## What is the source of Buckeye's water?

At the present time, groundwater is Buckeye's sole source for water. The city's Water Resources Department (WRD) carefully manages how much water is pumped from the ground to ensure compliance with permits. The Arizona Department of Water Resources requires specific limits on how much water can be pumped from wells each year. This safeguards that we do not adversely affect other wells in and near our service area by significantly lowering the water table.

## What are the city's water supplies?

While all of water the city delivers to its customers comes from the ground, not all the city's water supplies are considered groundwater. Nearly every home in the city is a member of the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD). The CAGRD is funded through a home's property taxes and it utilizes these funds to acquire non-groundwater supplies to replenish the ground for the water pumped by the city.

The city of Buckeye's water portfolio includes non-groundwater supplies including its own allocations of Colorado River water as well as reclaimed water supply from its water reclamation facilities (WRFs). When available, nearly all the Colorado River water is used to recharge the groundwater. The reclaimed water produced is sent to customers such as schools and golf courses for landscaping, farmers, or is used to recharge the groundwater supply.

## What state laws govern groundwater in Arizona?

Arizona created the 1980 Ground Water Management Act which is administered by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR).

## How do the shortages on the Colorado River impact Buckeye?

Since the city of Buckeye currently relies almost entirely on groundwater to deliver water to its customers, we are not directly affected. Having said that, since the Colorado River water is used to recharge the ground, the CAGRD's and the city's supplies may be reduced.

## Is Buckeye's water future in jeopardy?

No. Water is available for all current residents as well as those anticipated to be arriving in the coming years. Current forecasts show that there are adequate water resources to sustain new single family residential growth for the next 15-20 years. Challenge for single family residential growth beyond that timeframe will be required to provide identifies supplies that can be used to meet their demands.

Understanding that there is not enough water to meet the city's potential long-term water needs, WRD is constantly planning for the future. The city's Integrated Water Resources Master Plan (IWMP) is reviewed and updated every five years. This plan outlines potential opportunities available to us and guides the city on the best practices to acquire additional water supplies. Our long-term goal is to continue growing while providing and maintaining a sustainable water supply.

Through careful and thoughtful planning, and working with other water partners, we will be able to ensure an assured water supply for all our customers.

## What does Buckeye's future water portfolio look like?

Like a financial portfolio, the city's Water Portfolio consists of several different classes of water assets, including:

- Groundwater
- Long-term Storage Credits
- Extinguishment Credits
- Municipal and Industrial (M&I) Colorado River Water
- Non-Indian Agricultural (NIA) Colorado River Water
- Harquahala Irrigation Non-attainment (INA) Water (Non-AMA Groundwater)
- Reclaimed Water from city WRFs

**Future supplies may include:**

- Brackish groundwater from the Buckeye Waterlogged Area.
- Acquisitions or leases of other Colorado River water from entitlements from public or private owners. The water could be transported through the Central Arizona Project canal to Buckeye.
- Instate Surface Water supplies. This water could be transported to Buckeye through the canal systems owned by the irrigation districts operating in Buckeye.

## How much water does the city currently use?

In 2025, the city's delivered approximately 12,000 acre-feet of water to customers. (1 acre-foot of water is equal to 325,851 gallons.)

## What is Buckeye doing to encourage reduced water usage?

The city continually works to find efficiency within its own operations to be a good steward for our valuable water resources. In addition, the city offers resources to customers to assist them to use water as efficiently and cost effectively as possible, including:

- Conservation Education and Outreach
- Notifying customers when an account (residential or commercial) has abnormally high usage and helping them troubleshoot the issue
- Performing outdoor water audits, when necessary, for the customers to help identify the problem Hosting an advanced customer portal which allows customers to monitor their daily usage and set customized alerts to notify them if unusually large usage is detected

- Obtaining grants that can be put towards water conservation programs
- Administering a Turf Removal Rebate program
- Offering customers rebates for using WaterSense high efficiency toilets and Smart Irrigation Controllers

### Can you recharge storm water?

Stormwater runoff incidentally recharges the aquifer; however, this recharge is not considered stored water that can be used for the future. For the most part stormwater runoff is considered surface water, which has legal rights and allocations associated with it.

### Does Buckeye's water enterprise fund have revenue outside of the regular water rates paid by customers?

Only small amounts in the form of recycling refunds, certain types of fees and grants.

### Has a water utility used wastewater for drinking water?

Indirectly, reclaimed water, which is the clean, treated product from the WRF process, is used to recharge groundwater which is then pumped by water utilities. No utility or city is directly utilizing effluent as a supply for drinking water in Arizona.

### How do Community Facilities Districts (CFDs) factor into water rates?

The CFDs do not factor in the city's water rates. A CFD is a special taxing district that allows developers to finance the installation, operation and maintenance of public improvements such as roads, flood control and drainage projects.

