



Our Region's Trusted Water Leader
San Diego County Water Authority

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News Release

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New Landscape Transformation Program Increases Incentives in San Diego County
Replacing turf with sustainable landscaping can yield \$2.75 per square foot across region

Residents in San Diego County now can receive \$2.75 per square foot for replacing turf with sustainable landscaping features as part of a new Landscape Transformation Program launched today across Southern California.

The new program includes a partnership by the San Diego County Water Authority and the Los Angeles-based Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to boost the per-square-foot incentive amount available in the Water Authority's service area and streamline the application process.

“Over the past few years, the Water Authority has helped foster sustainable landscaping through financial incentives, a demonstration garden, hands-on classes and publication of a detailed guidebook,” said Mark Muir, chair of the Water Authority's Board of Directors. “We're excited to take the next step so that homeowners in the San Diego region can maximize their rebates with one application.”

The new incentive program builds on the success of the Water Authority's pioneering Sustainable Landscapes Program, which in October 2016 started offering up to \$1.75 per square foot toward project costs for upgrading as much as 3,000 square feet of existing turf. That program helped more than 175 homeowners transform their landscapes into beautiful, climate-appropriate mini-watersheds that not only save water, but achieve additional benefits such as reducing stormwater runoff and lessening green waste. Incentive payments required following a detailed set of environmentally friendly landscaping practices to ensure projects achieved a heightened level of sustainability.

Moving forward, residents in San Diego County are eligible for MWD's Landscape Transformation Program, which includes requirements for grass removal, irrigation modification and water retention or filtration to support reuse or soil absorption of rainwater. For residents, MWD is offering \$1 and the Water Authority will use existing grant funds from the state Department of Water Resources to add \$1.75 per square foot for a total of \$2.75 for qualifying projects. Businesses are eligible for \$1 per square foot. City of San Diego residential water customers are eligible for an additional \$1.25 per square foot for qualifying projects.

Program funding is limited, and participants must comply with requirements that include a simple landscape plan, plant coverage, mulch, rainwater capture and irrigation technology. Qualifying projects generally must remove between 250 and 1,500 square feet of turf in the front yard, though some exceptions apply.

Removing turf grass is one of the best upgrades residents or businesses can make to reduce their water use. Other steps – such as converting irrigation systems to drip, hand-watering or installing modified sprinkler heads or systems – ensure that water is used only where needed.

In addition, the new landscape program helps to reduce or prevent wasteful runoff using rainwater capture or filtration systems.

Details about the Landscape Transformation Program are at www.socalwatersmart.com.

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The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$220 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.



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