

How Tampa's Water is Used

How do we get our water on a daily basis? We turn on the faucet in the morning and expect the water to come out, but how does it get there?

And how long have we as citizens been depending on that water to be there? Our faucets and pipes are part of a larger public water supply that is a system that dates back as far as the 1800s. The first record of the public water supply dates back to **1887**, when the **Tampa Water Works Company** held a 35 year contract with the city. Back then, people only relied on wells to supply their water, but after a short time the wells were abandoned because the water wasn't suitable for drinking, cooking or bathing.

The city realized that they needed to find an alternate source for water, so in 1922 they began to look for an adequate source. **The Hillsborough River**, which flowed into Tampa from a 640 square mile water shed, was chosen as our source and remains our primary source of water today.

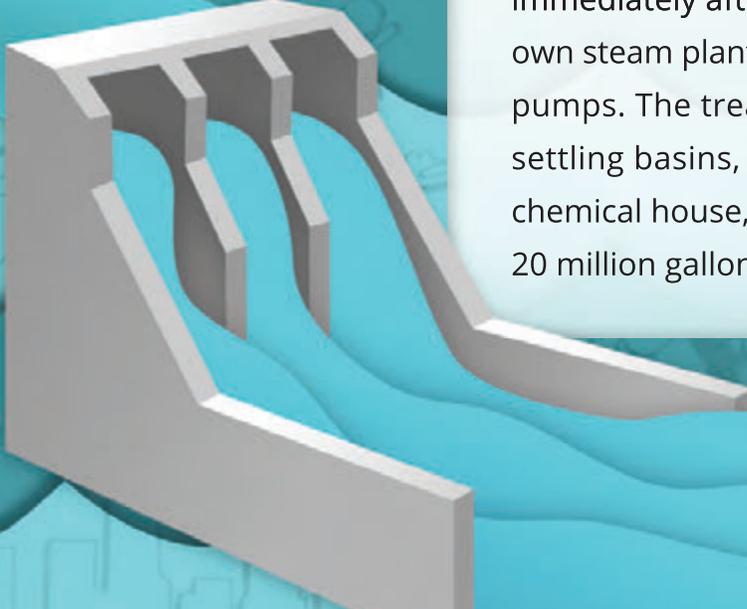


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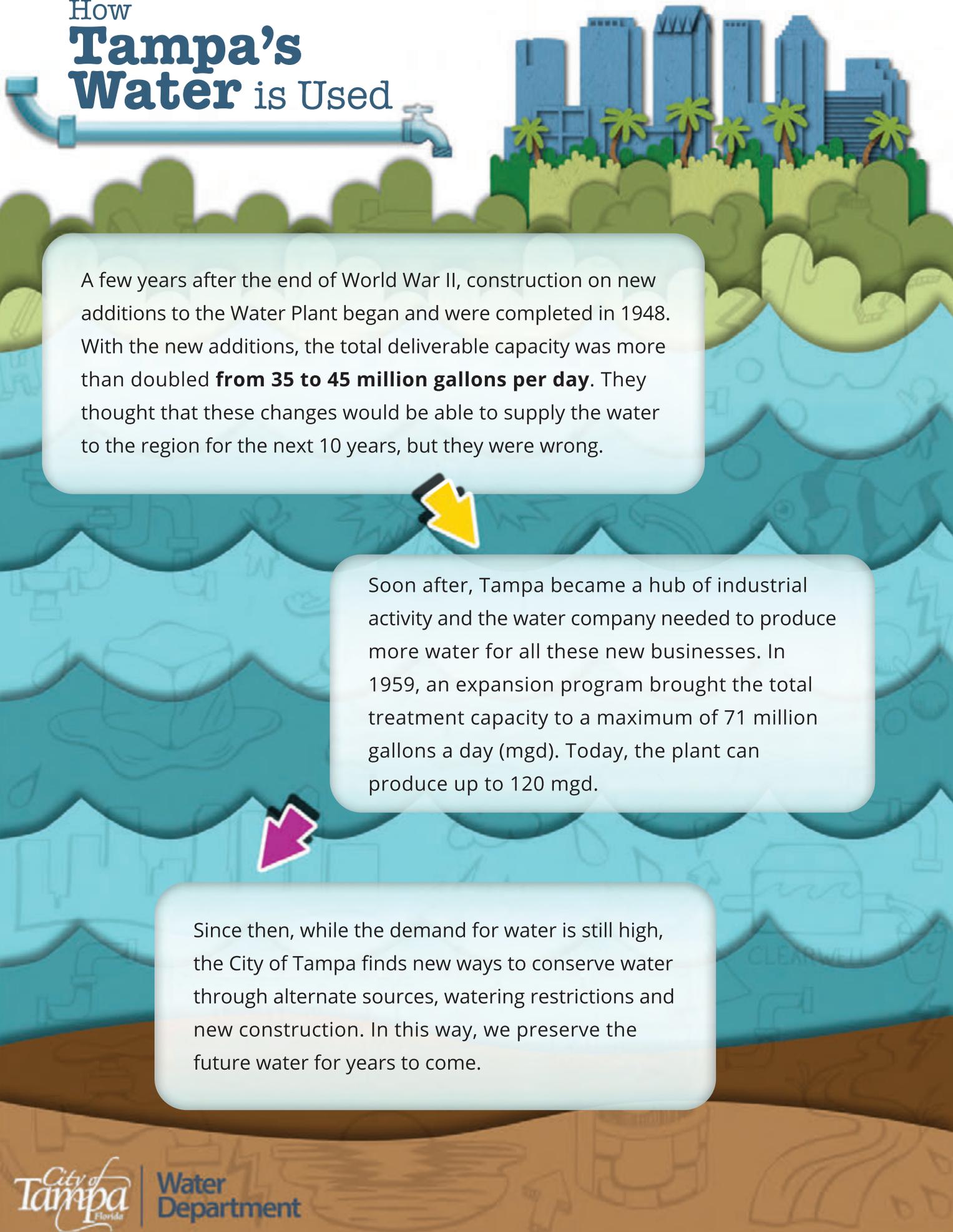
In 1923, the system consisted of 24 artesian wells, one spring, a steam operating pumping plant with a capacity of 13 mgd (million gallons per day), and 60 miles of cast iron water distribution mains. The City began work on a **new water treatment plant** and pumping station on the south bank of the Hillsborough River at 30th Street, just upstream from Tampa Electric Company's dam, immediately after the purchase. This plant included its own steam plant, electrical generators, and steam-driven pumps. The treatment plant consisted of mixing and settling basins, rapid sand filters, clear well storage, chemical house, laboratory, and office and could supply 20 million gallons of quality potable water per day.



In 1933, extreme weather and thunderstorms produced severe flood stage conditions in the Hillsborough River, resulting in the collapse of the Tampa Electric Company's dam. The dam was later **rebuilt in 1944**, but for years, water had to be pumped from the river directly into the plant.