### How do I know how much to water my outdoor plants?

That depends on the type of landscaping that you have in your yard. You can get step-by-step guides to outdoor plants, lawn and landscape watering on the Landscape Watering Guide web page at Water Use it Wisely.

### How do reserves get used for repair and maintenance?

The city has set aside reserves for specific purposes. Repair and replacement are budgeted annually in the operating budget and is separate from the CIP. Since emergency repairs or upgrades cannot be predicted, they are typically paid for out of reserves. The city ensures, through its comprehensive rate study, reserve funds are always on hand for emergency purposes. The target amount for reserve funds is 60 days of operating and maintenance expenses and one-year capital depreciating expenses.

### I live in a neighborhood where I pay Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD) as part of my taxes. Why do I have to pay increased water rates?

These taxes are a result of the developer who built your neighborhood entering into an agreement with CAGRD to replenish the aquifer for water delivered to your home by the city. Water rates are collected to pay for the utility services you receive from the city.

## What are growth rates based on?

Buckeye is a member agency of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). MAG employs statisticians, system engineers and other professionals to manage regional analytics. The city provides all its growth data to the MAG team who then generates a region wide profile for economic development, transportation and other municipal planning. MAG is also the regional coordinator for all official Census activities.

## What are some of the ways I can conserve water in my home and yard?

A variety of water conservation information is provided on the city's Conservation web page as well as Water Use It Wisely. You can also contact the city's Conservation and Education Specialists at 623-349-6195.

## What is an Enterprise Fund?

Similar to an HOA, an enterprise fund provides goods or services to the public for a fee that makes the entity self-supporting. The Water Resources fund is completely supported by the rates and not property taxes or any other form of general fund monies.

## What is the difference between a water leak and water loss?

A water leak is a break in a water system (such as in a pipe, valve, fixture or sprinkler head) located inside your home or outside in your yard that must be repaired. The city of Buckeye provides a one-time leak adjustment to customers when accompanied by the appropriate receipts that document the repairs made. Please contact customer service at 623-349-6100 for additional information on a leak adjustment.

Water loss is when water has left the system and accounted for. The city is responsible for accounting for every drop of water that is pumped from the ground, treated and delivered to customers' meters.

## Is the city able to help me find a leak?

Yes. Thanks to our Automated Meter Infrastructure (AMI) metering system, city staff have access to your meter and can help pinpoint when your water usage increases. If you have a concern about your water bill, please start by contacting customer service at 623-349-6100, press 2. A customer service representative will assist you in determining if a technician is needed to check the meter equipment.

## What is the Drought Declaration?

Only the governor of Arizona can make a Drought Declaration. It's based on constant monitoring of certain weather conditions and key indicators. The Arizona Department of Water Resources along with other state, regional and federal partners, monitors these conditions. The State of Arizona assigns the following drought Intensity: No Drought, Abnormally Dry, Moderate Drought, Severe Drought, Extreme Drought and Exceptional Drought. To learn more about the Drought Declaration please visit the state of Arizona Drought Management web page.

## Who regulates water rates in the city of Buckeye?

The city of Buckeye is a non-profit municipal water provider. The City Council sets the rates that every customer pays based on industry standards and the specific needs of the enterprise.

## Can Buckeye use surface water from the Salt, Gila, Colorado or Hassayampa rivers?

Surface water supply has specific criteria for their use that must be met in order for Buckeye to be able to use them. Below are descriptions of Buckeye's access to these supplies:

1. **Salt River** – Buckeye is not able to access water from the Salt River as we are not in the Salt River Project service area.

2. **Gila River** – The Gila River has been completely allocated. The City of Buckeye does not possess any Gila River water rights. The city is able to utilize Gila River water through agreements with entities that are willing to partner with the city for use of their rights.

3. **Colorado River** – There are several types of Colorado River Water rights an entity can own. The city of Buckeye has two types of water allocations:

- Municipal and Industrial (M&I) contract: 68 acre-feet per year, which decreases to 25 acre-feet per year after 2034. This right has been earmarked to the Sun City Festival golf course.
- Non-Indian Agricultural (NIA) allocation: 2,786 acre-feet per year. In the event of shortage calls on the Colorado River, each of these rights are subject to temporary reductions or eliminations.

4. **Hassayampa River** – The Hassayampa is a dry river in Buckeye. The city is able to access groundwater in the Hassayampa basin only.

## Why does the water taste different in different parts of Buckeye?

The water the city provides to its customers meets or exceeds all mandated and regulated safe drinking water standards. The city has been working hard to maintain a consistent quality of water; it sometimes differs depending on the source of the water. Regardless of one's taste, the water is safe to drink.