

# Landscape Conversion Rebate Program

## Important Program Update

(June 15, 2016)

On July 1, 2016, the Santa Clara Valley Water District will reinstate the Landscape Rebate Program and will begin accepting new applications. Sites wishing to participate in the rebate program must complete a pre-inspection and submit an application for approval **before beginning any work** on their project.

- Single family and multi-family sites should call (800) 548-1882 to schedule a pre-inspection through our Water Wise House Call Program, unless they are a customer of San Jose Water Company.
- San Jose Water Company customers should call (408) 279-7900 to schedule a Water Audit.
- All non-residential sites should call (408) 630-2554 to schedule a pre-inspection.
- If you have already completed a pre-inspection and have not received an application for the current Landscape Rebate Program, please call (408) 630-2554 to request an application packet.

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1) Sites that have been denied participation in the Landscape Rebate Program for not meeting the initial program eligibility requirements will not be allowed to re-apply for the rebate within three (3) years of the initial pre-inspection or denial date, whichever is the latter.

2) All applications issued a Notice to Proceed on or after July 1, 2016 will be held to a total rebate cap (for both the Landscape Conversion Rebate and the Irrigation Equipment Upgrade Rebate combined) of \$2,000 for Single Family and Multi-family (4 or fewer units) and a \$20,000 for all Commercial sites and Multi-family (5 or more units).

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Santa Clara County single family homes, multi-family and business properties with qualifying irrigated landscape (i.e. irrigated turf or functional swimming pool) can receive rebates for replacing high water using landscape, such as irrigated turf grass, with a minimum of 50 percent plant coverage consisting of low water using plants from the Water District's [Approved Plant List](#). ([SCVWD Qualifying Plant List - Microsoft Excel version](#)) The table below describes the rebate amounts available.

**Rebate Amounts for all applications that receive a Notice to Proceed on or after July 1, 2016:**

Property Type	Rebate Amount (as of July 1, 2016)
Single Family and Multi-Family (4 or fewer units)	\$1.00 per sq ft up to \$2,000 total rebate per site

Multi-Family (5 or more units) and Business/Institutional properties	\$1.00 per sq ft up to \$20,000 total rebate per site
For information about current increased rebate amounts in cost sharing areas, please call the Water Conservation Hotline at (408) 630-2554. Funds are first come, first served, while funding is available.*	

**Projects must be completed within 90 days of Notice to Proceed date. The rebate caps are calculated using the combined total from both the Landscape Conversion Rebate and the Irrigation Equipment Upgrade Rebate.**

**\* Rebate amounts subject to change. For current cost-sharing area information, please call the Water Conservation Hotline at (408) 630-2554.**

## **Program Applicants**

- Applicants must have received a pre-inspection.
- Rebates are available for residents, businesses, or institutions located within Santa Clara County.
- Participants must own the property to be eligible.
- Applicants must attain pre-approval by participating in a qualifying pre-inspection and submit a Request for Application Form to the Santa Clara Valley Water District.
- Areas to be converted must include approved high water using landscape at the time of pre-inspection.
- In response to the drought, lawns that are dead, brown, yellow or green all qualify as long as the lawn is still physically onsite. Sites do not need to maintain a green, living lawn in order to qualify for the rebate program as long as the dead or stressed lawn was still onsite at the time of the pre-inspection and has not been removed.
- Projects that have been started or projects that have already been completed prior to the Notice to Proceed are not eligible.
- New construction does not qualify as the Landscape Rebate Program is aimed at encouraging retrofitting of existing facilities.
- Rebate material must be purchased after receiving a written Notice to Proceed from the water district.
- Projects must be completed within 90 days of date on written Notice to Proceed. Extensions can be provided on a case by case basis, if requested.

## **Landscape Conversion Rebate Program Requirements:**

- A minimum of 75 square feet of qualifying high water using landscape (i.e. irrigated turf or functional swimming pool) must be converted in order to participate in the landscape conversion rebate. If removing an existing swimming pool, all local building codes or permitting requirements must be met. Contact your local planning or building department for specifics.
- The converted area must include a sufficient number of qualifying water efficient plants to ensure at least 50% of the area is covered with living plants when the plants are fully grown. To determine coverage value, consult the [SCVWD Qualifying Plant List](#). ([SCVWD Qualifying Plant List - Microsoft Excel version](#)) Tree species will not be included in the 50% plant coverage requirement. Plants outside the converted area are not considered in the calculation even if they are adjacent to or overhanging into the converted area.
- Permeable hardscape such as permeable pavers, decomposed granite, rocks, and boulders are permitted within the converted areas as long as all other terms and conditions of the program are met. Impermeable surfaces, such as concrete and thick plastic (>3 mil), that do not allow water to penetrate into the ground are not permitted within the converted area.
- All planting areas must have a minimum of two (2) inches of qualifying mulch, including: chipped or shredded bark, rock, gravel, or weed free straw. If a weed barrier is used below the mulch, it must be

permeable to air and water. Although compost, leaves, and grass clippings are important for providing valuable soil structure, nutrients, and water retention, these materials do not qualify as mulch for this program as they decompose quickly and do not adequately reduce soil evaporation.

- A limited number of groundcover plants listed on the Water District's Qualifying Plant list may qualify as living mulch provided the individual plants are installed at sufficient density to assure 100% plant cover. The mulch requirement around these plants may be waived on a case-by-case basis.
- Irrigation systems, if used within the converted area, must be low volume drip, micro-spray, or bubbler. The system must be in good working order, free of leaks and malfunctions. Once installed, the irrigation system must not create run-off, overspray, or misting.
- Exceptions for overhead irrigation systems in a converted area will be reviewed on a case-by-base basis. The system shall have no run-off, low head drainage, overspray or other water waste to be accepted. All spray bodies and nozzles must be on the SCVWD Qualifying List and sprinklers must be set in a minimum of two feet from any impervious hardscape (i.e. concrete sidewalks, driveways and roads).
- There can be no net increase in the size of the irrigated area. The irrigation system must be designed so that any remaining lawn and shrubs are watered separately from the converted landscape area, meaning overhead irrigation is served through a separate valve that can be controlled independently on a separate irrigation zone and schedule.
- The sprinkler system for the remaining lawn must be modified to provide adequate coverage and may not spray onto the converted landscape area. **Pop-up sprinklers must be removed from the converted landscape area.**
- Non-qualifying materials include, but are not limited to the following: artificial turf ([click here for Artificial Turf Fact Sheet](#)), seed, sod, vegetable gardens, vineyards, high water use plants, lawn ornaments, impervious surfaces, cement, decking, curbing, hot tubs, pools, building extensions, retaining walls, sheds, trellises, play ground materials, and fences.