



# The Regional Water Efficiency Program **2021 YEAR IN REVIEW**

**The Regional Water Authority's Regional Water Efficiency Program (RWEF) brings together 19 participants serving 2 million people to promote water efficiency in the Sacramento region. For two decades, RWEF participants have partnered to:**

- **ENGAGE** in a regional strategy to preserve local water resources
- **NETWORK** and share best practices
- **LEVERAGE** dollars with other regional utilities and partners
- **BUILD** economies of scale for attracting grants
- **MAXIMIZE** advertising dollars for broad and consistent customer outreach
- **PROVIDE** a regional school education program
- **DEVELOP** and promote a regional customer-facing website—[BeWaterSmart.info](https://www.BeWaterSmart.info)



## FROM LEAKS TO LAWNS TO DROUGHT

2021 was a year for nimble messaging and maximum flexibility to adapt outreach to the rapidly changing conditions. RWA's RWEF began 2021 with a focus on household leaks and then transitioned to the fourth year of an award-winning outreach campaign focused on tackling the landscape overwatering problem by encouraging residents to check soil moisture before turning on sprinklers (Check & Save).

With the sudden emergence of drought in May 2021, the program introduced new creative (Way to Save) and tools

for RWEF participants. The goal: Help provide consistent and actionable tips region-wide while providing flexibility for RWA members to customize materials to reflect their unique water supply situation and call to action.

As the drought grew more serious, the RWEF updated messaging again and ramped up outreach, asking residents to reduce lawn watering while continuing to water trees (Stress Your Lawn, Save Your Trees), understanding that lawns can handle less water but that drought-stressed trees can be lost forever.



ATTRACTING GRANT FUNDING

The RWEF allows members to leverage their investments in water efficiency and take advantage of grant funding available now and in coming years. Since 2003, the program has secured nearly \$16.3 million from highly competitive grant programs, including more than \$2.7 million in grants in just the past three years.

Grant	Projects	Funds Received	Begin Date	End Date	Local Cost Share
Regional San/RWA Annual Water Conservation Program	Rebates for Toilets, Clothes Washers, and Pre-Rinse Spray Valves	\$350,000	6/1/2021	6/1/2022	Yes
Proposition 1 Round 1 2020	Regional Leak Detection Repair	\$1,000,000	6/26/2020	12/31/2023	Yes
Proposition 1 Round 1 2020	Advancing Water Efficiency in Sacramento	\$1,244,000	6/26/2020	12/31/2023	Yes
Proposition 1 Round 1 2020	Water Efficiency Indoor and Outdoor Studies	\$200,000	6/26/2020	12/31/2023	Yes



In addition, the RWEF distributed over 1,277 rebates to replace older toilets and clothes washers with high-efficiency models in partnership with Regional San.

New Regional Rebate Program for Water-Wise Landscaping at Business, Institutional Properties

The RWEF launched a new rebate program in 2021 aimed at helping commercial, industrial and institutional (CII) properties reduce water use and protect the Lower American River’s water quality. The program offers businesses, offices and schools located within five miles of the river up to \$15,000 in free landscape irrigation and plant upgrades with professional installation included. The rebate program is funded by a grant from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation.

GET FREE LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION AND PLANT UPGRADES PROFESSIONAL INSTALLATION INCLUDED

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) is pleased to offer this first-come, first-served program for free landscape irrigation and plant upgrades for your business or institution with professional installation included. The program's goal is to reduce water use and improve water quality of the Lower American River.

Each eligible property will receive up to \$15,000 in landscape irrigation and/or plant upgrades.

Potential upgrades include:

- Turf conversion to low-water use plants
- High-efficiency sprinkler heads
- Weather-based irrigation controllers
- Drip irrigation

- Low-water use plants and mulch
- Native trees and shrubs
- And more!!!

NOT SURE WHAT UPGRADES YOUR PROPERTY NEEDS?

No problem! A landscape professional will come out and survey your property and tailor recommendations for you.

DO I HAVE AN ELIGIBLE PROPERTY?

- Property must be located within five miles of the Lower American River.
- Property must be a commercial, industrial, or institutional property.
- Property must have existing landscape area that includes turf grass and/or high-water use irrigation equipment.
- Property must receive water from a public or private water utility.

HOW SOON CAN I GET THE LANDSCAPE UPGRADES INSTALLED?

- Upgrades will be scheduled for winter 2021 and spring 2022.
- All upgrades must be installed by June 2022.

INTERESTED??? QUESTIONS????

For more information and to verify eligibility, please contact Chris Perry at [rwacipprogram@gmail.com](mailto:rwacipprogram@gmail.com) or 916.967.7653.

