



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT AWE?

CalWEP's 2025 Winter Plenary | December 11, 2025

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# Alliance *for* Water Efficiency



## **POLICY UPDATES**

*Alliance for Water Efficiency*

# WATERSENSE AND ENERGY STAR THREATS

- Trump Administration's proposed FY 2026 budget would eliminate EnergyStar funding
- In early 2025, the EPA announced plans to "overhaul" WaterSense specifications; changes have yet to occur
  - Some specifications under development have been paused
  - WaterSense program has been moved into an office with the Water Reuse program
- Both programs have level funding through January (stop gap funding bill) with bi-partisan support
- Despite overwhelming support, both remain at risk because of Trump Administration opposition (Energy Star more than WaterSense)



# WATERSENSE & ENERGY STAR DEFENSE

- AWE and partners met with EPA and Congress
- Appropriations requests sent to Congress
- Organized a national WaterSense support letter with nearly 100 orgs and engaged in outreach with the EPA and Congress
- Released a fact sheet on the benefits of WaterSense to strengthen stakeholder and Congressional engagement
- Coordinated with a broad 1,100+ cross-sectoral coalition to oppose the elimination of ENERGY STAR and advance shared efficiency priorities

# WATER CONSERVATION REBATE TAX PARITY ACT



- Introduced in the House & Senate with bipartisan support
- AWE network brought key Congressional champions to the table
- Organized a national sign-on letter with 62 organizational signatories
- Targeted outreach in the CRB
- Strong national support: AWWA, AMWA, IA, IAPMO, NWRA, PMI
- Government shut down undercut our strategy to advance the bill in 2025; will enhance efforts in 2026

# DEFENDING FEDERAL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

- Legislation (e.g., Don't Mess with My Home Appliances Act) and proposed regulations threaten to weaken or eliminate federal water and energy efficiency standards
- AWE and partners lobbying against legislation that is likely to pass the House but not the Senate
- AWE led development of comments opposing DOE proposed regulatory rollbacks of water efficiency standards; co-signers included Appliance Standards Awareness Project, AWWA, AMWA and NRDC.
- AWE prepared to sue



## RESEARCH UPDATES

*Alliance for Water Efficiency*

# **NEWLY RELEASED: ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH HOUSEHOLD CONSUMER PRODUCTS: GUIDANCE & INSIGHTS FOR ESTIMATING & COMMUNICATING WATER SAVINGS**

## **The Report includes:**

- Potential water savings from household consumer products and campaigns
- A step-by-step process of estimate potential water savings
- Methods to advance the understanding of consumer behavior to improve the accuracy and credibility of company claims



[Access the report here!](#)





# NEWLY RELEASED: WRF 5265

*EVALUATING CHANGES IN PEAK WATER DEMAND AND HOW THAT MAY AFFECT THE CHOICE, DESIGN, MANAGEMENT, AND EVALUATION OF DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES*

## The Report includes:

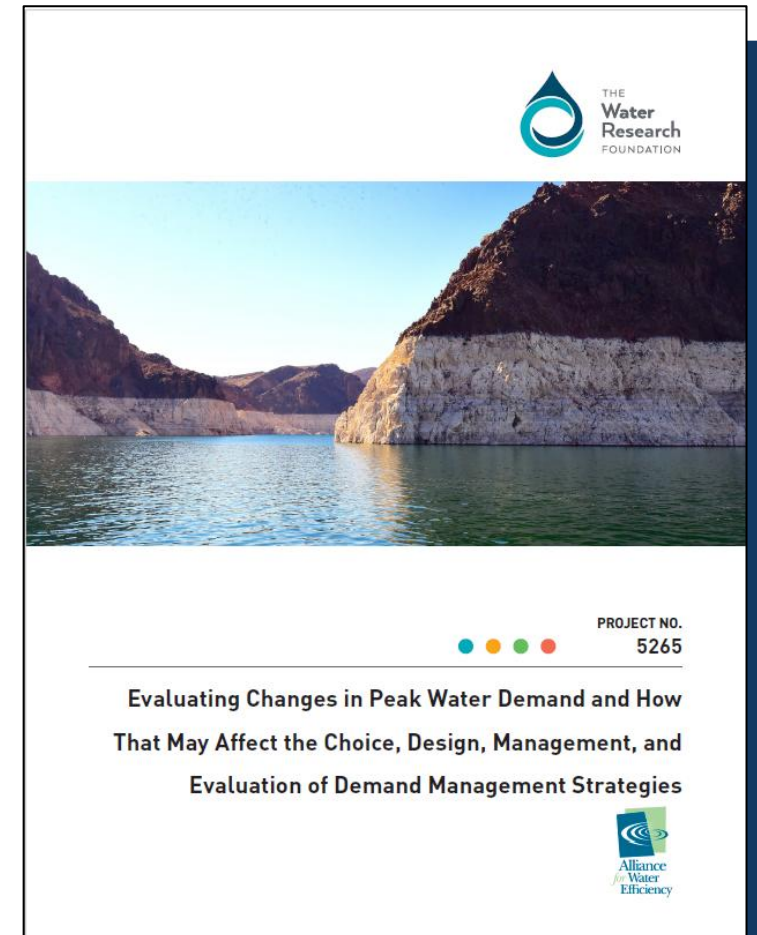
- An overview of water demand trends across various peak-related metrics
- Case study analyses of peak water demand history and trends
- An assessment of peak demand management strategies



