



2024 Sustained Excellence Awards



Students at the Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities' Annual Ripple Effect Blue Carpet Premiere.

These WaterSense® Partners Made It Easy for Consumers to Save

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. Nineteen partners were honored for their continued commitment to the WaterSense program in 2023 as 2024 Sustained Excellence Award winners.



Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department

Athens-Clarke County (Georgia) Public Utilities Department's Water Conservation Office (WCO) earned its eighth Sustained Excellence Award thanks to their engaging water conservation outreach efforts. In 2023, over 400 people attended the Annual Ripple Effect Blue Carpet Premiere that featured 25 water-themed films from local K-12 student filmmakers. At the event, audience members learned about WaterSense and the importance of fixing leaks. The ripple reached all

the way to New York City, where the 2023 winning films were shown at the World Water Film Festival to kick off a gathering of 440 organizations attending the United Nations Water Conference.

The WCO distributed free dye tablets and also created a unique "Ode to the Commode" poem that encouraged customers to show their toilet some love by checking for leaks and switching out old, inefficient toilets for WaterSense labeled models; the ads played on local radio stations and on Spotify. To celebrate World Water Day, WCO staff, along with WaterSense "spokesgallon" Flo, hosted a special water-themed trivia night at a local restaurant, where attendees could compete on their water knowledge and pick up free toilet dye tablets.

To engage middle and high school students and encourage them to learn about trade careers, Flo and WCO staff attended the Construction Ready Career Expo. The Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) created a "world of water" where all aspects of the water industry were discussed, including smart water use. WaterSense signage and information was included, and students could pose for photos with Flo.



Students with Flo at the Construction Ready Career Expo.

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

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Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power

The Big Bear Lake (California) Department of Water and Power earned its first Sustained Excellence Award, which is the utility's fifth WaterSense Award overall. In 2023, Big Bear Lake promoted many WaterSense campaigns, including Fix a Leak Week, Sprinkler Spruce-Up, and Shower Better. For Fix a Leak Week, Big Bear Lake created a sweepstakes where participants watched an educational video to find the WaterSense label for a chance to win a WaterSense labeled

irrigation controller. Big Bear Lake placed newspaper ads for Fix a Week Leak, as well as for Sprinkler Spruce-Up and Shower Better, using WaterSense materials to highlight water conservation and to look for WaterSense labeled products.

To celebrate Earth Day and teach children about the importance of saving water, the utility partnered with the area's local electric company, Bear Valley Electric Services, to host a community event. Two fourth grade classes, along with hundreds of community members, could visit with local environmental clubs and community programs and receive handouts on water-efficient practices and products. Additionally, Big Bear Lake gave a presentation to a property owner's association in an auxiliary community where they discussed the benefits of WaterSense labeled products and handed out free WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators.

Big Bear Lake also partnered with the local Sierra Club chapter to co-host the annual Xeriscape Garden Tour. The exposition portion of the tour was located at one of Big Bear Lake's xeriscape demonstration gardens. About 200 hundred participants learned about water-smart landscape features and received WaterSense labeled aerators and showerheads.



Citrus County Utilities

Following a year of new water conservation outreach efforts, Citrus County (Florida) Utilities won its sixth Sustained Excellence Award. To help customers use water wisely outdoors, the county created and kicked off its new Be a Smart Irrigator campaign in July 2023, which was inspired by WaterSense outdoor water use campaigns. The campaign used bus decals, radio ads, billboards, and Facebook posts

to encourage customers to upgrade to WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and adopt water-smart landscaping practices.

Citrus County celebrated Fix a Leak Week by purchasing a half-page ad in the *Citrus County Chronicle* featuring facts on leaks and the Flip Your Flapper campaign materials from WaterSense. The county also encouraged customers to find and fix leaks by distributing cards from WaterSense with leak detection dye tablets during site visits, at the utility counter, during events, and through the Classroom Toilet Leak Detection Challenge. Over 1,300 dye tablet cards were distributed in 2023.



Citrus County's Be a Smart Irrigator campaign decal on a bus.

