



The Regional Water Efficiency Program 2022 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 over 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

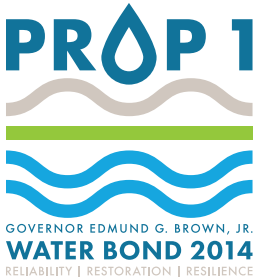
ATTRACTING GRANT FUNDING

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 \$19.9 million from highly competitive grant programs, including more than \$6 million in grants in just the past four years.

Grant	Projects	Funds Received	Begin Date	End Date
Regional San/RWA Annual Water Conservation Program	Rebates for Toilets, Clothes Washers, and Pre-Rinse Spray Valves	\$350,000	6/1/22	6/1/23
Proposition 1 Round 1	Regional Leak Detection Repair, Customer Rebates, and Indoor/Outdoor Studies	\$2,444,000	6/26/20	12/31/23
Bonneville Environmental Foundation	Lower American River Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional (CII) Landscape Transformation Project	\$250,000	3/1/21	12/31/22
Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Grant Program	Sacramento Regional Indoor Direct Install Project	\$500,000	6/11/22	4/1/25
Urban Community Drought Relief Grant Program	Disadvantaged Community Indoor Fixture Direct Installation, Turf Replacement, and Public Outreach	\$3,000,000	7/1/22	8/31/26









CREATING A CONDUIT FOR PROGRAMS

The RWEPP provides an avenue for water providers to partner with local and state agencies on rebate programs and services that would otherwise be impractical or impossible. RWEPP manages these programs for water providers and serves as a conduit for funding and reimbursement.



Water-Wise Landscape Incentives and Leak Investigations

RWEPP provided rebates to residential and commercial customers in partnership with the California Department of Water Resources using Proposition 1 funding (the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014).

2022 Rebate Activity			
 <p>239,645 square feet of turf replaced</p>	 <p>4,173 drip or low-volume irrigation parts</p>	 <p>1,464 sprinkler heads or nozzles</p>	 <p>1,381 pipe and pipe fittings</p>
 <p>1,049 irrigation controllers</p>	 <p>112 pressure regulators</p>	 <p>88 leak investigations</p>	 <p>23 flow sensors</p>

High-Efficiency Toilets and Clothes Washers

In partnership with Regional San, the RWEPP distributed over 1,540 rebates to replace older toilets and clothes washers with high-efficiency models.



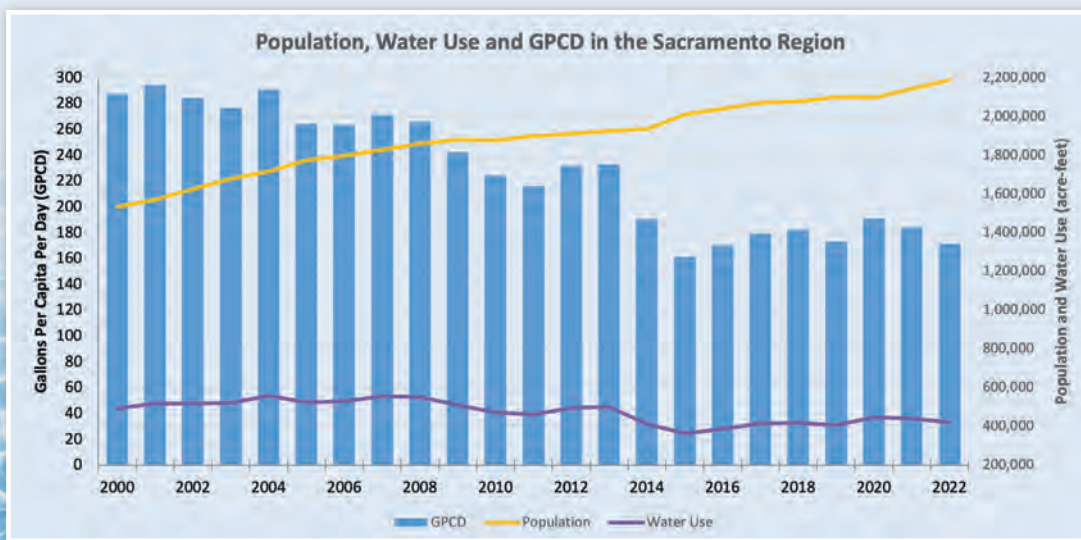


Media Event Highlights Rebate-Funded Landscape Makeover

The RWEF hosted a media event in partnership with Save Our Water to highlight a Folsom business that utilized a regional rebate to transform lawn to a low-water landscape. The event included speakers from RWA, State Water Resources Control Board member Nichole Morgan and California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot. The rebate program was funded by a grant from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation and transformed 10 business and institutional landscapes for an estimated 15-year savings of 250 million gallons.

TRACKING WATER USE

Over the last 22 years, the region's water use has been steady even though the population grew nearly 43 percent from 1.5 million to almost 2.2 million people.



