



2024 Excellence Awards



Medford Water Commission showing in-store signage promoting their WaterSense rebates.

WaterSense® Partners Excel in Water Savings

WaterSense and its more than 2,100 partners have been making it easy for consumers and businesses to save water since 2006. Our partners work together to promote and produce WaterSense labeled products and homes, encourage water-saving behaviors, and educate consumers, professionals, and businesses on reducing water waste. WaterSense recognized 22 partners for their achievements in specific aspects of the program in 2023.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Arlington Water Utilities

Arlington (Texas) Water Utilities had a big year promoting water conservation in 2023, earning their first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach. In February, they promoted a Love Your Yard campaign to reduce outdoor water use. The utility offered free kits to customers that contained four sprinkler gauges, instructions on how to measure sprinkler output, and information on water-smart irrigation. For Fix a Leak Week in March, Arlington Water

hosted two in-person classes and posted on social media to educate residents on the importance of finding and fixing leaks inside and outside their homes. In addition, the utility promoted Fix a Leak Week in its *Tips and Tools for Saving on Your Bill* newsletter. Arlington Water customers also could sign up for free sprinkler evaluations all year long as part of a collaboration with WaterSense partner Tarrant Regional Water District. The utility used targeted emails to promote the program and performed more than 500 evaluations! Arlington Water and Tarrant also worked together to allow customers to exchange old, inefficient showerheads in the fall for a WaterSense labeled model, distributing more than 120 showerheads.



City of Lakeland Water Utilities

The City of Lakeland (Florida) Water Utilities made a splash in 2023, earning its first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach. The City attended more than 20 events and creatively educated attendees by displaying a mini “green” home model—a dollhouse featuring WaterSense labeled toilets and ENERGY

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STAR® certified appliances, as well as rain sensors, microirrigation, and a rain barrel to educate the public on ways to save water. The City also helped organize the annual Seven Rivers Water Festival with a few other local utilities. The festival highlights water conservation and natural resource stewardship. The City of Lakeland Water Utilities was also active in the classroom, participating in The Great American Teach-in, afterschool Boys & Girls Clubs’ workshops, summer library events, and the Spring Break STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) program, where they taught about water-saving practices. On social media, the City shared water conservation tips with over 80,000 followers on Facebook and Instagram through their Water Wednesday posts.



The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY
Utilities Department

City of Oklahoma City

The City of Oklahoma City (Oklahoma) earned its first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach with a focus on teaching residents how to save water and look for WaterSense labeled

products through its Squeeze Every Drop conservation program. Oklahoma City attended 26 tabling events in the community where they promoted finding and fixing leaks, composting, water-efficient landscaping, and other water conservation topics. To help homeowners save water, the City held three homeowner association (HOA) irrigation check-up workshops to demonstrate best practices and simple sprinkler repairs to HOA members. Oklahoma City hosted or attended seven other speaking engagements on topics from understanding your water bill, to making leak repairs at home, to planting native, drought-tolerant species of plants. As another way to promote outdoor water savings, the City conducted a “Winter Pop-Up” series at five home and garden centers; the pop-ups included water-efficient irrigation equipment demonstrations.



Oklahoma City teaching residents how to understand their water bill.



Cobb County Water System

Cobb County (Georgia) Water System has earned an impressive 13th WaterSense Award, this year for Excellence in Education and Outreach. In 2023, Cobb County participated in several WaterSense campaigns, including Fix a Leak Week, Sprinkler Spruce-Up, Your Better Yard, and Shower Better. During Fix a Leak Week in March and Shower Better Month in October, Cobb County distributed WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators to customers at no cost. In July, the

utility engaged their Spanish-speaking customer base during a local Spanish language Family Fun Safety Day, where the county encouraged over 400 visitors to play WaterSense’s Lotería game with cards and facts on water-saving devices and behaviors. Cobb County staffed a booth at a local Master Gardener plant sale, promoting WaterSense’s Find it, Flag it, Fix it materials for repairing irrigation systems to over 800 gardeners. For indoor water savings, Cobb County distributed nearly 400 free water-saving kits that include WaterSense labeled faucet aerators and showerheads.