Citrus County engaged with consumers and businesses at its second annual Terra Vista Earth Day Expo, where staff gave a presentation covering local water resources, where water comes from, and how much water Citrus County residents use locally. Attendees received WaterSense labeled bathroom faucet aerators and showerheads, as well as educational brochures. Participants visited tables to answer a conservation-themed question and be entered into a raffle to win a flowering plant.



City of Charlottesville

The City of Charlottesville (Virginia) focused on creative and engaging outreach in 2023, earning their seventh Sustained Excellence Award. The City developed new television and digital commercials featuring three charismatic water characters singing about the woes of wasting water; the ads incorporated messages focused on fixing running toilets and faucets, replacing inefficient showerheads with WaterSense labeled models, and looking for the WaterSense label.

To celebrate World Water Day in March 2023, the City developed a new video in collaboration with the Rivanna Conservation Alliance about the value of water, actions people can take to save water, and the City’s rebates for WaterSense labeled products. Charlottesville also partnered with the Rivanna Stormwater Education Partnership, Albemarle County Service Authority, Master Gardeners, and the James River Association to hold a rain barrel workshop—the City’s first in over a decade. At the workshop, the City set up a table with WaterSense labeled aerators, conservation kits, and information on rebates and incentives for attendees and visitors in the park where it was held.

Staff continued educating the next generation on water conservation and updated their water-saving curriculum for Charlottesville City Schools by adding activities to their science pacing guide. Materials for teachers linked to WaterSense information about understanding water usage in schools, the Product Finder for labeled models, and the Test your WaterSense game.

“The Charlottesville Water Conservation Program enjoyed a very collaborative year, working with community partners to support the community’s water-saving efforts. These partners along with the WaterSense program were instrumental in the continual success of the community to save water.”
Kristel Riddervold,
Director of the Office of Sustainability, City of Charlottesville



City of Durham Water Management

Continuing its impressive outreach and education programs, City of Durham (North Carolina) Water Management won its second Sustained Excellence Award. In 2023, Durham Water Management increased and enhanced its outreach with a new Fix a Leak Week campaign, “Every Drop Counts,” on the importance of water conservation and the WaterSense label and new Spotify ads for the Shower Better campaign. Throughout the year, Durham Water Management participated in 36 public outreach events, including festivals, concerts, school presentations, and tabling events, reaching over 4,300 customers.

2024 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award Winners

Just in time for Halloween, Durham Water Management released a film trailer on social media—*The Haunting of Dripmore Manor*—featuring a comically spooky narrative to highlight the consequences of wasteful water habits. The short film integrated WaterSense messaging and showcased how replacing fixtures with WaterSense labeled products is the key to banishing water-wasting ghosts.

For Fix a Leak Week, Durham Water Management partnered with the Durham County Library and Home Repair Lab to offer a new, hands-on workshop on finding and fixing leaks. In the Home Repair Lab’s workroom, attendees were able to try their hands at testing toilets, replacing flappers, changing aerators, and reading meters. They also received useful tips to find and fix leaks in their homes. Finally, in 2023, Durham Water Management issued 423 rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets, helping customers save an estimated 2.2 million gallons of water annually.



A scene from *The Haunting of Dripmore Manor*.



City of Plano

The City of Plano (Texas) won its fifth Sustained Excellence Award after ramping up its outreach and education efforts in 2023. Plano’s water education coordinator collaborated with Customer Utility Services and developed new materials to educate customers on various water

conservation practices and available free water conservation items. They also conducted individual outreach calls to residential customers with high water use or continuous use issues, offering these customers solutions to reduce consumption, such as replacing fixtures with WaterSense labeled products. In the initial month of program implementation, nearly one million gallons of water were estimated to be saved.

The City’s Sustainability and Environmental Education Division (SEED) conducted five pop-up water conservation education events using their new electric van, where they handed out information on WaterSense labeled products. SEED also launched a campaign to strengthen internal partnerships, which resulted in three Fix-A-Leak workshops in collaboration with the Neighborhood Services Department and in six Play at the Park events with the Parks and Recreation Department. Overall, the City of Plano delivered 35 classes and workshop programs focused on water quality, conservation, and efficiency, which reached over 3,800 participants.

