



Per Capita Water Use

Explanation of Indicator

The purpose of this indicator is to compare Florida's per capita water use to the rest of the nation. Florida's per capita water use should be higher than most of the southern states due to its climate, levels of tourism, and the number of water-related recreational activities.

Per capita water use is calculated by dividing the total public supplied water in gallons per day by the population served for each state. The water withdrawn from public water suppliers includes all waters withdrawn by public and private water suppliers and delivered to multiple users for domestic, commercial, industrial, and thermoelectric power uses, as well as water lost in collection and distribution systems, public use (water for fire fighting, street washing, municipal parks, and swimming pools), and water transferred between adjacent states or water-resources regions. This differs from total water use since it does not include irrigation and agriculture.

Source

The Water Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is the lead office for this information. The USGS publishes a report, *Estimated Use of Water in the United States*, every five years which contains this information. The data for Florida is prepared by Richard Marella, who can be contacted at USGS, 227 North Bronough Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301, or at (904) 681-7620.

Data Characteristics

This information is collected throughout the year for each state by their respective environmental agencies, but it is compiled for the above mentioned publication approximately every five years by the USGS. This information can be obtained in hard copy format at no cost from the Water Resources Division of the USGS.

Overall Assessment

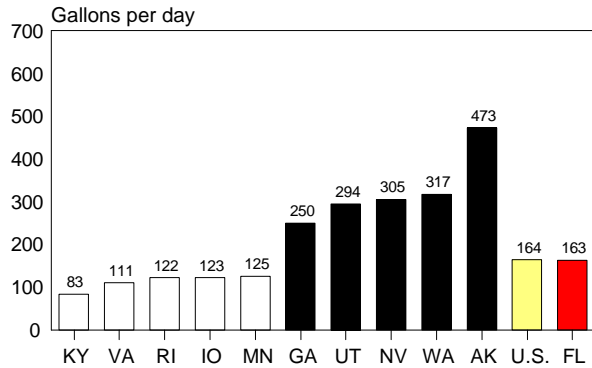
The data used to calculate this information may not be solely based on actual meter readings, but on estimates based on consumptive use permit files and monthly operating reports. Per capita comparisons do not distinguish between states that have stringent water restrictions which may limit individual use and those states without restrictions. The change in per capita water consumption will reflect the ability to more efficiently conserve and utilize this limited resource.

Analysis of Indicator

As shown in the following graphs, Florida's per capita water use has increased from 163 gallons per day (GPD) in 1970 to 171 GPD in 1990, a 4.9 percent increase. The highest per capita water use in Florida occurred in 1980 with each person using 183 GPD, an 8.9 percent increase from 1975. Perhaps the most interesting comparison shown in these graphs is that Florida's per capita use has been at the same level as the United States' per capita water use. Increases in Florida's per capita water use are

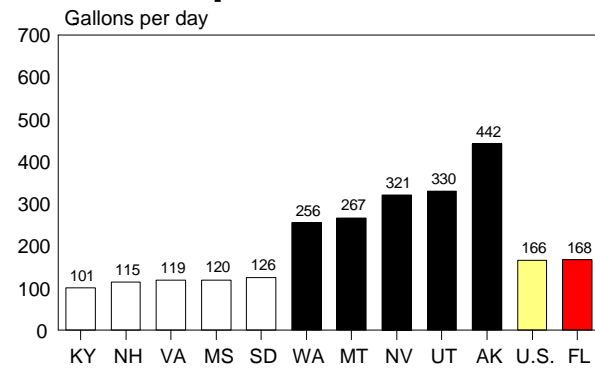
accounted for by increases in tourism and irrigated acreage. Overall trends in per capita water use show that the western states tend to rank higher, i.e. use more water, than any of the other states.

Best and Worst States in Per Capita Water Use



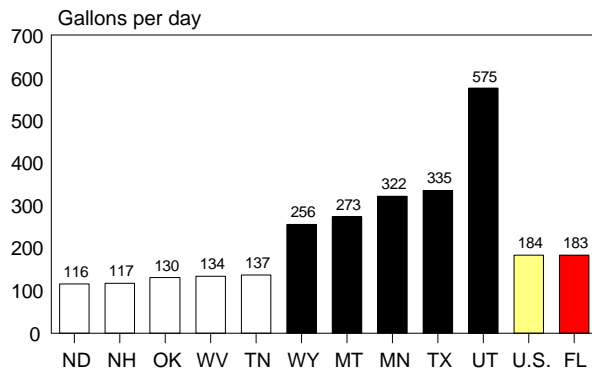
1970

Florida was ranked 28th in 1970.



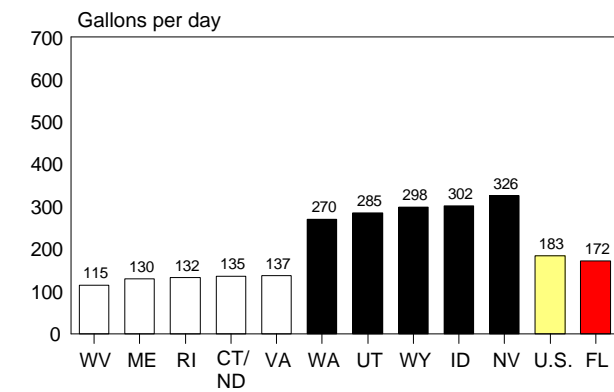
1975

Florida was ranked 27th in 1975.



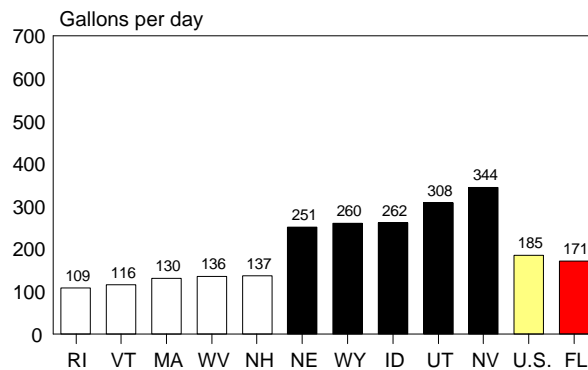
1980

Florida was ranked 28th in 1980.



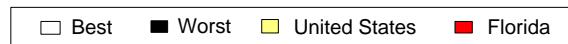
1985

Florida was ranked 24th in 1985.



1990

Florida was ranked 22nd in 1990.



Per capita water use in general has been increasing since 1970. Per capita water use for the "best state" has increased from 83 GPD to 109 GPD, with its highest use occurring in 1980 with 116 GPD. The "worst state" per capita water use has decreased from 473 GPD in 1970 to 344 GPD in 1990. The highest water use occurred in 1980, when Utah's per capita water use was 575 GPD. Utah is the only state that has consistently been ranked in the five highest per capita water use states. This high per capita water use can be attributed to the arid climate of Utah. The U.S. per capita water use has remained fairly consistent, with the exception of the 10.8 percent increase which occurred between 1975 and 1980.

Trends in Per Capita Water Use

