



2024 Partner of the Year Awards



Rancho California Water District WaterSense labeled irrigation controller distribution event.

WaterSense® Partners of the Year Made Water Savings Simple

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. Ten partners were honored for their continued commitment to the WaterSense program in 2023 as 2024 Partner of the Year Award winners.



Broward County Government

Broward County (Florida) Government has received their sixth WaterSense Award, earning Partner of the Year for their efforts to help consumers save both water and money. In 2023, Broward increased the incentive for their toilet rebate program from \$100 to \$125 to encourage more residents to replace their old, inefficient toilets. To promote the increase, Broward started a campaign, “25 Things for \$25,” providing residents with a variety of suggestions on how to use the extra \$25 they would receive as part of the rebate program. Suggestions included

purchasing a water filtration pitcher, investing in a reusable water bottle, and supporting local farmers by purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables from nearby markets.

In March, Broward hosted a Water Matters Day event at Tree Tops Park featuring interactive educational displays and booths where attendees had the opportunity to learn about various water conservation techniques, smart irrigation practices, native landscaping, and more. The county hosted a hands-on demonstration on optimizing irrigation system efficiency and a workshop showing the benefits of installing a WaterSense labeled toilet. Broward County also promoted its toilet rebate program during this event to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation.

Broward’s toilet rebate program was also featured in a presentation to the Urban League of Broward County for first-time homebuyers, showcasing the importance of selecting water-efficient fixtures and reminding attendees to make water-smart choices in their new homes. Looking to the future, Broward County is partnering with the Minority Builders Coalition (MBC) to address any financial barriers to switching to WaterSense labeled toilets. Broward aims to work with MBC to install more efficient toilets in eligible homes free of charge.

To learn more about WaterSense, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.

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City of Bend

The City of Bend (Oregon) took outdoor water conservation to new heights, earning their first Partner of the Year Award for their water conservation outreach and programs in 2023. More than 200 people attended the City’s annual WaterWise field day event in June, which included educational seminars presented by local green industry professionals and live irrigation demonstrations to promote ways to save water outdoors. The City collaborated with WaterSense partner

G3, Green Gardens Group, to present multiple webinars on outdoor water conservation topics, including drought-proofing landscapes, fundamentals of drip irrigation, and a garden design workshop.

Outdoor education was also featured in the City’s quarterly newsletter, the *Conservation Connection*, with an article on the benefits, application, and performance of WaterSense labeled sprinkler nozzles for residents and green industry professionals. The City also encouraged residents to use irrigation professionals certified by a WaterSense labeled program. To promote water savings indoors, the City held a social media raffle contest during Fix a Leak Week; participants who submitted photos of themselves checking for leaks had a chance to win a WaterSense labeled toilet, showerhead, and faucet aerators.



The City of Bend staff at a tabling event.

The City of Bend continued to offer rebates on WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers, spray sprinkler bodies, toilets, and showerheads in 2023—more than doubling the number of rebates they issued in 2022. The City advertised its rebates on local television network affiliates and promoted the WaterSense label with point-of-sale signage at stores such as The Home Depot, Lowe’s Home Improvement, Ewing, and Horizon Distributors.



City of Flagstaff

A banner year of creative outreach and educational programs gave the City of Flagstaff (Arizona) their first WaterSense Partner of the Year Award. The City started out the year by participating in the Flagstaff Visitors Center’s annual Chocolate Walk in February 2023. Staff gave samples and discussed the embodied water in the production of chocolate, while providing WaterSense labeled products and other water-efficient giveaways. In April, the City organized a scavenger hunt with local nonprofit organizations to promote water conservation and give away WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators.

The City hosted trivia nights during the month of April to help educate the community about Flagstaff water resources and ways to save water; participants could win WaterSense labeled products. In the fall, the City participated on a climate panel for the annual Festival of Science at Lowell Observatory, where they discussed water efficiency and WaterSense and gave out WaterSense labeled faucet aerators

and showerheads. In October 2023, the City provided over 400 Home Water Check-up Kits during the Make a Difference Day recycling event, including supplies to check for leaks and a WaterSense labeled faucet aerator.