To help customers get their irrigations systems ready for summer, the city hosted an online contest promoting Sprinkler Spruce-Up. Participants completed an interactive learning module focused on leak repair and the cycle-and-soak method of irrigation. At the end of the learning module, participants took a short survey to demonstrate what they learned. Three winners were chosen out of nearly 40 individuals who entered.

“Thanks to WaterSense for providing quality resources that support water savings in our community and for recognizing the City of Plano for innovative education and outreach approaches to water conservation.”

Rachel Patterson, Director
Environmental Health &
Sustainability, City of Plano





City of Sacramento Department of Utilities

After ramping up its outreach and partnership efforts, the City of Sacramento (California) Department of Utilities won its third Sustained Excellence Award. To celebrate Fix a Leak Week in 2023, the City hosted a webinar, “Become a Leak Detective: Take the 10 Minute Challenge,”

that used WaterSense graphics and information to help people learn how to find and fix water leaks in their home. A total of 130 people attended the live webinar; a recording was distributed to all registrants.

Sacramento Department of Utilities staff encouraged customers to save water outdoors by mailing 5,000 letters to single-family homes with high water usage, with the goal of encouraging customers to complete a Sprinkler Spruce-Up. The city also gave away about 300 yards of mulch during their “Mulch Mayhem” at the Sacramento Marina and promoted WaterSense labeled controllers and water-efficient gardening practices at their Water Wise Garden Showcase. Additionally, the city partnered with the Sacramento Tree Foundation to host two workshops in 2023. Attendees were taught how to properly water and prune trees and learned about the city’s water-saving rebates, including indoor and outdoor upgrades that promote WaterSense labeled products.



Water Wise Garden Showcase.

In June and July, the Department of Utilities conducted a campaign to educate Sacramento residents about its rebates on WaterSense labeled products. The campaign included radio and streaming ads in English and Spanish, a digital display, mobile ads, social media posts in English and Chinese, and digital billboards. The city issued over 150 rebates to customers who replaced their grass with drought-tolerant landscaping, 58 rebates to customers who upgraded the efficiency of their irrigation systems, nearly 600 rebates for WaterSense labeled smart irrigation controllers, and 19 rebates for rain barrels.



Fulton Homes

For the second year in a row, Fulton Homes has earned a WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award for its dedication to building WaterSense

labeled homes. In 2023, Fulton closed on over 350 homes, all of which were WaterSense certified, and Fulton has committed to continue to build 100 percent WaterSense labeled homes in all new communities. In addition to WaterSense labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads, Fulton Homes feature WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers, high-efficiency tankless water heaters, water recirculation systems, and leak detection systems. Fulton communities also use reclaimed water for common spaces; residents must limit front yard irrigation, and Fulton meets regularly with homeowner associations (HOAs), going beyond the WaterSense homes specification to encourage conservation outdoors.

To take sustainability a step further, the Learning Academy, Fulton’s online training facility, provides courses on efficient building and energy practices, required for all construction and customer care personnel.



WaterSense banner in a Fulton Homes community.

Their online education program is also available to all of their contractors and sales associates. Fulton Homes educates those outside the company by maintaining a large presence within the Energy Environmental Builders Alliance, where they advocate for WaterSense labeled homes and fixtures.

In 2023, Fulton achieved what they call the “EPA Triple Crown,” winning an ENERGY STAR® Sustained Excellence Award, Indoor AirPlus Leader Award, and WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award. Fulton Homes was featured in an article and case study by Arcxis Energy Inspectors highlighting the collaboration of the two organizations promoting water- and energy-saving homes.



