) at a site near the New Braunfels airport. With ASR, treated water is injected into an aquifer during low-demand periods, when treatment plants can produce more water than is needed. That water is later extracted during high-demand periods or when other supplies are unavailable.

NBU continuously evaluates new ways to improve its water supply diversity and reliability. As part of the 2025 Water Resources Plan, NBU performed an analysis of water supply alternatives. The types of projects evaluated are summarized below, and the two alternatives NBU is recommended to pursue are highlighted in green.

A new surface water treatment plant to fully use existing surface water rights.

A permit that allows NBU to withdraw water from the Guadalupe River in proportion to the amount NBU discharges upstream as treated wastewater effluent.

Additional ASR wells to allow for storing additional water during non-drought periods.

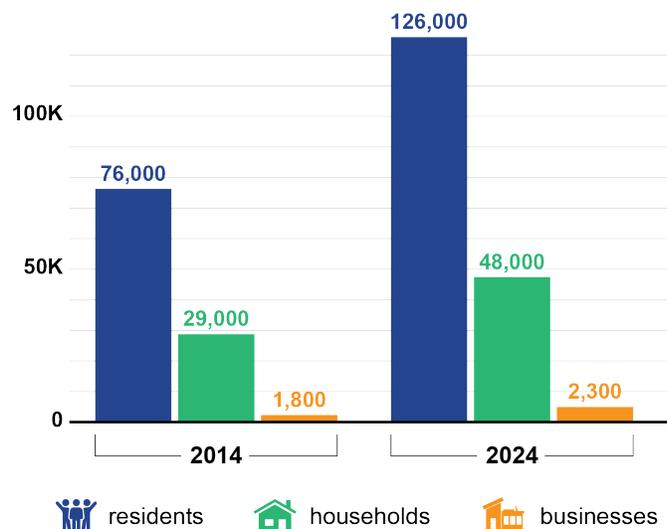
Non-potable reuse, providing highly treated wastewater effluent for non-drinking use such as irrigation.

Additional water purchased from other entities such as GBRA.

Direct potable reuse, purifying effluent from an existing Water Reclamation Facility to drinking water standards and delivering it directly into NBU's distribution system.

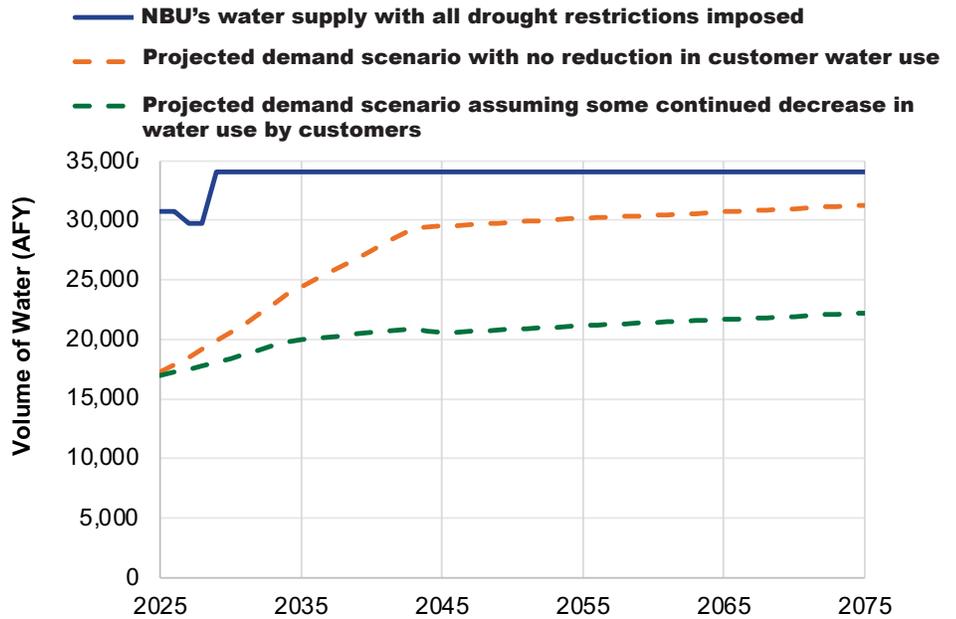
Water Conservation Will Ensure We Meet Our Long-Term Needs

