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## Lawn Replacement & Irrigation Efficiency Rebate Program Frequently Asked Questions

### **I already replaced my lawn with water-efficient plants. Can I get a rebate?**

No. Thank you for your efforts. The Program is not retroactive and cannot provide rebates for projects that were started prior to a pre-conversion site inspection. The Program is intended to provide an incentive to retrofit existing lawns.

### **I already upgraded my irrigation system, can I still get a rebate? I'm already in the process of replacing my irrigation system, am I eligible for the rebate?**

No. The Program is not retroactive and cannot provide rebates for projects started prior to application approval.

### **I have already upgraded to an EPA WaterSense approved weather based irrigation controller, can I still get a rebate?**

You can still apply for the rebate as long as the application is submitted within 60 days of purchase.

**How much is the Lawn Replacement rebate?** The maximum rebate for single family residential accounts is \$1,000 and for non-residential accounts is \$8,000.

### **How much is the Irrigation Efficiency rebate?**

The rebate is up to \$500 for residential upgrades and \$2,000 for commercial upgrades. See equipment listing for qualifying irrigation upgrades.

### **Who is eligible to participate?**

The Program is available to residential and non-residential customers, who receive treated water in the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) service area. Customer accounts must be distinctly metered to allow for evaluation of water savings. The applicant's water account must be in good standing.

### **What lawn areas are eligible for the Program?**

Lawn areas to be converted must be currently maintained and irrigated by an operating sprinkler system. Dead lawns, due to drought-related watering reductions, may be eligible and will be assessed on an individual basis. Evidence of previous lawn such as existing turf, borders, remnants of turf, or existing operational turf irrigation systems must be present; dirt or weed-filled areas are not eligible.

### **What plants can I use in my water-efficient landscape?**

Only very low to moderate water using plants can be used in your water-efficient landscape project. Food producing shrubs, vines and perennial plants may be included. PCWA has created an Approved Plant List as an easy reference for participants. These plants are drought-tolerant and adaptable to our local climate. The list can be found in the Rebate Programs section of our web site at <https://pcwa.net/stewardship/rebate-programs>. The list will also be made available in printed form upon request. Plants that are not on the list must be submitted to PCWA for review and will be accepted on a case-by case basis.

**Can I receive a rebate for replacing my lawn with artificial turf?** No. Artificial turf is not consistent with a holistic landscaping approach and therefore is not allowed in the rebated portion of the converted landscape.

### **Can I receive a rebate for installing a concrete patio, a walkway or an extension to my driveway?**

No. The program does not allow non-permeable hardscape. However, permeable hardscape, such as gravel, brick or flagstone with permeable, mortar-less materials for grout lines (such as sand and gravel) are allowed. Keep in mind that the conversion area must still meet the fifty percent (50%) living plant coverage requirement.

**Can I receive a rebate for replacing an existing dead lawn?**

Dead lawns, due to drought-related watering reductions, may be eligible and will be assessed on an individual basis. Evidence of previous lawn such as existing turf, borders, remnants of turf, or existing operational turf irrigation systems must be present; dirt or weed-filled areas are not eligible.

**Can I receive a rebate for replacing my high water use lawn with low water use lawn?**

No. This program provides incentive to convert lawns to alternative types of landscaping, including trees, shrubs, groundcovers and native bunch grasses. These use less water than even the lowest water use lawn.

**Can I receive a rebate for replacing high water use plants other than lawn?**

No. The Program only credits the lawn that is removed.

**What is mulch and why is it required?**

The most common types of mulch are bark chips, shredded bark and wood chips. Non-organic materials, such as rock or decomposed granite, can also be used as mulch. Mulch will reduce the amount of water that evaporates from the soil, as well as act as an insulating layer, keeping the soil cooler in the summer. Also, organic mulch breaks down and adds nutrients to the soil. Finally, mulch keeps weeds down. The program requires that converted areas have a minimum of two inches (2") of mulch in all planting areas. Please note that if a weed barrier is used below the mulch, it must be permeable to air and water.

**What is the 50% Plant Cover requirement?**

Upon completion and continuing for the five-year term of the agreement, converted areas must contain enough plants to cover at least 50% of the area with living plant cover when the plants are fully grown. To determine if your landscape plan will meet this requirement, check the mature growth size for each plant you are using. You can find many plants listed in the *Sunset Western Garden Book* (available at bookstores and libraries), or ask your local nursery. For example, a retrofit of a 500 square foot lawn must contain a sufficient number of plants installed so that at maturity, the plants cover at least 250 square feet.

**Why is there a 50% Plant Cover requirement?**

The primary goal of the program is to reduce water use by removing water-thirsty lawn, and at the same time, encouraging the use of environmentally beneficial water-efficient landscaping. Trees, shrubs and groundcovers provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, supply oxygen, reduce soil erosion, give wildlife a home, decrease energy use, reduce storm water, and save water.

**What type of irrigation system do I need to use?**

If you are installing irrigation for the new landscaped area, it must be low volume drip. The drip system must include a pressure regulator, and filter. If only part of the lawn is converted, the remaining lawn must be irrigated separately from the new landscape, and the sprinkler system for the lawn must be modified to eliminate overspray onto the new landscaped area. See equipment list for detailed equipment.

**How many times can I apply for the rebate?**

Eligible customers may participate one time per rebate per water service.

**For more information, visit [www.pcwa.net](http://www.pcwa.net) or call PCWA's  
Customer Services Department at 530-823-4850.**