Department of Water, County of Kaua'i

The Department of Water, County of Kaua'i (Hawaii) earned their fourth WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach. New in 2023, the Department organized a month-long Your Better Yard campaign to showcase easy xeriscaping options for water-efficient landscaping. The Department of Water gave away lavender seed packets and showcased a selection of drought-tolerant plants and posted landscaping tips on signage. To promote Your Better Bathroom

and Shower Better, Kaua'i staff set up a display in the Department of Water lobby offering free WaterSense labeled showerheads—giving away more than 275, which they anticipate will save nearly 750,000 gallons of water in the County of Kaua'i annually! Throughout the year, the Department held eight WaterSense-specific distribution events in the community where they handed out WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators, shower timers, leak detection tablets, and WaterSense educational materials. Their one-person team participated in over 20 outreach events in 2023, where they educated customers on water-saving practices and promoted WaterSense labeled fixtures.



Showerhead giveaway in the Department's lobby.



Hilton Head Public Service District

With a continuous stream of water conservation messaging, Hilton Head (South Carolina) Public Service District (PSD) earned its third WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach.

Throughout 2023, Hilton Head PSD promoted a variety of WaterSense outreach campaigns, including: encouraging customers to take

the I'm for Water Pledge at the beginning of the year; helping homeowners identify leaks during Fix a Leak Week; and getting those with irrigation systems to conduct a Sprinkler Spruce-Up. The PSD suggested improvements to Hilton Head's many swimming pools by sharing WaterSense's pool efficiency resources in the summer, and it encouraged customers to look for the WaterSense label on fixtures at the end of the year through their Tis the Season for Savings campaign. Hilton Head PSD also spread 40 WaterSense-themed messages through Instagram and Facebook in 2023. To reach a larger audience, Hilton Head PSD partners with the Clemson University Extension Service to provide education about responsible lawn care and landscaping through social media, newsletters, and their website.

“We are so thankful for the outstanding resources WaterSense provides to utility partners like Hilton Head PSD. Our customers are the beneficiaries of the great information and ideas provided by WaterSense, and we are so honored to once again be recognized for Excellence in Education and Outreach.”

Pete Nardi, PSD General Manager



Kearns Improvement District

Thanks to their continued commitment to water conservation education, Kearns (Utah) Improvement District has earned their second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach. In 2023, Kearns Improvement District partnered with Kearns Township

and Utah Water Savers to renovate the Paul Walker 911 Memorial Park with water-wise landscaping and WaterSense labeled irrigation equipment. The renovation project is estimated to save 450,000 gallons of water annually! Kearns offered free conservation kits to any customers that visited Kearns' customer service counter; the kits included a garden hose timer, a shower timer, a soil moisture meter, a water-efficient hose spray nozzle, and the WaterSense *Simple Steps to Save Water* brochure. To educate a younger audience about water efficiency, Kearns hosted a Water Conservation Art Contest for students. Elementary, junior high, and high school students were encouraged to get creative and depict water-saving practices and the importance of water conservation for a chance to win monetary prizes.



Water Conservation Art Contest participants showing their artwork.



SCV Water

Santa Clarita Valley (California) Water Agency (SCV Water) has earned an impressive fifth WaterSense award in a row, this time for Excellence in Education and Outreach. SCV Water and the City of Santa Clarita constructed the Bridgeport Park Sustainable Landscape Demonstration Garden next to an elementary school to promote sustainable, climate-

resilient landscapes to the community and provide the school's Green Team a space for outdoor learning. To increase the effectiveness of their water conservation outreach, in 2023 SCV Water worked with the University of California's Dornsife Public Exchange to conduct a study that found residents were unaware of how much water they use, and many have not taken action to save water. SCV Water is using the results to improve engagement and remove customer barriers. SCV Water continued to offer the WaterSMART Workshop—an online interactive e-learning module for residential customers—to more than 125 participants in 2023. They also created videos to educate residents how to find and fix household leaks and to promote their Lawn Replacement Program.

EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING WATERSENSE LABELED PRODUCTS



Alameda County Water District

Alameda County (California) Water District earned its third WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products.

In 2023, the District hosted four workshops on landscape water efficiency, covering topics including: conversion to native and drought-tolerant plants; efficient irrigation and tree care; and rainwater harvesting. They issued rebates for 142 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and

125 WaterSense labeled sprinkler spray bodies. The District also partnered with Rising Sun Center for Opportunity to promote their Green House Call program. Nearly 100 homes received “green house calls,” where WaterSense labeled showerheads and bathroom faucet aerators, as well as water-efficient kitchen faucet aerators, were installed. The District also distributed a new and improved leak kit with free toilet leak detection dye tablets and a toilet flapper; educational materials about finding and fixing leaks; information on how to access the District’s new My Smart Water Connect Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) customer portal; and the California Water Efficiency Partnership’s *Practical Plumbing Handbook*.