Invaluable Insight into Attitudes About Drought and Efficiency

In 2022, RWA conducted four virtual focus groups in both English and Spanish, as well as a statistically valid public opinion survey. The focus groups provided qualitative information and feedback on draft and existing creative concepts for outreach and advertising. The survey provided an opportunity to see whether focus group findings were widely held by others in the region. Results from both the focus groups and survey were used to refine messaging and campaign materials in 2022 and beyond.



ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Conserving Water While Preserving Trees

In 2022, the RWA Regional Water Efficiency Program focused on encouraging residential water customers to reduce lawn watering while continuing to water trees during California's drought to support the Governor's request of water providers to voluntarily reduce water use by 15 percent. Additionally, the RWEF continues to partner with the Sacramento Tree Foundation to help maintain and expand the region's healthy tree canopy.



TELEVISION

KXTV ABC10

172
advertisements
3,622,000
impressions
1,366,307
people reached
6.1
frequency

Premion (Streaming TV)

822,061
advertisements
822,061
impressions
684,013
people reached

CAPITAL PUBLIC RADIO

Broadcast

478
sponsorships
(120 of these in-kind)
1,583,700
impressions
400,300
people reached
5.9
frequency

Cap Radio Digital

355,701
impressions
287
clicks



BILLBOARDS (digital and static)

10,755,282
impressions
(5,945,646 of these in kind)

COMMERCIAL RADIO

1,378
advertisements (492 of these in-kind)
5,543,100
impressions
1,454,000
people reached
6.5
frequency



WATER SPOTS WINNER MOVIE THEATER PREMIERE

The RWEPA utilized the 2022 Grand Prize winner in the Water Spots Video Contest as advertising during the summer at the 16-screen Century Blue Oaks theatre in Rocklin. The video, "Doing Your Part," played before some of the biggest movies of the summer, including Top Gun and Jurassic World. **The video appeared 2,619 times and delivered roughly 49,000 impressions.**

SPANISH MEDIA

Entravision (Radio)

1,171
 advertisements
874,300
 impressions
116,700
 people reached
7.5
 frequency

Telemundo (Streaming)

76,840
 advertisements
76,840
 impressions
4.38
 frequency
23
 clicks

Telemundo (TV)

148
 advertisements
186,000
 impressions
116,999
 people reached
1.9
 frequency



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSAS)

The RWEPA partnered with PCWA to customize and use their video on the bucket method for watering young trees (utilizing a Bucket Band from Colfax High School) as a regional PSA.

Television

Videos: "Bucket Band" tree watering, "Doing Your Part" Water Spots winner and "Nuts" check the soil and save
7
 outlets broadcast
995
 times
3,520,000
 impressions
\$90,750
 in value had they been purchased as advertising

Radio

Live read messages on outdoor water efficiency and tree care
12
 stations broadcast
425
 times
1,063,500
 impressions
\$34,300
 in value had they been purchased as advertising



ONLINE

Facebook

1,886,887
 impressions
871,213
 people reached
27,251
 clicks

Google

3,895,205
 impressions
5,907
 clicks

PARTNERSHIPS TO EXTEND MESSAGING

Gardening Influencers

The RWEF continued its successful partnerships with regional gardening influencers to encourage their communication of water efficiency topics, messages and tips and build the Be Water Smart brand as the go-to resource for water efficiency:



Flower Power Garden Hour Podcast:

Interviews with regional water efficiency experts; promotional message during podcasts, logo and website links on the podcast website, Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Green Acres Garden Podcast:

Promotional message at the end of podcasts, logo and website link on the podcast web page.



Sacramento Digs Gardening Blog:

Recognition and links from the blog website, in eblasts, and on the blog Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Sacramento Tree Foundation | Videos for Diverse Communities

The RWEF refined its Spanish-language video on watering mature trees per focus group feedback. In addition, longtime program partner the Sacramento Tree Foundation translated RWA's videos on watering mature trees and watering young trees using the bucket method into multiple languages: Russian, Hmong, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Simplified Chinese.



National Honors

During the year, RWA's Garden Smart magazine was awarded top honors for Best Garden Marketing Publication by Garden Publications International, an organization of professional communicators in the green and garden industry.

Garden SMART

Create a beautiful **stress-free** Sacramento-area landscape **year round**

Do these five things now!
PAGE 3

Plan your ultimate garden
PAGE 8

Grow food, save water, too
PAGE 14

EXPERT PICK: Beautiful, smart, low-water tree

IGNORE INVASIVE PLANTS. Get rid of the nutsedge and birdweed before replanting.

TOY TO PLANT in a Sacramento heat wave. The best time for planting: fall and spring.

PUT GRAVEL (OR ROCK) mulch over existing tree's roots. That just adds to heat stress. Use organic mulch instead.

NEGLECT TO WATER new plants. All plants – even low-water – need extra irrigation when transplanted.