Harris-Galveston Subsidence District

The Harris Galveston Subsidence District (HGSD) in Texas has won its first Sustained Excellence Award for its continued dedication to water conservation and promoting WaterSense. In 2023, the District implemented several water conservation community outreach efforts, including a dedicated presentation for homeowner associations with an interactive water conservation Jeopardy game to put their knowledge of water conservation to the test. Additionally, HGSD created

informational handouts with step-by-step instructions on how to detect toilet leaks using attached toilet tank leak-detecting tablets and additional resources promoting WaterSense labeled products and a QR code linked to WaterSense’s *Replace Your Leaky Flapper* video.

HGSD’s Water Conservation Grant Program funded a fixture replacement project that distributed over 300 WaterSense labeled showerheads to residents, potentially saving 974,562 gallons of water per year. This program also helped fund advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) projects, installing 27,000 smart meters, which allow users to access a customer portal for real-time water usage, the ability to identify leaks, and additional water conservation resources linked to HGSD’s Smarter About Water website.

HGSD continued its Water Conservation School Program, H₂O Lab!, that provides third through sixth grade classrooms with age-appropriate water education, along with take-home water conservation kits to engage families with activities that reinforce the lessons taught at school and encourage water efficiency at home. The program reached more than 20,000 students and 425 teachers in 2023, projecting an annual water savings of more than 173 million gallons based on the installation of the kits.



A homeowner association presentation by HGSD.



Irvine Ranch Water District

Thanks to continued creative water conservation outreach efforts, the Irvine Ranch (California) Water District (IRWD) won its second Sustained Excellence Award—their sixth WaterSense Award overall. IRWD encouraged customers to find and fix leaks during Fix a Leak Week with a contest for residents to submit photos of themselves

repairing leaks in their homes. To help homeowners get their irrigation systems ready for summer, IRWD held a Fix Your Sprinklers workshop that highlighted irrigation maintenance and water-smart practices. They also partnered with Tierra Verde Industries to offer a 50 percent discount on mulch to help reduce evaporation in local yards.

In 2023, IRWD worked with the University of California Irvine Athletics Department on a marketing campaign to reach students, alumni, and fans. The campaign included signs and video board ads during games, radio and TV commercials, and website ads that highlighted water efficiency and California-friendly landscaping. IRWD also partnered with three local Home Depot stores to raise awareness of water conservation and WaterSense labeled products. At each event, there was a monitor playing their Shed Show web video series focused on water efficiency practices. The Home Depot stocked rebate-eligible WaterSense labeled smart irrigation controllers, and IRWD staff assisted customers with rebate applications.



A still from the IRWD Shed Show video series.

Homeowners aren't the only ones benefitting from IRWD programs. Through their WaterStar Business Recognition Program, IRWD provides companies with suggestions to reduce water use, save on water bills, and obtain financial incentives for efficiency improvements. Participating businesses are eligible to receive free or rebated WaterSense labeled models when upgrading fixtures.



KB Home

KB Home has been recognized by WaterSense for 14 consecutive years and has earned an impressive 10th Sustained Excellence Award for its long-standing leadership in building WaterSense labeled homes. KB Home built 2,806 new WaterSense labeled homes in 2023 —over 50 percent more than the amount of labeled homes built in 2022! KB has also committed to building 100 percent WaterSense labeled homes

across the southwestern United States. Additionally, 100 percent of the plumbing fixtures installed in all KB homes built since 2009 were WaterSense labeled.

In addition to building WaterSense labeled homes, KB Home is committed to outreach and education about the benefits of homes that have earned the WaterSense label. In 2023, the company collaborated with WaterSense on a case study of more than 200 WaterSense labeled homes at its Oak Shade and Durango communities in Menifee, California. The study evaluated the impact that water savings have on energy use and greenhouse gas emissions compared to communities of similar size with typical new-home construction. According to these findings, the two communities are expected to reduce water-related energy consumption by approximately 530,000 kilowatt hours per year!

“As the leading water-efficient national homebuilder, we believe that a WaterSense labeled KB home is a better home, one that is more efficient and affordable to operate, and one that helps to save this precious natural resource for future generations.”

Rob McGibney, President and Chief Operating Officer, KB Home

During the 2023 Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET®) Conference, KB also offered tours of these communities, where attendees learned about the many benefits associated with the WaterSense label.

