



Solano County Water Agency

Water-Efficient Landscape Rebate Program

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

Terms and Conditions

The Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) is offering cash rebates to water customers who replace thirsty grass turf with **sustainable water-efficient landscaping that meets Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines**. This program has two primary goals, 1) to promote landscape water use efficiency and 2) to support the installation of healthy, sustainable landscapes that will enhance our local environment by providing habitat for local fauna and promoting healthy soils.

You may be eligible for a rebate of \$1.00 per square foot when converting your lawn to a **sustainable watershed appropriate** landscape. The maximum rebate is **\$1,000** per eligible residential water service site (**\$5,000** maximum for Commercial, Industrial, Institutional (CII) sites). Offer is limited to one (1) Water Efficient Landscape Rebate per site. Funding is limited and **rebates are one-time-only per site**, and will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. **Rebates are subject to availability of funds and at no point in time are guaranteed.** The Agency reserves the right to terminate this program at any time, for any reason.

I. Eligibility

- a. The Program is available to residential and CII customers who purchase water from a participating SCWA Member Agency. Properties using recycled water or not connected to the city's water system are ineligible. The water service account must be in good standing and have been active for at least twelve months.
- b. A minimum of 300 square feet of lawn must be converted in order to participate in the program. New construction does not qualify for the rebate program as it is aimed at encouraging retrofitting of existing sites.
- c. Rebate applicants must agree to brief Pre- and Post-Inspection site visits by Agency staff in order to apply and qualify for the Turf Replacement rebate.
- d. **In response to the drought, lawns that are dead, brown, yellow or green may qualify as long as the lawn is still physically onsite and has not been removed. The lawn must have been irrigated by a sprinkler system in good working condition. 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 is still onsite at the time of the pre-inspection and has not been removed. Weeds and/or dirt will not qualify. Each rebate application will be handled on a case by case basis.**
- e. ***This program is NOT retroactive; projects in progress or projects already completed prior to a Pre-inspection are not eligible. This Program is intended to provide other water customers with a "monetary incentive to act", therefore, sites where landscape renovations are already underway are not eligible for a rebate.***

II. Rebate Offer

- a. **\$1.00 per square foot** of lawn removed, with per site maximum of **\$1,000** for Single-Family Residences (equivalent to 1,000 sq. ft.). The per site maximum rebate amount for multi-family or CII account is \$5,000.
- b. Applicants will be accepted on a first-come first-serve basis until all funds have been reserved. After which, applicants will be put on a waitlist.
- c. *Rebate applicants are encouraged to remove more turf area than is covered by the rebate program, but the per site maximum of \$1,000 will still apply.*
- d. Rebate applicants must consent to **brief Pre- and Post-Inspection site visits** by Solano County Water Agency staff in order to apply and qualify for the Turf Replacement rebate.
- e. At the **Pre-Inspection** visit, Water Agency staff will measure the proposed conversion area and verify that the site meets the program's Terms and Conditions. If approved, the Water Agency will mail an **Application Approval** to the applicant.

SCWA Mailing Address: 810 Vaca Valley Pkwy, Ste. 203, Vacaville, CA 95688

OFFICE: 707-455-1113

FAX: 707-451-6099

Email: SolanoCash4Grass@scwa2.com

- f. Lawn conversions **must be completed within 120 days (four months)** of the date on the Application Approval. If project is not complete within 120 days, the application will be canceled and funds made available to future applicants on the waitlist.
- g. Receipts are not required to be submitted but should be retained for tax purposes. SCWA reserves the right to audit receipts for any materials used in the conversion. SCWA does not issue IRS Form 1099 for rebates exceeding \$600.
- h. Following the **Post-Inspection** visit and **Final Approval**, SCWA will issue a rebate check to the eligible applicant. **Please allow 6 – 8 weeks for the rebate check to be processed.**
- i. Rebates are reserved and paid on a first come first served basis and are only available until funds are depleted. **At no point in time are you guaranteed a rebate.**
- j. Offer is limited to one (1) Water Efficient Landscape rebate per site, residential and CIL.

