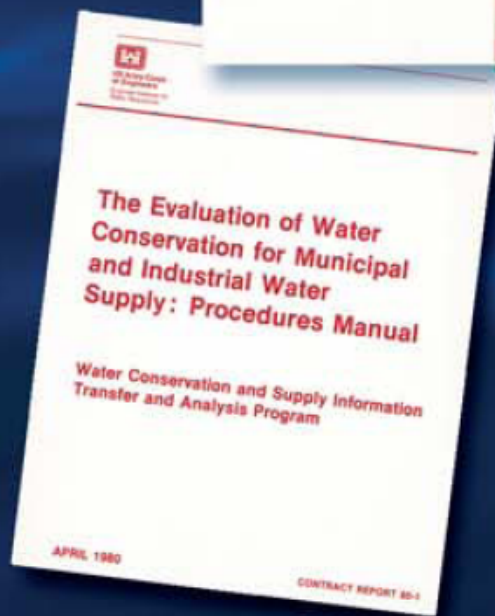
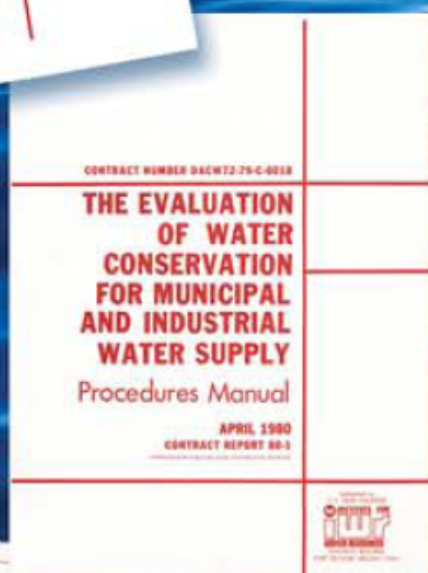
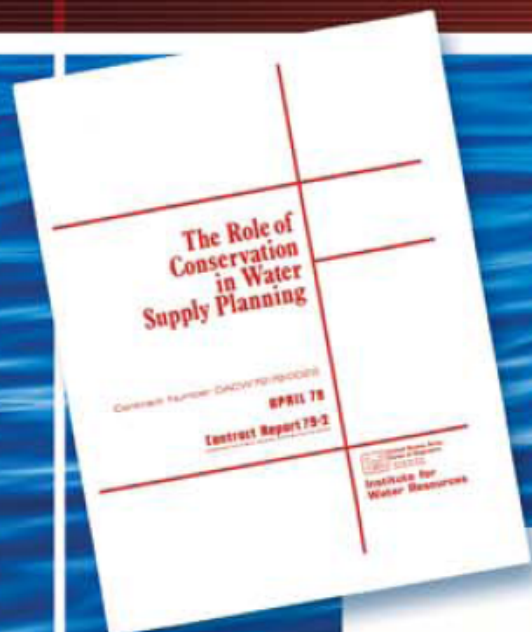


1978 Water Conservation Study

1970s



Controlling water in abundance—either through flood mitigation or building dams—often formed the focus of water resources management in the 20th century. But in the 1970s the Corps was faced with a different challenge: managing water shortages. A severe drought in the middle of the decade led the Corps and other Federal agencies to examine water conservation responses.

After directing a drought study task force for the White House and producing the Presidential Drought Appraisal Study in 1977, IWR began a water conservation study at the request of Corps leadership. Researchers asked what were different aspects of water conservation, and how could the cost savings of conservation be quantified. They developed an algorithm to test conservation projections for major U.S. cities. IWR personnel examined what water demands would be under various conservation alternatives and what economic savings could be expected.

During the water conservation study, IWR reached out to experts across the Corps by collaborating with members of the Office of the Chief of Engineers (OCE), the Waterways Experiment Station (WES), and the Hydrologic Engineering Center (HEC). The study resulted in the development of a manual of water conservation planning procedures for the Civil Works directorate. The findings also influenced the Water Resources Council's revised Principles & Standards in 1979, and it helped to refine IWR's expertise in drought research and water demand management. This knowledge would be put to use in later projects, such as the development of the water usage computer model IWR-MAIN and the National Drought Study.



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