

How long can Payson's current water supplies last?

A question that many people ask is "just how long can Payson's water supplies last?" Payson's water supplies are managed with the **Safe Yield** approach. This means that we do not wish to use more water than is naturally replenished over the long-term average. We expect to reach this balance at about the same time that a new source of surface water is delivered to Payson. At that point, groundwater wells will be turned off seasonally, in favor of the surface water supply. Therefore, assuming Payson's water resources are managed appropriately Payson's long-term water supplies are anticipated to be quite sufficient.

What will happen if the Town of Payson were to continue to grow beyond its Safe Yield and C.C. Cragin water is not yet being delivered?

Assuming a growth rate of 3% per year, average precipitation, and per capita use remains less than 90 gallons per person per day, groundwater supplies should remain sufficient to meet annual demands until C.C. Cragin surface water deliveries commence; even if several years of demand above Safe Yield were to occur.

What is Payson doing to conserve its water resources?

Our water conservation ordinances are some of the most aggressive in the state of Arizona. Water conservation is taken

seriously in Payson. Resource status levels such as precipitation trends and groundwater levels are used to set reality based conservation levels. We provide free conservation education to schools, free water saving devices, special incentive programs, and much more.

What's in Payson's future for water?

Continuing to provide sufficient quantities of the highest quality drinking water for the people of Payson is our goal. The Town of Payson is working hard to **preserve and protect** our current water resources while developing new ones. Working towards the utilization of C.C. Cragin surface water is a priority for the Town's Water Department. We are focused on working with the Salt River Project, Bureau of Reclamation, Gila County, Department of Water Resources, Tonto National Forest and others in a cooperative effort to ensure utilization of this source. With the utilization of C.C. Cragin Reservoir surface water, Payson will have obtained a water supply necessary to satisfy foreseeable future water demand through buildout.

We are excited about Payson's water future and look forward to continued success.



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WATER RESOURCES

FACT SHEET



Where does Payson get its water?

Currently, Payson utilizes two sources of water to meet its needs. Groundwater is Payson's only source of drinking water, while reclaimed water is used for irrigation and artificial recharge.

What is groundwater and how does Payson obtain it?

Groundwater is water that resides in aquifers within the earth's crust. The geology in and around Payson is made up of decomposed and fractured granite rocks. This kind of geology has allowed for snowmelt and rainfall to percolate or recharge into the earth's crust and create our aquifers. Also, a deeper portion of the aquifer system carries groundwater of the regional aquifer. Groundwater that exists within this part of the aquifer is believed to originate as recharge from atop the Mogollon Rim northeast of Payson. These Groundwater resources are pumped into the Town's distribution system from wells drilled into the aquifer at locations throughout the Town of Payson.

What is recharge? Why is it so important?

Recharge is a term used to describe how aquifers are replenished. The shallower portions of the Payson granite aquifer are totally dependent on local recharge from winter precipitation and to a lesser

degree, summer monsoon rains. Studies indicate that between ten and sixteen percent of Payson's annual precipitation recharges into the local aquifer.

What is reclaimed water and artificial recharge?

Reclaimed water is treated effluent or recycled water. The Northern Gila County Sanitary District receives wastewater and treats it to a very high quality. The quality of the reclaimed water is so good that portions of the Payson aquifer are being artificially recharged with it at Green Valley Park. The Green Valley Park Lakes also serves as the distribution hub for reclaimed water used at golf courses, schools, and



park turf areas thereby helping to preserve groundwater for potable uses. In the future, additional artificial recharge facilities may be utilized in order to offset the negative influences of unusually long dry spells.

What about surface water resources?

Currently, surface water resources are not utilized in the Town of Payson.

Payson's CC Cragin Project, under construction, will provide surface water from CC Cragin Reservoir.

However, the United States Congress passed the 2004 Arizona Water Rights Settlement Act, in December 2004. By the passage of this Act, Payson was given access to up to 3,000 acre-ft/yr of surface water from **C.C. Cragin reservoir (formerly Blue Ridge)**. This reservoir is located atop the Mogollon Rim 25 miles north of Payson. Payson has secured this water right and works in partnership with the Salt River Project for the operation of CC Cragin water delivery facilities. Payson has received



all necessary federal permits for the installation of an approximately 15 mile long pipeline needed to bring the water to the community. A water treatment plant is under design. The project is anticipated to cost \$55M, with impact fees and user fees being the primary funding source. The Department's goal is to have the new source of water available between the years 2017 to 2020.