[Access the report here!](#)



**In 2026:** Guidance Document detailing key takeaways from the report.



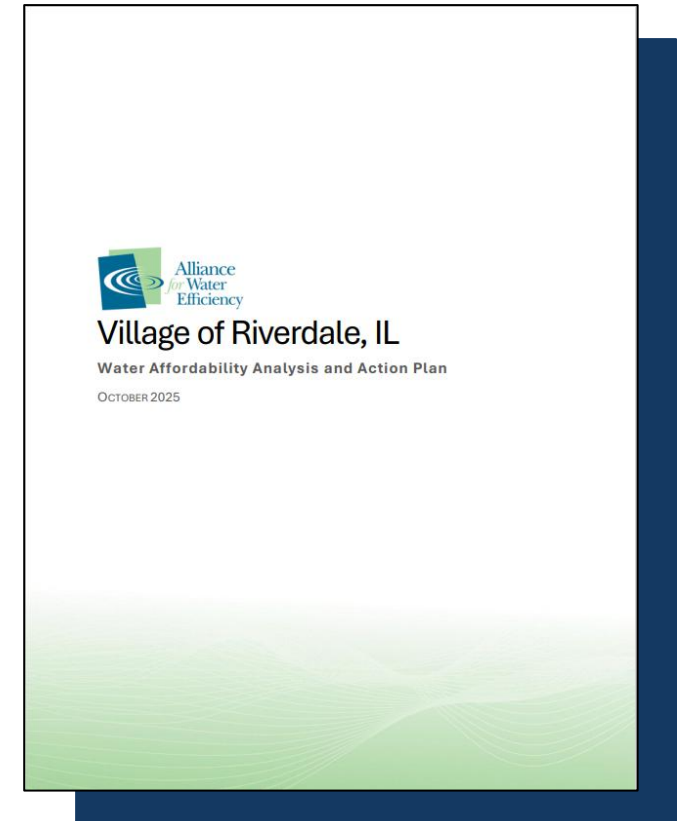
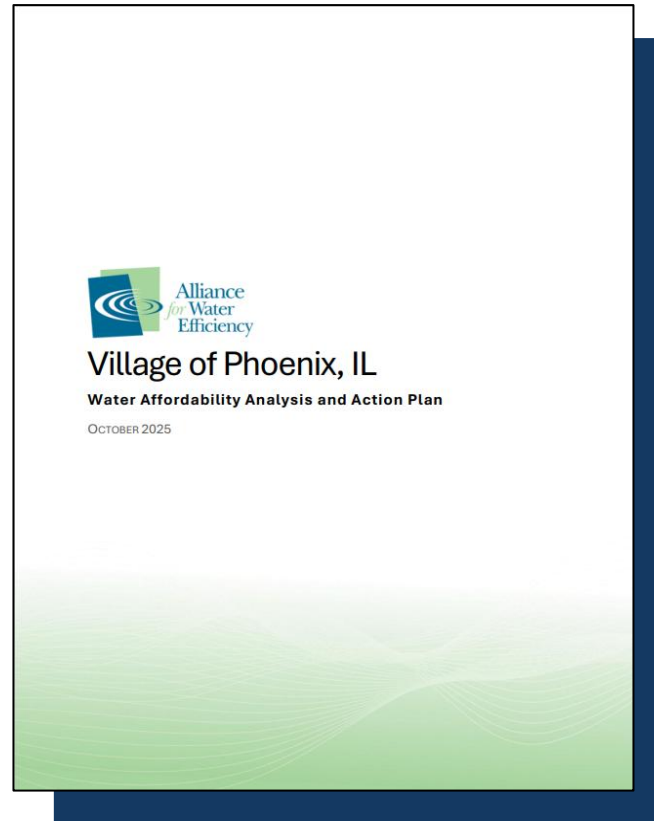
# COMING SOON: COOK COUNTY WATER AFFORDABILITY ANALYSES