Water is a valuable resource, and its use has environmental, sustainability, community and financial implications. Over the last 10 years, the number of single and multi-family households served by NBU has increased by about 5% per year. In addition, institutional and business accounts have increased by about 2% per year. Although these current rates are unlikely to continue indefinitely, our community is projected to keep growing. This growth will lead to a corresponding increase in the number of people and businesses that must be served.





NBU's water demand is projected to range between 22,000 AFY and 31,000 AFY by 2075.



Based on the estimated scenario of future demand compared to future supply, NBU would not need to increase its water supply until after 2075. However, if customers continue to reduce water use in line with current trends, existing water supplies could remain sufficient for a much longer period. Additional water conservation benefits include:

-  Reduced stress on water supplies, which supports long-term sustainability and our precious recreational and economic opportunities.
-  Reduced costs for water procurement, treatment, and distribution.
-  Reduced stress on existing utility infrastructure.
-  Delayed or eliminated need for additional water supplies and associated contracting, planning costs, construction costs, and environmental impacts.

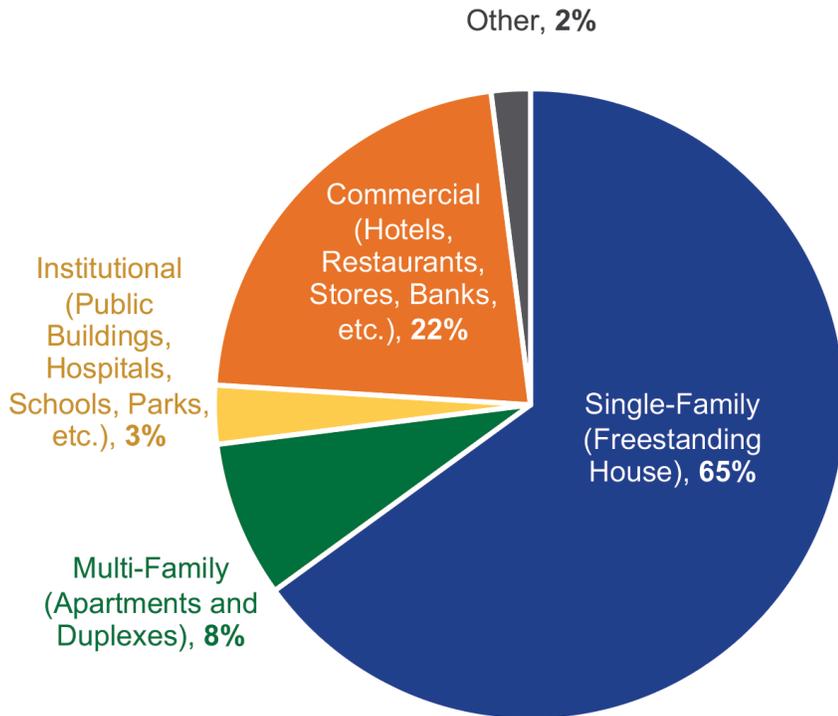
Conservation is a Partnership Between NBU and Our Community

To protect our precious water resources, we must all take responsibility for using water more efficiently, both inside and outside our homes and businesses. None of us can control the weather, but we can control our water use.