In further recognition of how water-efficient its homes are, KB was recognized as part of the 2023 RESNET Cross Border Builder Challenge, receiving the award given to the builder with the lowest HERSH₂O score in the United States.

KOHLER®

Kohler Co.

With its extensive contributions to WaterSense labeled products in the marketplace, Kohler Co. has won its 10th WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award and 15th overall WaterSense award. Kohler introduced 120 new WaterSense labeled products in 2023: seven tank-type toilets; 70 bathroom faucets; 35 showerheads, hand showers, and rain heads; and eight high-efficiency urinals, flushometer bowls, and valves. In 2023 alone, the sale of Kohler, Sterling, and Kallista WaterSense labeled products offered a savings of approximately 91 billion gallons of water, 2.1 million metric tons of avoided carbon dioxide emissions, and over \$1.6 billion on water, sewer, and energy bills, based on results from EPA's WaterSense Partner Savings Calculator.

Kohler not only manufactures WaterSense labeled products, but also gives back extensively to the communities it serves. In 2023, the company supported disaster relief and charity efforts, giving \$3.5 million of in-kind donations, including WaterSense labeled products, to nonprofit partners. Kohler also donated 200 products, including showerheads and WaterSense labeled toilets, as part of the Alliance for Water Efficiency Partnership for Water Affordability, Long Beach Program. They estimated an average 13 percent reduction in weekly water consumption for participating homes compared to homes in the control group.

To ensure everyone associated with the company is up-to-date on WaterSense, Kohler offers online water conservation training as part of its outreach to showroom associates, architects, designers, specifiers, distributors, homebuilders, remodelers, and its own sales associates. Its accredited courses were used for 318 trainings in 2023, reaching 7,780 attendees.



New Kohler Statement® VES WaterSense labeled showerhead.



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District has earned its seventh Sustained Excellence Award. In 2023, the District revamped and refreshed its website to include information focused on its My Drop Counts campaign, which features WaterSense labeled product rebate programs. The District also promoted a My Drop Counts pledge for water conservation at home and at work. By taking the pledge, consumers and businesses can find out how much water they'll save by taking water-efficient measures inside and outside.

2024 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award Winners

The District attended a number of community events in 2023 and reached over 1,000 people across the region. During the Summer Adventures Day at the Chattahoochee Nature Center, they educated residents about water-efficient irrigation. In October, District staff attended the Trick or Treatment Fall Festival and promoted the WaterSense Flip Your Flapper campaign.

The District continues to provide rebates for retrofits and fixture replacements with WaterSense labeled products, including 600 rebates for WaterSense labeled toilets in single- and multi-family homes. In summer 2023, the District launched its new Smart Leak Detector Rebate Program, through which they rebated over 35 leak detectors. Additionally, the District distributed free leak detection kits.



Coming soon!
The Smart Leak Detector Rebate Program launches July 1st, 2023

- Leaks** Research shows that up to 13% of indoor household water use is attributed to leaks.
- Smart** Some devices learn your in-home water use and quickly able to alert you of any abnormal usage.
- Alert** Many of these products can alert you immediately via your smartphone, helping to minimize damage.
- Save** Smart technologies can help you save money on your water bill and avoid costly property damage.
- Variety** Models are available in a wide range of affordability and capabilities, ranging from moisture sensors to remote water shut-off capabilities.



OF INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY,
AND WATER CONSERVATION

Niagara®

Thanks to its continued dedication to promoting WaterSense labeled products and water conservation, Niagara earned its first WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award and eighth WaterSense award overall. In 2023, Niagara launched the new Phantom One Piece toilet, a 0.8 gallon-per-flush toilet, at the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS). Niagara highlighted how the new toilet is WaterSense labeled in all marketing, advertising, and booth materials distributed to KBIS' audience of 40,000 attendees.