Regional Water Authority, 5620 Birdcage St, STE 180, Citrus Heights, CA 95610 or [rwa2020.org](http://rwa2020.org)

RWA

Regional Water Authority

RELOCATED ALLIANCE TO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

TRACKING WATER USE

Over the last 20 years, the region’s water use has been steady even though the population grew 37 percent from 1.5 million to 2.1 million people.

Population, Water Use and GPCD in the Sacramento Region

Year	GPCD	Population (acre-feet)	Water Use (acre-feet)
2000	285	1,450,000	450,000
2001	290	1,550,000	480,000
2002	285	1,650,000	480,000
2003	275	1,750,000	480,000
2004	285	1,850,000	550,000
2005	265	1,900,000	480,000
2006	265	1,950,000	480,000
2007	270	2,000,000	550,000
2008	265	2,050,000	550,000
2009	240	2,100,000	480,000
2010	225	2,150,000	420,000
2011	215	2,200,000	400,000
2012	235	2,250,000	450,000
2013	235	2,300,000	450,000
2014	190	2,350,000	350,000
2015	160	2,400,000	300,000
2016	170	2,450,000	350,000
2017	180	2,500,000	350,000
2018	180	2,550,000	350,000
2019	175	2,600,000	350,000
2020	190	2,650,000	400,000
2021	185	2,700,000	380,000

Providing Leadership

RWEF Program Manager Amy Talbot provided national and statewide leadership and represented Sacramento-area interests on water efficiency issues as a Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) Board member, California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) Board member, Sacramento Tree Foundation Board member, the California-Nevada AWWA Water Loss Control Committee Chair and Association for California Water Agencies (ACWA) Water Loss Committee Chair.

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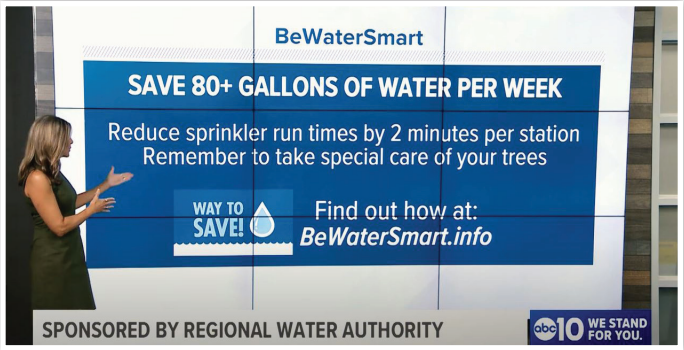
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ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fueled by new grant funding awarded to RWA in 2020, the 2021 paid advertising buy maximized its reach among multiple media channels in both English and Spanish, including television (ABC 10 and CW 31/KMAX CW 31 as part of the River Cats games), cable television, radio (Capital Public Radio, 96.9 the Eagle and 98 Rock FM), online (Facebook and local news and weather websites), and in Spanish on three Entravision radio stations and Univision online. The buy included several segments in Spanish on Univision featuring RWA guest spokesperson Martin Carrion van Rijn of Landscape Symphonies.

Mid-year, RWA utilized additional grant funding to increase its advertising buy for water conservation messaging, adding a partnership with ABC 10 Chief Meteorologist Monica Woods to deliver weekly water-saving tips; advertising on CBS 13; digital and static billboards throughout the Sacramento region; and a glossy new home and garden magazine (Garden Smart) distributed in partnership with 23 nurseries and irrigation shops throughout the Sacramento region.



SPANISH MEDIA

Univision

Digital and online campaigns

181,408 impressions

282 clicks

Bonus interviews with RWA spokesperson on Despierta Sacramento

Entravision Radio

702 advertisements

766,000 impressions

116,000 people reached

6.6 frequency

TELEVISION

KXTV ABC10

365

advertisements

10,362,000 impressions

998,694

people reached

6.2

frequency

EFFECTV (Cable TV)

5,489

advertisements

895,089 impressions

270,869

people reached

3.3

frequency

KOVR CBS13

141

advertisements  
(97 paid, 44 in-kind)

3,814,752 impressions

676,305

people reached

9.0

frequency

BILLBOARDS digital and static

13,593,989 impressions

COMMERCIAL RADIO

761

advertisements  
(621 paid, 140 in-kind)

4,153,600 impressions

640,100 people reached

6.5

frequency

CAPITAL PUBLIC RADIO

Broadcast

704

sponsorships  
(484 paid, 220 in-kind)

2,684,000 impressions

283,700 people reached

9.5

frequency

Cap Radio Digital

423,398 impressions

450 clicks

ONLINE

Facebook

2,284,441 impressions

1,069,908 people reached

24,568 clicks

Google

15,493,921 impressions

6,820 clicks

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Television

“Check & Save”

6

outlets broadcast

520

times

1,765,000 impressions

\$47,000 in value had they been purchased as advertising

Radio

“Check & Save” and “Leak Protection Program”

10

stations broadcast

385

times

1,107,500 impressions

\$30,100 in value had they been purchased as advertising



New Videos Promote Tree Care and Finding Leaks

RWA produced several videos in 2021 to promote Check & Save, efficient tree watering and other priority themes. These were posted to BeWaterSmart.info, used in digital advertising, as PSAs, and by the Sacramento Tree Foundation in their educational outreach. Videos included “How to use the Bucket Method for watering young trees” (in partnership with the Sacramento Tree Foundation) and “How to find a hidden leak in your home.”