## Each report includes:

- Background information on the municipality and community demographics
- Water affordability analysis using census, consumption, and billing data
- Community engagement summary and outcomes
- Policy and programmatic recommendations



COOK COUNTY  
BUREAU OF  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT



# COMING SOON: INNOVATION IN WATER CONSERVATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

## The report includes:

- Engagement summary with Michigan's non-B&I water use sectors
- Engagement summary with Michigan's B&I water use sectors
- Water efficiency and conservation best management practices innovations and trends
- Summary of findings and considerations for future action



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

## Innovation in Water Conservation Best Practices

Analytical Report

### Prepared For:

State of Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy  
Office of the Great Lakes

### Prepared By:

The Alliance for Water Efficiency  
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance  
H.W. Hoffman & Associates, LLC

**Submission Date:** October 15, 2025

**Reporting Period:** February 28, 2025, to August 31, 2025

**Project Number:** GL24-AWE-01

# LOOKING FORWARD – KICKING OFF NEW PROJECTS

**Characterizing water use in low-income households** explores the extent to which leaks from inefficient appliances and fixtures contribute to immediate and long-term household water affordability challenges.



**Strategies for Integrating Water Reuse and Water Efficiency / Conservation to Maximize Benefits** documents examples, lessons learned, and best practices to effectively integrate reuse and efficiency/conservation policies and efforts for water providers.



**Per capita water use calculation** evaluates and standardizes the calculation of per capita water use across North America by developing a clear, consistent, and adaptable framework and tool grounded in stakeholder input, past research, and aligned methodologies.



# LOOKING FORWARD – KICKING OFF NEW PROJECTS

The **Data Center Primer** will provide information on data center types and functions, cooling technologies, how much water is used, and community recommendations to ensure water is appropriately considered in data center development.



The **Colorado River Basin Water Efficiency Network** will provide a collaborative platform for water and land use practitioners to advance innovative water conservation and efficiency strategies that safeguard the Basin's long-term water supply.