“We value the ability to point customers towards high-performing and water-efficient equipment that has been fully vetted through the WaterSense labeling program and appreciate the key role WaterSense plays in supporting both the District’s and our customers’ water savings goals.”



Laura Hidas, District
Director of Water Resources



California Water Service Company

With a focus on helping Californians save water during the drought, California Water Service (Cal Water) earned its second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products. Cal Water offered rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets, urinals, weather-based irrigation controllers, and spray sprinkler bodies and even increased the incentive amount during drought to encourage more customers to save water

during drier weather. Cal Water also offered a free Smart Landscape Tune-Up Program to eligible customers to provide professional repair and retrofit services from an irrigation professional certified by a WaterSense labeled program. Through the rebate program and the Smart Landscape Tune-Up Program, over 1,660 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and more than 8,000 WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler bodies were installed throughout Cal Water’s California service territory. Cal Water also distributed water conservation kits to sixth grade students with WaterSense labeled showerheads to take home and share the savings with their families.



City of Tucson/Tucson Water

The City of Tucson (Arizona)/Tucson Water earned their second Excellence Award for Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products. For example, they send a *Water Matters* newsletter to all customers; WaterWiser text tips are sent to over 1,900 subscribers each month

focusing on outdoor watering practices, including information on how to purchase a WaterSense labeled irrigation controller. As part of its Drought Preparedness and Response Plan Tier 1 efforts, Tucson Water directed nearly 8,000 customers with high water usage to available rebates and incentives for WaterSense labeled products. Prior to the annual Sustainable Landscapes Expo, Tucson Water worked with Ewing to offer a discounted price for a WaterSense labeled controller with cloud management software. To receive the discount, customers took an online workshop to learn about programming the controllers; over 230 people took the workshop and over 180 purchased the smart irrigation controller. In

a follow-up survey of purchasers, 91 percent thought the controller made it easier to schedule irrigation, and 89 percent said the product saved water.



JEA

Thanks to its efforts making WaterSense labeled products accessible, JEA in Jacksonville, Florida, won its first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting

WaterSense Labeled Products. To promote their rebate programs, JEA participated in over 20 events in 2023, where they had attendees spin a Conservation Wheel to win free water-efficient products and distributed information about rebate programs, including how to identify WaterSense labeled eligible models. JEA works with The Home Depot and Lowe's Home Improvement stores to promote rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets and irrigation controllers. Signs are posted in store aisles and stickers are placed on the products for rebates offered in more than 40 stores in the region. JEA's rebates are also listed on the stores' websites for local customers who do their shopping online. In 2023, JEA rebated nearly 800 water-efficient irrigation controllers and 1,540 toilets. In addition to offering rebates, JEA provides direct installation of WaterSense labeled showerheads and aerators as a part of their Neighborhood Energy Efficiency Program that assists low-to-moderate-income customers.

"The WaterSense program has been a critical component to the success of our water conservation programs. We've seen the program grow as it has gained recognition by our customers as a tool to make it easier for anyone to quickly identify products that achieve reliable water savings."

Brian Pippin, Director
Strategic Customer
Programs



Medford Water Commission

Medford (Oregon) Water Commission has earned their first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products. Medford helped customers find ways to save water through their indoor audits, during which they provided free WaterSense labeled

water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators, as well as information about their WaterSense labeled toilet and smart controller rebate programs. Medford's Water Efficiency Team also conducts sprinkler surveys; residents receive a free inspection of their sprinkler systems, as well as rebates to replace their old irrigation controllers with WaterSense labeled models. In 2023, Medford partnered with several hardware stores to promote their WaterSense labeled product rebates during Fix a Leak Week with signage and QR codes that take customers to the rebate application form. Thanks to these partnerships and promotional efforts, Medford Water Commission rebated over 70 WaterSense labeled toilets in 2023. To increase the number of irrigation professionals promoting water efficiency in the area, Medford held a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor class that also emphasized WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers.



Medford's information table at The Home Depot.