 INDOOR EXAMPLES	 OUTDOOR EXAMPLES	
Bathroom Kitchen Laundry Medical Equipment Water Cooling/Heating	Swimming Pools Splash Pads Construction Car Washes Athletic Fields	Landscape Irrigation Firefighting Water Leaks Driveway Washing Fountains

In Central Texas, a large volume of water is used outdoors for landscape irrigation, watering foundations, and filling swimming pools and fountains. In 2024, residential customers used about 73% of the water NBU produced. Of that amount, roughly half of all single-family water use went to irrigation based on the pattern observed over the past several years. Due to these trends, NBU developed additional new conservation initiatives specifically targeting residential irrigation use.

2024 Water Use per Customer Group




NBU’s goal is to reduce per capita water use by 9%. It is important that every user does their part to achieve this.



Separate irrigation meters provide customers with greater awareness to encourage conservation. Irrigation meters are a powerful tool for reducing water use and water bills. Irrigation meters can help identify water leaks and help customers optimize landscape water use to prevent overwatering while ensuring landscaping remains healthy and beautiful. NBU customers can apply for an irrigation meter online.

NBU Internal Conservation Initiatives

Since 2007, NBU has proactively implemented water conservation programs led by a dedicated conservation team. During the last five years, NBU has implemented 16 conservation strategies that have saved an estimated 40 to 110 million gallons per year. For example, NBU focuses on reducing water loss, such as leaks due to pipeline breaks. NBU performs annual audits to evaluate types of loss and uses satellite images to identify areas that have high soil moisture, which could indicate a water leak. NBU is also increasing investment in replacing pipelines before leaks occur. Additionally, NBU supports the City of New Braunfels in updating and enforcing the Water Conservation and Drought Management Plan Ordinance, as well as the Land Development Ordinance.

Community Conservation Initiatives

NBU cannot implement an effective long-term conservation program without the community's partnership. NBU's 2024 Water Conservation Plan evaluated more than 50 potential new strategies and identified low-impact conservation approaches that would allow us to reduce water use while still enjoying beautiful landscapes.



NBU aims to help customers develop more sustainable water use habits through education and positive influence.



A few of NBU's current initiatives include:

Improved Conservation Data Analytics and Visualization Capabilities – NBU is implementing digital tools, such as smart meters and a new customer portal, to help customers understand their water use and opportunities to reduce it. These tools can identify leaks before large volumes of water are wasted.

Water-Wise Landscape Rebates – NBU is providing education and rebates to customers who choose to upgrade their landscaping to be more water-wise. Rebates for homeowners and businesses include rainwater harvesting, rain gardens, and switching to drought-tolerant landscaping.

Free Home Assessment Program and Rebates – NBU is enhancing its free home assessment program and rewarding customers who implement the recommended efficiencies with rebates.

Education and Outreach – NBU is building partnerships with community influencers to enhance awareness of conservation in the community, and with local trade organizations to educate professionals such as landscapers.

NBU is also continuing existing initiatives such as the tiered rate structure that rewards customers who use less water.

Our Community Values Watershed Stewardship

Water is essential for the community's public health and safety, for businesses, and for water recreation. NBU has developed diverse water supplies that will meet current water needs and support community growth; and NBU will add supplies as needed. However, new water sources typically have greater watershed impacts and higher costs. NBU will continue doing its part to conserve water, but we need to work together to become a more water efficient community. If we all make changes today, such as those suggested below, we can protect the watershed we enjoy today for future generations.

How can you help?

- Review your water use through NBU's customer portal, identify areas where you can conserve more water, and consider getting a separate irrigation meter to better understand your water use.
- Prioritize small changes, such as addressing leaks quickly and optimizing irrigation systems, which can add up to significant savings.
- Consider large changes, such as converting to water-wise landscaping.
- Talk with your family, friends, and colleagues about the importance of water conservation.
- Learn more about our water resources and support our water conservation programs.



Detailed information about the conservation programs, strategies, action plans, and timelines can be found in the NBU's [2024 Water Conservation Plan](#).



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NEW BRAUNFELS
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New Braunfels Utilities
1488 S. Seguin Ave.
New Braunfels, TX 78130

830.629.8400
nbutexas.com