During the Northern Arizona University's Better World Film Series, the City hosted a documentary screening and presentation focused on WaterSense labeled products. The City of Flagstaff also created a large-scale "connect four" game and a cornhole set using the WaterSense label for attendees to play. In addition to these events, the City gave away and issued rebates on nearly 4,000 WaterSense labeled fixtures to Flagstaff residents.



The WaterSense label on a cornhole game.



City of Round Rock

With a solid showing in its promotion of WaterSense and water efficiency in 2023, the City of Round Rock (Texas) has earned its second Partner of the Year Award. For Fix a Leak Week, the City created a new educational video showing residents how to detect leaks at home by reading their water meter and how to locate leaks in sprinkler systems, water softeners, water heaters, toilets, faucets, and spigots. The City posted the video on its conservation page and sent it to customers with water leak notifications.

To encourage more indoor water savings, the City of Round Rock identified older homes in their community where many still have original toilets and other bathroom fixtures. The City sent postcards promoting their Better Bathroom Rebate to encourage over 1,600 customers to switch to WaterSense labeled bathroom fixtures. In addition to plumbing fixtures, the City offered rebates on WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and spray sprinkler bodies.

During Smart Irrigation Month in July, the City of Round Rock hosted an Irrigation 101 class covering efficient irrigation scheduling, detecting system leaks, minor repairs with hands-on practice, native landscaping, and various irrigation components. The City also collaborated with Williamson County AgriLife Extension Services and other neighboring water utilities to implement an education event called Irrigation Station aimed at residential outdoor water use. The events included a presentation on water issues, such as supply, distribution, and water restrictions, as well as an open forum with stations dedicated to sprinkler scheduling, maintenance, upgrades, and landscaping.



East Bay Municipal Utility District

The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) in California won their first WaterSense Partner of the Year Award after making waves on the West Coast helping consumers and businesses save water. During Fix a Leak Week, for example, the utility provided toilet leak detection tablets and fliers at local hardware stores to help customers find and fix leaks

at home. On social media, they created Instagram reels with short video reminders to turn off irrigation systems during wet weather. The utility even has a multilingual video library on YouTube on how to save water in English, Spanish, and Chinese. Their video in Spanish on how to fix a toilet leak has been viewed over 200,000 times and has been popular in California and Mexico.

As part of its regional conservation efforts, EBMUD collaborated with other WaterSense partners on the 20th anniversary Water Conservation Showcase, which had over 300 attendees and featured speakers on a range of topics from legislation to landscaping best practices. EBMUD also organizes and hosts in-person and virtual workshops on topics such as sheet mulching, biodiversity, and drip irrigation.

To encourage customers to pursue lawn conversion projects and choose appropriate plants and irrigation design, the district launched a Pilot Landscape Design Assistance Program offering a two-hour consultation with a professional landscape designer. EBMUD staff also regularly host virtual drop-in sessions over Zoom to answer questions about landscape rebate projects.

“We are creating a ‘conservation culture’ focused on engaging customers through multimedia channels that emphasize everyday actions around our homes and yards that help people make informed decisions about their water use.”

Charles Bohlig, EBMUD
Manager of Water
Conservation



Monte Vista Water District

Monte Vista Water District in Montclair, California, earned their first Partner of the Year Award by implementing WaterSense campaigns and water conservation initiatives throughout the year. During Fix a Leak Week, for example, customers were provided information on the District’s rebate programs to replace inefficient outdoor products with WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and spray sprinkler bodies. In collaboration with EcoTech Services, the District introduced a new Indoor Leak Repair Program, assisting 22 customers with 26 fixture repairs. And during a Leak Repair 101 Workshop, attendees received hands-on instruction on fixing leaks, efficient irrigation maintenance tips, and leak repair kits.