Niagara promoted the WaterSense label and their products' water efficiency statistics in all of their campaigns, reaching more than 100 wholesalers and more than 100 key industry media outlets. Niagara also participated in 2023 Fix a Leak Week, encouraging customers to switch to WaterSense labeled products, and promoted WaterSense on social media and at 26 trade shows throughout 2023.

Niagara worked with industry organizations such as the American Institute of Architects and the American Society of Plumbing Engineers to promote WaterSense labeled products. The manufacturer hosted 41 live accredited courses with an attendance of over 430 people. Niagara conducted over 100 product trainings to help wholesalers and distributors understand the benefits of WaterSense labeled products.



Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Thanks to its focus on outdoor water conservation outreach, the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District (Northern Water) earned its second Sustained Excellence Award. In 2023, Northern Water developed six complete residential water-efficient landscape design plans to assist homeowners in rebuilding after the December 2021 Marshall Fire. They collaborated with the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership in California to research strategies to include and

developed an advisory committee to ensure the templates would meet the needs of homeowners and the community. Along with supporting fire recovery efforts, the plans are designed to be used by HOAs for landscape renovations and other new communities.

To help irrigation and landscaping professionals obtain water efficiency skills and become certified, Northern Water hosted three Irrigation Association classes and one certification testing day on its campus. About 100 professionals attended the classes, where they received an introduction to WaterSense labeled controllers and sprinkler components, as well as the benefits of being a certified professional when bidding for contracting services.

Northern Water collaborated with WaterSense throughout 2023, providing recommendations to revise the best practices in the *WaterSense at Work* guide for commercial and institutional facilities and support use of the EPA Water Score in the multifamily sector. Northern Water also connected WaterSense staff with past Water Efficiency Landscape Grantees at HOAs who could provide input on new HOA tools and case studies for the program.

“WaterSense provides an ideal platform for everyone involved in urban water efficiency. Users, utilities, and partners all benefit from a brand, language, and collaboration that magnifies our investment, and makes participation easy and productive. Conserving water is easier with WaterSense.”



Frank Kinder, Water Efficiency and Sustainability Department Manager, Northern Water



Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership (as a Professional Certifying Organization)

Thanks to its continued dedication to education and certification of irrigation professionals, the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership in California won its eighth WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award as a professional certifying organization (PCO). In 2023, through its Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program, the PCO issued 791 new certifications, while 1,990 landscape professionals maintained their certifications for a renewal rate of 90 percent in 2023. To expand the reach of certification classes and testing, the Partnership began offering an English/Spanish combination exam.

In partnership with the University of California Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County, the Partnership installed a display at the 2023 Sonoma County Fair to showcase water-efficient landscape practices and promote the QWEL program, as well as WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers.

To expand training opportunities for regional professionals, Sonoma-Marin developed and piloted a new QWEL Rainwater Harvesting module for California, with a focus on Sonoma and Marin counties. The training introduced concepts in rainwater catchment system design and installation to complement the sustainable water management practices taught in the QWEL certification training. Forty-five landscape professionals attended the two-day training in December 2023, including 25 who had previously received QWEL certification.

Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership (for Promotion)

After winning three Partner of the Year Awards as a WaterSense Promotional Partner, the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership in California has earned its first Sustained Excellence Award in this partner category (the Partnership also earned a Sustained Excellence Award as a Professional Certifying Organization). As part of their Fix a Leak Week celebrations, the Partnership held a Dye Tab Challenge that encouraged residents to test their toilets for leaks. The partnership made free dye tablets available at 15 locations in Sonoma and Marin counties, and challenge participants were entered to win one of five \$25 gift cards.

The Partnership collaborated with Sonoma Clean Power and the Sonoma County Library to make water-efficient information and fixtures available to library patrons. Residents can check out a Do-It-Yourself Toolkit that contains tools, information, and water- and energy-efficient fixtures, including free WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators. Users can install the free fixtures themselves and return the tools and manuals once they're finished.