PLANT TREES "Especially small desert trees that grow fast. Always layer in tough, blooming, small trees and large shrubs for birds to hang out." Among Tranquilli's favorites: Desert willow, Desert Museum palo verde and pineapple @wva.

PLANT LOW-WATER NATIVES. They support native bees and other local wildlife. "Please, please, please add California native plants to your new landscape. Request them!"

MULCH, MULCH, MULCH! That fills in the space between new plants, cuts down on weeds, feeds the soil and retains moisture.

UPGRADE IRRIGATION. Replace sprinklers with a drip system. Put plants with like water needs together.

SAVE PLANTS from your former landscape. Especially keep plants that will fit with lower water use and are already established. Trees in particular can anchor the new water-wise garden. Camellias and roses are both drought tolerant. So are many popular perennials such as daylilies, irises and agapanthus.

MAKE USE OF REBATES and resources. Contact your local water provider. Read rebate details before you dig out the grass.

RESEARCH PLANTS. Don't just buy what you like. Be thoughtful about combinations; use plants with similar water, sun and soil needs.

BEFORE YOU BUY THE FLORA. Improve your soil with a drip system. Your planting should include a soil test to see what nutrients may be needed.

PLANTING – that planting should include a soil test to see what nutrients may be needed.

PLANTING – that planting should include a soil test to see what nutrients may be needed.

KEEP TREES GROWING STRONG

Learn the **bucket method** to help young trees

By DENISE ANDERSON

Worried about your trees during drought? Grab a bucket—preferably one with a hole near the bottom.

"Using a bucket is a great way to give trees—particularly young trees—the extra water they need, without wasting water," says Pamela Frickmann Sanchez, Education Program Manager for the Sacramento Tree Foundation.

"A 5-gallon bucket is a really easy way to make sure trees are getting enough water."

Pamela Frickmann Sanchez
Education Program Manager, Sacramento Tree Foundation

So easy that children can do it, "bucket watering" is the zen method of tree irrigation—slow, steady and as Mother Nature would do it. This simple solution also can help train young trees to grow deep roots, helping them become established and more drought resistant.

"People need to water them, especially young trees, to keep them healthy," Sanchez says.

Sacramento trees most likely to show drought stress include coastal redwood, birches, and maples and tulip trees. During very dry conditions, young trees of all kinds are most at risk, particularly under 7 years old. Those same saplings benefit most from bucket watering—even if they're growing in the middle of a lawn.

"The first few years, trees need about 10 to 15 gallons extra water a week, preferably split into two times a week," Sanchez explained. "If you do have a lawn, water from the lawn sprinklers is not adequate to get trees established. They need their own thorough soak. A 5-gallon bucket is a really easy way to make sure trees are getting enough water."

Sacramento's heavy soils need slow water application to allow moisture to soak in. "Don't leave the hose running," Sanchez said. "If you just dump 1 gallon on your tree, water runs off too quickly. Using the bucket method, you know exactly how much your tree is getting."

So Tree staff experimented and found a single 1/8-inch hole—located on the bucket's side about 1 inch above the bottom—was most effective. On the bottom, the hole got clogged with dirt. Multiple or bigger holes, the water drained too fast.

Cover the hole with tape, fill the bucket, and place the bucket close, within a foot of the trunk to newly planted trees, so their root ball will soak up water, and then remove the tape. Alternate sides with each bucket application. As the tree grows, move the bucket farther away from the trunk. The feeder roots that need the extra water most are located along the drip-line at the edges of a tree's canopy.

Mulch will help your trees keep that moisture longer. Apply a 1- to 4-inch layer of organic mulch (wood chips, bark, leaves, etc.) out to the tree's drip-line, leaving 6 inches of space between trunk and mulch.

NEED A NEW TREE?

The Sacramento Tree Foundation has "The Shady Eighty," tree recommendations for a cooler Sacramento region. Search for the right tree for the right place in your landscape.

Find the searchable list at: www.sactree.com/shady80

PHOTO COURTESY OF REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

HOW MUCH WATER?

Trees, especially young trees, need additional irrigation to grow strong and healthy. Using a 5-gallon bucket makes it simple. For mature trees, use a soaker hose. Here are recommendations from the Sacramento Tree Foundation:

TREE AGE	FREQUENCY	AMOUNT
1 year	2-3 times a week	5 gallons
2 years	Once a week	10 gallons
3 years	Every other week	15 gallons
3+ years	Once a month	Use a soaker hose at drip-line for one hour.

Local Nurseries and Irrigation Stores:

Distributed nearly 4,500 copies of RWEPA's glossy garden magazine GARDEN Smart free of charge via 20 nurseries and irrigation store partners throughout the Sacramento region.



PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

The success of the Regional Water Efficiency Program depends upon the RWA members who financially contribute to the program. **Thank you to 2022 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



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 | www.BeWaterSmart.info | www.rwah2o.org