The District hosted its first-ever Waterwise Expo in April 2023, showcasing the benefits of California native plants, efficient irrigation techniques, and strategies for maximizing water savings. For Sprinkler Spruce-Up, they promoted their Sprinkler Timer Program, Nozzle Retrofit Program, and Irrigation Tune-up Program. A partnership with the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce also helped spread WaterSense messages to the business community. In June, Monte Vista Water District hosted a Sustainable Landscaping Lunch & Learn to help property managers and maintenance teams work together to improve commercial landscape water use.

On social media, the Monte Vista Water District promoted Water Tip Wednesdays and their Water Watch campaign in response to ongoing drought conditions. They also encouraged public commitment to water



The District encouraging residents to take the I’m for Water Pledge.

conservation through the I'm for Water Pledge, receiving 557 responses. The District also celebrated Fix a Leak Week with social media posts and a raffle for the installation of a WaterSense labeled toilet.



Moulton Niguel Water District

Moulton Niguel Water District in Laguna Hills, California, earned Partner of the Year—their first WaterSense Award—for promoting WaterSense campaigns and their own water conservation programs on fixing leaks and smart irrigation. The District spread the word about WaterSense in guides, direct mailers, social media, website posts, and doorhangers. During Fix a Leak Week, they mailed 55,000 dye strips and encouraged customers to test their toilets for leaks. The mailer included links to their “Potty Talk” video series on YouTube. Customers that submitted their leak test results were eligible to win one of 100 \$25 gift cards to use for leak repairs.

In partnership with numerous agencies and cities, the District hosted a homeowner association networking event promoting incentives for WaterSense labeled products. Moulton Niguel also coordinated installation of 441 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers (WBICs) in the community, including 26 commercial-grade units; most of the WBICs were installed through their Smart Sprinkler Timer Direct Installation Program. These efforts are projected to save over 19.7 million gallons of water.

Moulton Niguel participated in an irrigation-focused “Fall Back” campaign, which featured videos on water-wise irrigation, a speakers bureau program, and Smart Irrigation Month workshops. They also provided an irrigation certification program to educate professionals on smart outdoor water techniques and hosted water-smart landscape classes for 400 customers, where they promoted water-efficient spray sprinkler nozzles and WBICs using the “look for” WaterSense promotional label. And as part of their school water fixture upgrade program, the District retrofitted 215 toilets, 152 urinals, 590 faucets, and 133 showerheads in the Capistrano Unified School District.

“Our team is dedicated to making a tangible impact through initiatives like our Fix a Leak Week, smart irrigation programs, and school fixture upgrades. We believe that by empowering our residents and partnering with local agencies, we can drive meaningful change and conserve our precious water resources for future generations.”

Duane D. Cave, Board President, Moulton Niguel Water District



Rancho California Water District

The Rancho California Water District in Temecula, California, has earned its second Partner of the Year Award for consistently promoting WaterSense campaigns. Rancho Water held a virtual workshop in May 2023 for Sprinkler Spruce-Up highlighting ways to promote healthy landscapes and reduce water waste outdoors. They distributed the *WaterSense Jump Into Pool Water Efficiency Guide* to pool contractors and homeowners. Rancho Water promoted their own Be a Water Hero campaign encouraging residents to use less water during drought conditions in California via their website, social media, and paid advertising that reached over 400,000 people.

Rancho Water collaborated with a diverse range of WaterSense partners to promote saving water. With Lowe's Home Improvement, they created a video promoting WaterSense labeled products and water conservation information, which they shared on social media. The utility promoted efficient irrigation practices through partnerships with the Riverside County Flood District and Blue Watch Dog Conservation District. Rancho Water collaborated with the Murrieta Public Library to designate a section of the library for Fix a Leak Week with various WaterSense materials such as leak detective kids' activities, bath hacks, bookmarks, and Fix a Leak at Home activity. Their dedicated landscape website, Temecula Murrieta In Bloom, provided information on water-efficient landscaping practices and sustainable gardening.