## Stay tuned for more exciting updates in 2026!



# EVALUATING & OPTIMIZING LARGE-SCALE LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

Outdoor Water Savings Studies – Phase 3

*Alliance for Water Efficiency*





Colorado Springs Utilities



CITY OF BEND



## Project Partners & Participants

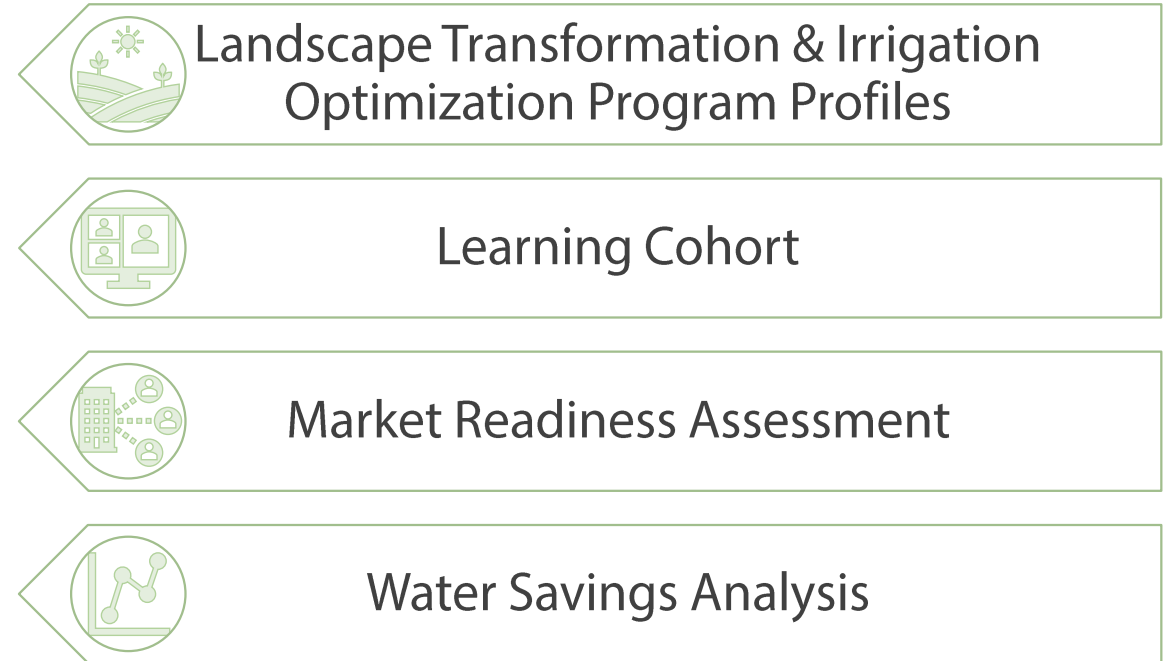


# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Goals & Objectives

- **Identify how are utilities implementing efforts** to transform or optimize large landscapes
- **Quantify the effectiveness** are these programs
- **Measure the resources** —funding, time, skilled labor— to facilitate these programs
- **Characterize co-benefits** like habitat, cooling, education, and stormwater capture
- **Illustrate policies** that support or hinder landscape transformation and optimization efforts

## Research Approach



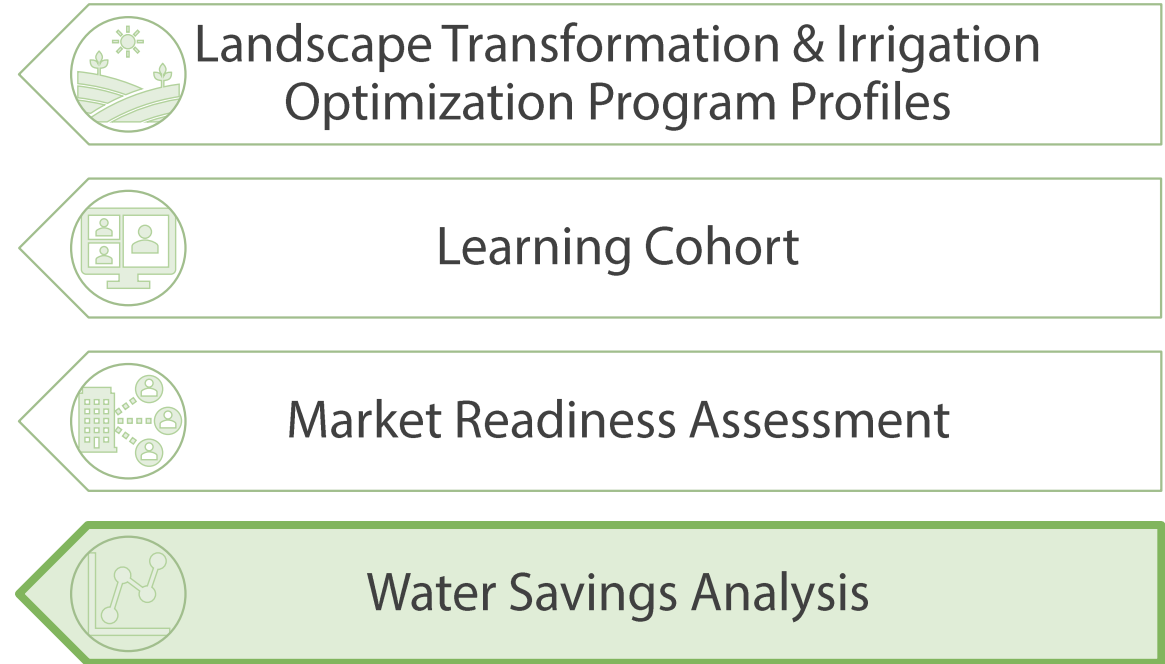


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## Research Approach



# WATER SAVINGS ANALYSIS

**Goal:** Calculate the potential water savings on large landscapes attributed to participation in one or more irrigation optimization and landscape transformation programs independent of localized variables.

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**Model:** a difference-in-difference model that compares the water consumption of customer accounts before and after they participate in an irrigation optimization and/or landscape transformation with a control group to calculate actual and percent water savings.