To connect with residents across Sonoma-Marin's service area, staff attended many events throughout 2023. The Partnership tabled at the annual Fiesta de Independencia to promote water conservation programs to the Latino community in Sonoma County. During the 2023 Sonoma County Fair, they partnered with the University of California Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County to co-develop and sponsor a sustainable landscape display with a dinosaur theme, "Water Waste Leads to Extinction." The display garden featured low-water-use native plants and WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers; visitors could also learn about rainwater harvesting.



Sonoma-Marin's table at Fiesta de Independencia.



The Home Depot

Coming on the heels of winning three WaterSense Partner of Year Awards, The Home Depot this year earned a WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award. In its retail stores, 100 percent of the toilets The Home Depot offers have earned the WaterSense label, and over 7,000 WaterSense labeled product models are offered through the store's website. In 2023, The Home Depot worked with utility partners and drove sales through over 500 local utility rebates. To make products

more affordable for consumers, consumers could earn instant rebates on over 140 different WaterSense labeled products, and their stores offered over \$50 million in WaterSense labeled product markdowns and discounts.

To ensure sales associates are able to help customers select the right water-saving fixtures for their needs, The Home Depot provided employees with training on the benefits of WaterSense labeled products and features information on WaterSense prominently in their sales associate pocket guide

and merchant handbook. And to help educate customers on how WaterSense labeled products can help them save, The Home Depot offered over 100 live-stream, public workshop sessions that educated attendees on WaterSense.

To further demonstrate the importance of WaterSense to the company, The Home Depot's environmental, social, and governance annual report had a page dedicated to the program, and their sustainability website features WaterSense labeled products and water-saving strategies. With a reach as broad as The Home Depot's, that means the WaterSense label received 3.7 million impressions online!

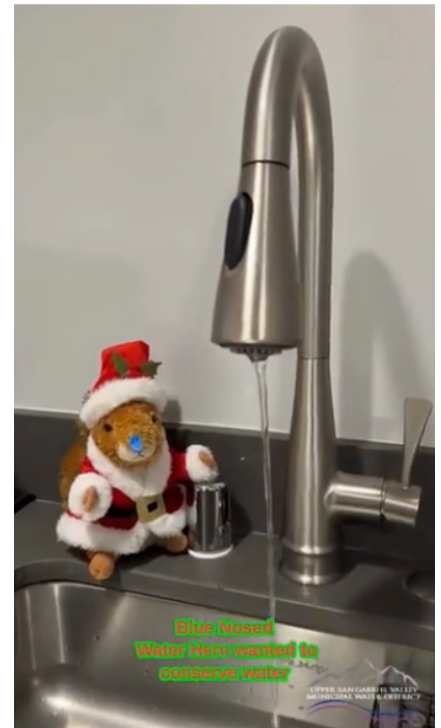


Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

The Upper San Gabriel Valley (California) Municipal Water District earned its third Sustained Excellence Award for its continued creative water conservation outreach and education. In 2023, the Upper District produced a “Droughtbusters” Halloween video focused on WaterSense labeled products, leak detective skills, and water-saving techniques, as well as drought-tolerant landscapes. The District also created *Uppy the Blue Nosed Water Hero*, a holiday jingle video focused on drought-tolerant plant options and ways to save water over the holidays.

Upper San Gabriel Valley updated its Sustainable Watershed Education program workbook for local schools to include more region-specific information, such as how water reaches homes and ways to save water in the district, as well as a Use Your Water Sense activity. The District increased the reach of the program by 30 percent in 2023, with over 2,700 students participating.

To make water-efficient fixtures more affordable and accessible to customers in 2023, the District was awarded funding through a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation grant program to expand availability of its Water Smart Home Kits, which contain WaterSense labeled fixtures and educational materials. The grant allows the District to double the number of kits that can be distributed. The District also collaborated with fellow WaterSense partner the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to implement and promote rebates on WaterSense labeled fixtures, including residential toilets, commercial toilets, urinals, pre-rinse spray valves, and weather-based irrigation controllers to consumers and businesses. In 2023, the District rebated over 350 WaterSense labeled toilets and over 220 labeled weather-based irrigation controllers.



A still from the *Uppy the Blue Nosed Water Hero* holiday jingle video.

Learn More

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