Rancho Water demonstrated their commitment to promoting WaterSense labeled products throughout 2023. Working in partnership with Rachio and the California Water Efficiency Partnership, they distributed 200 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and partnered with the Southern California Gas Company on a direct install program providing free WaterSense labeled showerheads and other water-efficient appliances to disadvantaged communities. They also participated in regional rebate programs offered by the Metropolitan Water District, covering a range of items from turf replacements to WaterSense labeled sprinkler nozzles.



The Rancho Water mascot promoting its Be a Water Hero campaign.



Santa Clara Valley Water District

Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) in San Jose, California, has earned their second Partner of the Year Award for actively promoting water conservation through a variety of educational and incentive programs. Valley Water engaged students through hands-on activities in classrooms and after-school programs, which included assemblies, field trips, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) events focused on water conservation. Valley Water held 15 summer camp programs in collaboration with organizations such as the YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, as well as six assemblies with the City of San Jose's Walk n' Roll program. During the assemblies, students took a pledge to save water, led by Valley Water's "H2Cool" mascot, and received WaterSense-inspired educational materials.

In 2023, Valley Water's eCart Program distributed free water-saving devices throughout Santa Clara County, including over 850 WaterSense labeled showerheads, 1,100 aerators, and Do-It-Yourself Water Wise Surveys inspired by WaterSense leak checklists. Valley Water's Fixture Replacement Program installed over 1,700 WaterSense labeled toilets and 16 showerheads. Their Landscape Rebate Program incentivizes properties with qualifying landscapes to replace existing lawn and pool areas with drought-tolerant landscapes, rainwater capture systems, and upgrading outdated irrigation systems; through the program, Valley



Valley Water teaching students about saving water.

2024 WaterSense Partner of the Year Winners

Water rebated 428 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and over 2,300 WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler bodies in 2023.

Valley Water also piloted new programs, including the Leak Assessment & Repair Pilot and Toilet Assessment & Retrofit Pilot, in partnership with PG&E. Through these initiatives, Valley Water installed more than 100 WaterSense labeled toilets, 66 WaterSense labeled lavatory faucets, 20 kitchen faucets, and 45 outdoor hose bibs. Valley Water also sponsored two Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) trainings in Spanish and English, certifying 47 professionals in 2023.



Tarrant Regional Water District

Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) in Fort Worth, Texas, has earned their second Partner of the Year Award by working with their customer cities to promote WaterSense and water efficiency at various educational events. In 2023, TRWD held over 230 water conservation classes and events, reaching over 15,400 participants. Posting class recordings on YouTube gained an additional 93,000 viewers! In collaboration with other water districts and utilities, TRWD offered two Fix a Leak Week workshops on finding and fixing leaks inside and outside the home. Attendees heard from leak-fixing experts and saw hands-on demonstrations, then an indoor leak kit or a sprinkler test kit was provided for participants to take home.

During the hottest months of the year, TRWD offered a Summer Savings Series of online classes to all of its customer cities, including Be Smarter Than Your Smart Controller, Home Sprinkler Basics, and DIY Sprinkler Repair. They also participated in a regional water conservation advertising campaign with the City of Dallas and North Texas Municipal Water District, which included a weekly watering advice service that promoted smart lawn watering techniques. When winter rolled around, TRWD promoted WaterSense labeled products as part of the Holiday Gift Guide on their website and in the *Save Tarrant Water Monthly Drop* newsletter.

Throughout 2023, TRWD conducted drawings for water conservation-related prizes in conjunction with WaterSense campaigns such as Your Better Yard, Smart Irrigation Month, and Shower Better. To be entered in the drawing, customers could read a web page or blog post and answer questions to win native Texas plant garden kits, WaterSense labeled smart irrigation controllers, or a shower savings kit that included two WaterSense labeled showerheads. During Shower Better Month, TRWD provided WaterSense labeled showerheads to nearly 200 residents who brought their old showerheads into their local water utility offices.



A winner of a drawing for a WaterSense labeled controller.

Learn More

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