Partnerships with Online Gardening Influencers

Be Water Smart (BWS) continued to build relationships with online influencers who were already regularly producing content and had an existing communication outlet and fan base. Our goal was to encourage their communication of BWS topics, messages and tips; build the BWS brand with their audience as the go-to place for water efficiency; and amplify their voice among BWS audiences.

- **Green Acres Garden Podcast:** The Green Acres Garden Podcast features interviews with gardening experts from Green Acres Nursery & Supply and others from the community. Sponsored podcasts included a promotional message from Be Water Smart and interviews with Be Water Smart experts.
- **Marlene Simon “The Plant Lady”:** Marlene hosts the Flower Power Garden Hour podcast, “Ask the Plant Lady” featured on Good Day Sacramento (KMAX Channel 31) and gardening tips on her YouTube channel. Sponsored podcasts included a promotional message from Be Water Smart, as well as the BWS logo on her website, Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Garden Smart Magazine and Partnerships with Nurseries and irrigation Stores

Utilizing excess grant funding, RWA published a new glossy garden magazine Garden Smart, made available free of charge via 23 nurseries and irrigation store partners throughout the Sacramento region in fall. In Garden Smart, local experts provide useful tips and inspiration for creating a beautiful, water-wise year, exploring topics such as designing a fire-wise and water-wise landscape, tons of ideas for low-water plants, the ultimate water-wise yard, garden renovation mistakes to avoid, and much more.

River Cats Sponsorship

The River Cats offered RWA several bonus exposure opportunities in 2021, including 30-second Check & Save spots broadcast on KMAX Channel 31 during each Saturday game and multiple 30-second radio spots broadcast during every game via their streaming radio coverage. The River Cats also worked to maximize exposure for the Be Water Smart message given the continued disruption to in-person events from the coronavirus pandemic. Ultimately, the River Cats started the season at 25 percent capacity, and by June 15, 2021 were authorized for 100 percent capacity. The total attendance for regular season games was 342, 861. In addition, 24 special events at Sutter Health Park drew 66,300 people in 2021.



MOSAC Water Efficiency Exhibits Open

RWA-sponsored water efficiency exhibits opened for viewing in 2021 at the new SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity (MOSAC), reflecting years of input by RWA Water Efficiency Program Manager Amy Talbot, who helped shape the exhibits at every step. Exhibits teach visitors to become a “Home Water Detective,” create their own mix tape from water conserving sounds in “Drop a Beat” and learn about local “Water Champions.”



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The Water Efficiency Program was honored with the 2021 WaterSense Partner of the Year Award for its dedication to helping customers and businesses save water. This was RWA’s second national WaterSense award. The outreach program was also featured in a new Drought Communications Primer, published by the California Water Efficiency Partnership. In addition, State Water Board staff highlighted RWA’s “Save Your Trees, Stress Your Lawn” advertising campaign during the Board’s December 2021 meeting and invited RWA Water Efficiency Program Manager Amy Talbot to provide details.



## PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

The success of the Regional Water Efficiency Program depends upon the RWA members who financially contribute to the program. ***Thank you to 2021 RWEF participants:***

### RWA MEMBERS:

California American Water  
Carmichael Water District  
Citrus Heights Water District  
City of Folsom  
City of Lincoln  
City of Roseville  
City of Sacramento

City of West Sacramento  
Del Paso Manor Water District  
El Dorado Irrigation District  
Elk Grove Water District  
Fair Oaks Water District  
Golden State Water Company  
Orange Vale Water Company  
Placer County Water Agency

Rancho Murieta Community Services District  
Sacramento County Water Agency  
Sacramento Suburban Water District  
San Juan Water District

### RWA ASSOCIATES:

Regional San  
SMUD



## LEARN MORE

**Amy Talbot, Water Efficiency Program Manager** | Regional Water Authority  
5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180 | Citrus Heights, CA 95610

(916) 967-7692 | [atalbot@rwah2o.org](mailto:atalbot@rwah2o.org) | [www.BeWaterSmart.info](http://www.BeWaterSmart.info) | [www.rwah2o.org](http://www.rwah2o.org)