



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



## News Release

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### **New Partnership Promotes WaterSmart Landscapes and Healthy Watersheds in S.D. County**

*Increased incentives available for sustainable landscape upgrades in unincorporated areas*

August 17, 2021 – Residents and businesses in unincorporated areas of San Diego County are eligible for increased water-use efficiency rebates under a new partnership between the County's Watershed Protection Program and the San Diego County Water Authority.

The County's new Waterscape Rebate Program will save money for residential, commercial, and agricultural customers who make landscape upgrades that improve the region's climate resilience and reduce the flow of pollutants into waterways. Sustainable landscapes produce multiple benefits for San Diego communities, such as reducing water use, enhancing habitat, increasing stormwater retention, and decreasing run-off.

The newly enhanced incentives include rebates that start at \$3 per square foot for turf replacement, \$60 per smart controller station, \$65 per rain barrel and up to \$450 per cistern. The agencies are also offering technical assistance to upgrade larger landscapes on multifamily and commercial properties, and a cost-share with agricultural growers to make water-saving upgrades.

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**"Drought conditions across the West are a reminder of the importance of water-efficiency upgrades, and these rebates offer a great opportunity to get involved." -- Kelley Gage, Director of Water Resources, San Diego County Water Authority**

Water customers in unincorporated San Diego County can determine their eligibility at: [SanDiegoCounty.gov/WatershedRebates](https://SanDiegoCounty.gov/WatershedRebates).

For the past 30 years, the Water Authority and its member agencies have promoted water-use efficiency through a variety of tools such as rebates, classes, and other resources available across their service areas. Landscaping upgrades are particularly important because more than half of all residential water use is outdoors. Some cities and water agencies in the region choose to increase the rebates like the County is doing for residents in unincorporated areas. Rebates, classes and incentives available to all residents in the San Diego metropolitan area are also at [www.watersmartsd.org](http://www.watersmartsd.org).

“Drought conditions across the West are a reminder of the importance of water-efficiency upgrades, and these rebates offer a great opportunity to get involved,” said Kelley Gage, Director of Water Resources for the San Diego County Water Authority. “With a WaterSmart approach, we can reduce water-use and maintain climate-friendly landscapes that help sustain our quality of life in San Diego County.”

The new partnership is part of the County’s new Waterscape Rebate Program, which helps to protect local waterways by reducing pollutants that enter storm drains. The program includes outreach and education to commercial, industrial, and residential properties in unincorporated areas of the county. In addition to the programs administered by the Water Authority, the County is offering programs with rebates for upgrades including rain gardens, gutters, permeable pavement, and regular septic system pumping.

“The County is committed to reducing stormwater pollution to help protect water and foster healthy communities,” said Scott Norris, Land Use Environmental Planning Manager at the County of San Diego. “Partnering with the Water Authority allows us to offer even more resources to help unincorporated residents and business owners upgrade their properties with incentives that can cover a large portion of the costs and actively contribute to protecting our waterways for everyone.”

To learn about how individual actions can promote clean water and healthier communities, and to take the “52 Ways to Love Your Water” pledge, go to: [www.projectcleanwater.org/](http://www.projectcleanwater.org/).

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*The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$253 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.*

*If you work, live or play anywhere in the region, there is one part of County government that you interact with every day -- the Land Use & Environment Group (LUEG). LUEG serves the community by preserving the environment, protecting health and safety, and improving the quality of life for the region’s 3.3 million residents and 35 million yearly visitors. Its programs are diverse ranging from food facility inspections, water-quality monitoring on 70 miles of shoreline, supporting the local \$1.8 billion agricultural industry, and ensuring consumer protection. LUEG also operates parks and libraries, constructs and maintains roads and sewer and water infrastructure, protects open space and regulates land development for the unincorporated*

*community -- an area that is the second largest by population in the region and geographically larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware combined.*