Metropolitan Council

The Metropolitan Council in the Twin Cities region of Minnesota has earned their third WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products this year. They continued their successful Water Efficiency Grant Program, which provides grants to municipalities around the region to support the purchase and installation of products that reduce water use. In 2023, the Metropolitan Council helped residential customers and commercial properties cover the replacement of over 800 irrigation controllers, more than 130 spray sprinkler bodies, and over 1,000 toilets with WaterSense labeled models. Through a pilot project with Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS), the Metropolitan Council funded the installation of another 242 WaterSense labeled toilets in apartment buildings located in disadvantaged areas in Saint Paul where tenants pay their water bills. During the Minnesota State Fair, the Metropolitan Council—in partnership with the University of Minnesota’s Turfgrass Science team—was able to reach thousands of attendees with information about smart irrigation and water conservation, including materials about WaterSense labeled irrigation equipment.



Veolia North America

Veolia North America (formerly SUEZ North America) has won their second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products in their New York service area. Veolia offers rebates on WaterSense labeled showerheads, smart irrigation controllers, toilets, and urinals. The utility partnered with Lowe’s Home Improvement, The Home Depot, and other local stores to promote these WaterSense labeled products and their rebates. For customers shopping online, Veolia collaborated with Orange & Rockland, the gas and electric utility in New York, to create an online store that issues Veolia customers instant rebates on WaterSense labeled showerheads and irrigation controllers. Since the launch of their water conservation and efficiency program in 2017, Veolia has issued over 13,900 rebates on WaterSense labeled products, helping its customers save water and money. For commercial customers, Veolia offered free water assessments to identify fixtures to upgrade; in 2023, two colleges in Rockland County, New York, installed nearly 400 WaterSense labeled showerheads.

“The WaterSense label is the backbone of our program and is used extensively in our promotional materials to educate our customers about the benefits of replacing outdated water fixtures with WaterSense labeled models.”

Chris Graziano, Regional President of Veolia’s New York operations

EXCELLENCE IN STRATEGIC COLLABORATION



Alliance for Water Efficiency

The Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) has earned an impressive seventh WaterSense Excellence Award for Strategic Collaboration. In 2023, AWE released a report with the Regional Water Authority (RWA) in Sacramento, California, that evaluated 10 project sites from RWA’s

Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional (CII) Landscape Upgrades Program. After the sites received incentives to upgrade their landscape plant material, irrigation systems, and equipment, AWE worked with RWA to estimate the water savings, energy savings, and greenhouse gas reductions they achieved. AWE also partnered with Houston Public Works to publish *An Assessment of Water Affordability and Conservation Potential in Houston, Texas*, which found a significant opportunity for consumers to save water and lower their utility bills by replacing inefficient fixtures and appliances. AWE continued their partnership with WaterSense by co-hosting a series of webinars focused on outdoor water efficiency topics. In 2023, nearly 500 people attended the webinars live or viewed the recordings!



G3, Green Gardens Group

Winning its fifth WaterSense Award, G3—Green Gardens Group in Los Angeles—is being recognized with an Excellence Award in Strategic Collaboration. In partnership with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, G3 taught 130 California Friendly Landscape

classes that promoted WaterSense and the benefits of working with certified professionals to nearly 3,700 registrants. As part of their work with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, G3 taught 16 Lawn Be Gone hands-on workshops that provided training in lawn transformation, rainwater capture, and drip irrigation at private properties. In all, G3 conducted over 200 classes and workshops for property owners and professionals in 2023, with more than 6,000 attendees. Each class included information on WaterSense labeled irrigation equipment and irrigation professionals certified by a WaterSense labeled program. Additional collaborations included: City of Bend (Oregon); City of Bozeman (Montana); Upper San Gabriel Valley (California) Municipal Water District; Rancho California Water District; and the City of Santa Ana (California) on a Watershed Wise landscape transformation with local Girl Scout troops.



G3 working with a local Girl Scout troop.

EXCELLENCE IN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM GROWTH



California Water Efficiency Partnership

The California Water Efficiency Partnership in Sacramento won their second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Certification Program Growth due to their commitment to certifying landscape and irrigation professionals. The California Water Efficiency Partnership awarded 162 Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) certifications in 2023, an increase from the 120 issued in 2022. In 2023, the Partnership hosted four in-person QWEL trainings and five virtual trainings in English or Spanish. Their virtual training option allowed for more participation from individuals with mobility restrictions, schedule considerations, or health concerns. The Partnership collaborated with various water agencies to host QWEL trainings, including with California Water Service to host training courses and certify professionals outside the Partnership's usual San Francisco Bay service area. The Partnership also fueled program growth by implementing a

sales intelligence and engagement platform to compile a list of over 1,000 industry contacts. These new contacts were targeted with mass email blasts, direct emails, and phone outreach throughout the year to encourage them to take advantage of QWEL training opportunities.



Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California earned its second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Certification Program Growth as it continued to certify more professionals through the Water Efficient Landscaper Dual Certification Program (WELDCP). This

program allows landscape professionals to receive two certifications simultaneously—the California Landscape Contractors Association’s water manager and QWEL. Metropolitan offers landscapers free training and certification on irrigation systems and care of water-wise gardens, reaching small and large landscaping companies as well as individual landscapers, while helping the public hire certified professional contractors. Metropolitan began offering classes in both English and Spanish to broaden its reach. In 2023, 246 landscape professionals attended a WELDCP class, compared to 88 in 2022. Of those, 149 became certified irrigation professionals, a 96 percent increase compared to 2022. In addition, 100 percent of the professionals who earned their QWEL certification through Metropolitan in 2022 renewed their certification in 2023. Metropolitan lists WELDCP-certified professionals online at bewaterwise.com.

“This award represents a multi-agency commitment to providing resources and education to the professionals who can gain the expertise needed to help homeowners transform their yards and their water use. The increased participation year after year has a direct impact on our efforts to create a more sustainable, beautiful, and water-efficient Southern California.”

Krista Guerrero, Metropolitan Water Efficiency Team

EXCELLENCE IN NEW BUILDER PARTNERSHIP



Thanks to their outstanding contributions as a new WaterSense partner in 2023, Beazer Homes USA, Inc., earned their first WaterSense Award for Excellence in New Builder Partnership. Beazer built 39 WaterSense labeled homes in 2023 and now has two divisions, Phoenix and Sacramento, that have committed to building WaterSense labeled homes for 100 percent of the homes they build. Three additional divisions are working to incorporate WaterSense labeled homes into their markets as well. To ensure their customers save water, all Beazer homes, whether built to earn the WaterSense label or not, include WaterSense labeled toilets, bathroom faucets, and showerheads. To educate all their employees, Beazer’s national sales trainers created presentation slides that detail the benefits of WaterSense labeled homes for both Beazer and their customers. They also rolled out in-depth training highlighting WaterSense labeled homes for Beazer sales, marketing, and operations teams.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND PROMOTING WATERSENSE LABELED PRODUCTS



Marin Municipal Water District

Thanks to their continued water-saving efforts, Marin (California) Municipal Water District (Marin Water) received their second WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Promoting

WaterSense Labeled Products. During Fix a Leak Week in March 2023, Marin Water encouraged customers to identify toilet leaks by participating in the Sonoma-Marin Water Saving Partnership's Dye Tab Challenge. The Partnership gave out \$25 gift cards to five customers for testing their toilets and submitting results, while also providing them with information on available rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets. In the spring, Marin Water helped train future Marin Master Gardeners on sustainable gardening practices, including water-efficient irrigation equipment and management, simple leak detection, and teaching students to look for the WaterSense label as a way to recognize efficient irrigation controllers. Marin Water made it easier for customers to save money on WaterSense labeled fixtures by issuing nearly 200 rebates on WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and nearly 20 rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets.

EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING WATERSENSE



Utah Division of Water Resources

Earning their second WaterSense Award, the Utah Division of Water Resources has been recognized this year for Excellence in WaterSense Promotion. The Division manages a state-wide rebate program for WaterSense labeled toilets and weather-based irrigation controllers, and in 2023, they issued nearly 600 rebates for WaterSense labeled

toilets and over 3,000 WaterSense labeled controller rebates. Since these incentive programs launched in 2018 and 2019, Utah has rebated more than 4,000 WaterSense labeled toilets and nearly 30,000 WaterSense labeled controllers! To further increase awareness of WaterSense, Utah Division of Water Resources supports the Utah Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) certification program, by encouraging program participation from industry professionals, recommending homeowners hire QWEL certified professionals, and stressing the importance of landscape irrigation audits. Residents are encouraged to participate in a landscape irrigation audit, offered throughout the state by districts, municipalities, and Utah State University's Water Check Program.

Learn More

WaterSense congratulates the 2024 Excellence Award winners. For more information and to learn about all the benefits of partnership, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.