

Watts Water Technologies Case Study



Watts Water Technologies, an international water solutions company, wanted to expand its role in global water stewardship. After joining The Water Council, it pilot tested The Water Council's WAVE program to begin its water stewardship journey.

Through WAVE, Watts is prioritizing water-related action where it matters most, mitigating water-related risk, and addressing shared water challenges and opportunities across the watersheds where it operates while building a more water-resilient supply chain.

Watts

Watts is a global leader of quality water solutions for residential, industrial, municipal and commercial settings.



Its family of brands offers products focused on drainage, HVAC and hot water, plumbing and flow control, and water quality and rainwater harvesting. Watts is based in Boston and operates 42 sites worldwide.

Situation

To support the expansion of the company's role in global water stewardship and sustainability, Watts first became a member of The Water Council. As part of that commitment, Watts began participation in WAVE in April 2021.

Process

The first part of the WAVE process is understanding a company's water uses, impacts and risks by examining how water is used at company sites and the condition of the watersheds in which the company operates.

"It's an evolution from looking at water use just within the four walls to looking at it with a community- and context-based perspective," said Samantha Akella, Manager of Global Sustainability Programs.

"The program was very pragmatic and easy to follow. It really helped us bridge the gap between site and community, with very simple and straightforward indicators to collect and measure and understand."

– Alan Gilden, Vice President of Quality and Continuous Improvement, Watts Water Technologies

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Process continued

Pilot Site Selection – Watts used WRI’s Aqueduct water risk atlas tool to identify which of its 42 major sites should be selected for the WAVE program. A mix of eight sites that were either large consumers and/or in regions of relatively higher water risk were selected for water stewardship action based on water withdrawals, wastewater discharges and local watershed risks.

Identify Watersheds – An evaluation of the origins of the water used by Watts yielded benefits from the start. The company contacted municipalities for details on the watersheds where it operates, accessing free services and audits from the water providers and connecting Watts with local organizations with similar water stewardship focus.

Conduct a Water Balance – A detailed water balance in every factory offered even more opportunities for water conservation and a new focus on maintaining water cleanliness as the water moved through the factory’s operations.

Engage the Community – This was a key step to ensure connections were made with other users of the shared water resource. A variety of stakeholders, including water and wastewater treatment utilities, community-based watershed associations, city officials, vendors and third-party services, were engaged in a direct dialogue at all eight sites.

Outcomes/Next Steps

As a result of the program, Watts took a variety of actions at the local and global level to reduce water consumption, increase reuse, improve water quality, and reduce negative impacts upstream and downstream. These included expanded water metering, continued community engagement and site-specific projects.

Watts updated its Corporate Environment, Health, Safety and Sustainability Policy to reflect its goal to advance local and global water stewardship across its facilities and in the communities where it operates through stakeholder engagement and partnerships. In January 2022, Watts published [a water stewardship report](#) on its website.

“Going through the process was very helpful in understanding what impact our site’s usage is having on the local community,” Akella said. “The engagement with both external and internal stakeholders became an important part of what we did.”

“Participating in this program has allowed us to better understand water as a shared resource and given us a community-based perspective when thinking about water usage and our place in this system. By looking beyond our footprint, we can make a larger impact in the watershed as a whole, and our water stewardship journey has just begun.”

– Ken Lepage, General Counsel, Chief Sustainability Officer & Secretary, Watts Water Technologies

Watts plans to apply WAVE learnings to its other sites that weren’t included in the pilot. The experience encouraged Watts to think about how it engages with communities worldwide on water quality and availability and how it can assist customers in the water stewardship process.