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A few years after the end of World War II, construction on new additions to the Water Plant began and were completed in 1948. With the new additions, the total deliverable capacity was more than doubled **from 35 to 45 million gallons per day**. They thought that these changes would be able to supply the water to the region for the next 10 years, but they were wrong.



Soon after, Tampa became a hub of industrial activity and the water company needed to produce more water for all these new businesses. In 1959, an expansion program brought the total treatment capacity to a maximum of 71 million gallons a day (mgd). Today, the plant can produce up to 120 mgd.



Since then, while the demand for water is still high, the City of Tampa finds new ways to conserve water through alternate sources, watering restrictions and new construction. In this way, we preserve the future water for years to come.

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Short Answer

1. Briefly describe how the Tampa Water Company has increased the production of water over the years.

2. How does the City of Tampa help preserve the water for the future?

3. How can you help save water for the future?

What Year did this Happen?

1. In what year did the Tampa Water Company take over the water needs of the City?

2. In what year did the Tampa Water Company look for a new water source?

3. In what year did they build the first water treatment plant?

4. In what year was the Tampa Electric dam, rebuilt?

5. In what year, after WWII did they complete construction to bring the production to 35-45mgd (million gallons per day)?

6. How much water a day can Tampa produce?



Water Department

Answer (backwards)



What Year did this Happen?:
1. 1887
4. 1944
5. 1948
6. 120 mgd
3. 1923
2. 1922

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Word Search

T	N	A	L	P	T	N	E	M	T	A	E	R	T	Y
C	Z	K	N	L	Y	R	Z	B	S	G	M	C	D	L
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ARTESIAN WELL

DAM

PUMP

SPRING

TREATMENT PLANT

WATER SHED

WATER SUPPLY

WELLS

Answer
(backwards)