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**Inputs:** Data from 14 utilities across the Western U.S., with a total of 446 data points incorporated into the model

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**Outputs:** Potential water savings as actual water savings and percent water savings

# IRRIGATION OPTIMIZATION & LANDSCAPE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMS

## Information Provision Programs

Audits  
Landscape water budget reports

## Irrigation Controller Retrofits

Clock-based irrigation controller  
Weather-based irrigation controller

## Irrigation Equipment Retrofits

Spray	Drip irrigation
Rotor	Mix
Rotator	Bubblers

## Landscape Transformation

Turfgrass (cool/warm season)	Low-to-no water use zone
Alternative ground cover	Hardscaping
Moderate water use zone	

## Preliminary Results for Summer Month Analyses

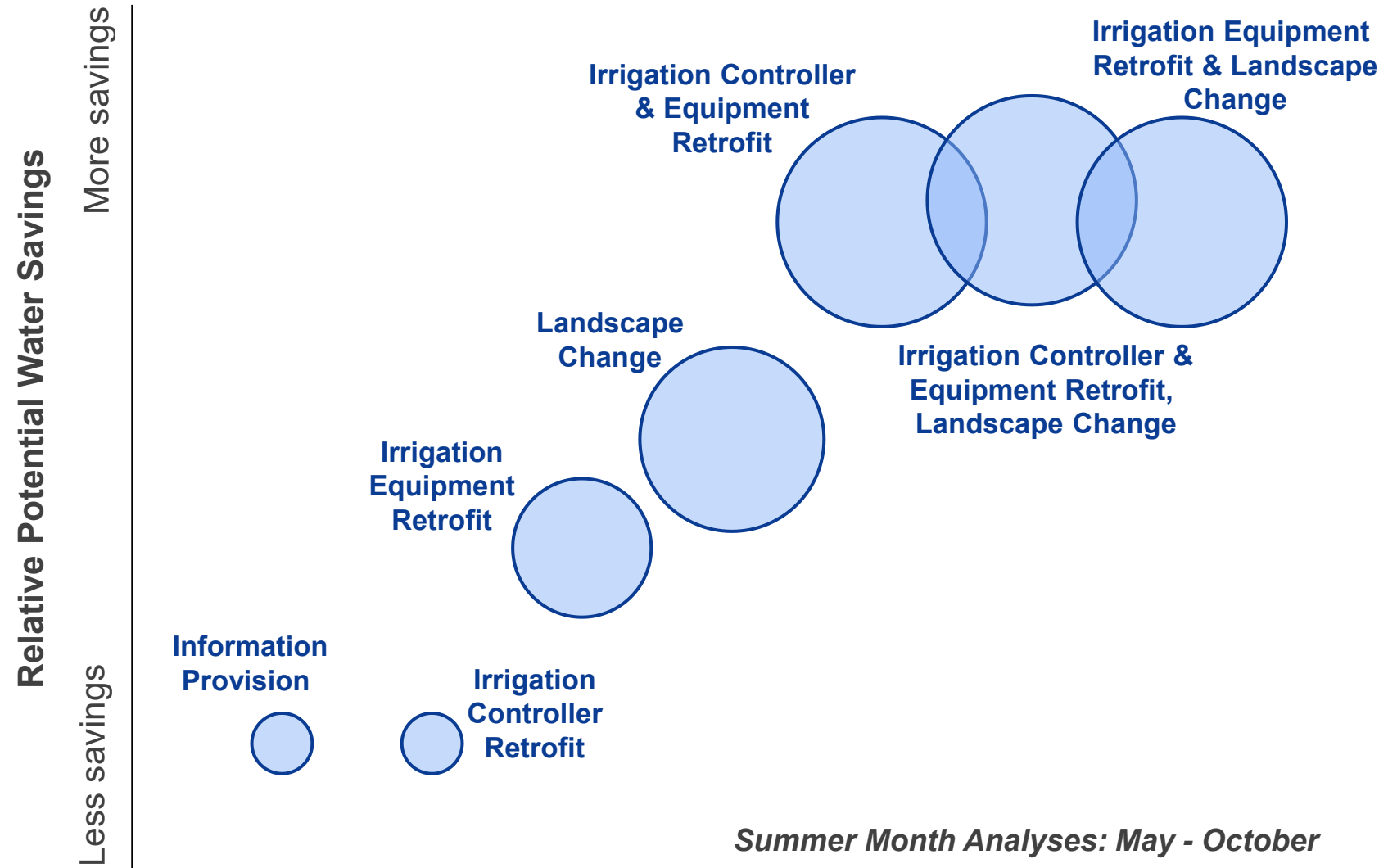
### Relative Potential Water Savings From Program(s) Participation

#### About the Figure

- Potential water savings are modeled
- Relative potential water savings from program(s) participation relative to a control group
- Size of the data point represents the relative potential water savings
- Number of accounts that participated in each program(s) differ

#### Takeaway

- ***Multi-program participation shows the greatest potential water savings***



# WHAT'S NEXT?

## 2026 Publication

### **Multiple Component Study → Multiple Resources**

- Market Readiness Assessment
- Water Savings Analysis Technical Report
- Utility Guide



**THANK YOU!**

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