III. Landscape Requirements for Converted Area

- a. **Plants** - must be drought tolerant, non-invasive, and adapted to our climate. Helpful resources for water-wise plant selection are available at <http://www.solanosaveswater.org> and also at <http://www.solano.watersavingplants.com> (Solano County's Water-Wise Gardening website). **Only very low (VL), low (L), or moderate (M) water-use species are acceptable.** High-water-use plant species are unacceptable and are those classified as high (H) in the Water Use Classification of Landscape Species database (www.ucanr.edu/sites/WUCOLS/) or those listed as needing "Regular Water" or "Ample Water" in the *Sunset Western Garden Book*. **The converted area must include a sufficient number of plants to ensure at least 50% of the area is covered when the plants are fully grown.** Installation of any fescue is ineligible of a rebate.
- b. **Mulch** - All planting areas must have a minimum of three (3) inches of mulch (i.e. organic material, bark, or rock).
- c. **Landscape Materials** - **must be permeable** (e.g., decomposed granite). Concrete, plastic sheeting or other impermeable surfaces are not allowed as part of the conversion area. Weed barrier must be biodegradable.
- d. **Artificial Turf/Grass and rubber mulch does not qualify for the rebate since it does not provide a sustainable watershed appropriate landscape.**
- e. **Existing lawn** – All lawn within one *contiguous* measured area must be converted, no patches may be left unconverted. *Separate complete* lawn areas may be left but will not count towards the rebate. Areas where lawn patches are left will no longer qualify towards the rebate. This is to avoid small patches and strips of lawn that often waste substantial water due to overspray.
- f. **Irrigation system** for the converted area, if used, must be **low-volume drip, micro spray, bubbler, or hand watering**. Overhead spray is not allowed. The system must be in good working order, free of leaks and malfunctions. The irrigation system must not create run-off, overspray, or misting.
- g. **Tenants/Renters:** If applicant is not the property owner, written consent from the property owner must be provided to Agency staff at the Pre-Inspection visit.
- h. At Post-Inspection, if conversion fails inspection, applicant will be given thirty (30) days to bring project into compliance. After which application will be canceled and funds made available to future applicants on the waitlist.

IV. Steps to Participate

1. Download **Rebate Application** from www.solanosaveswater.org/rebates or request one directly from SCWA.
2. Submit completed **Rebate Application** to SCWA via mail, email, or fax. Applications will be processed as they are received until all funds are reserved.
3. Upon receipt of **Rebate Application**, Water Agency staff will call or email applicant to schedule Pre-Inspection visit.
4. Following Pre-Inspection, await receipt of **Application Approval** letter by email or mail. **Do not remove lawn until you receive this document. To be eligible for a rebate, the Lawn Conversion Project must not be started before receipt of an Application Approval.** Due to high demand you may be approved and placed on a waitlist pending fund availability.
5. Remove the lawn area and install your project according to the program Landscaping Requirements listed in the Terms and Conditions **within 120 days**.
6. Call SCWA at 707.455.1113 or email solanocash4grass@scwa2.com to schedule a Post-Inspection visit when project is complete. **Post-Inspection must take place within 120 days of the Application Approval. If project is not complete within 120 days application will be cancelled and the funding reallocated back into the program's rebate fund for future applicants.**



Solano County Water Agency

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I have to remove all of the turf in my yard?

No, but any turf remaining cannot be included as part of the rebate. The sprinkler system for the remaining lawn must be modified to provide adequate coverage and may not spray onto the converted landscape area.

Are trees required or allowed in my converted landscape?

The Program requires at least one tree in the landscape conversion. If you have an existing tree that will remain after the conversion, a new tree is not required.

What type of mulch is part of the rebate?

All planting areas must have a minimum of three (3) 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.



Can I receive a rebate for installing decks, patios, and other structures?

Decks, impermeable patios and other structures may be installed as part of the project but must be excluded from the rebate footage. Paving stones and brick patios with permeable grouting are allowed, and the footage represented with this type of patio may be included in the rebated footage.

Are plants required in my conversion area?

The program requires that at minimum 50% of the converted area include low-water-use, drought-tolerant or California native plants.

Is there an approved plant list I can use to plan my conversion project?

The rebated portion of the converted landscapes requires plants, and may only include low-water-use, drought-tolerant or California native plants. The Water Use Classification of Landscape Species list (<http://ucanr.edu/sites/WUCOLS>) may be used as a resource guide. Consult your local plant nursery or the DWR turf website at www.water.ca.gov/turf/LandScapingmaps for additional guidance.

Is the rebate available for irrigation replacement?

The rebate is based on the square footage of turf replaced. Irrigation replacement alone (not associated with turf removal) is not eligible for this rebate program. Irrigation changes and upgrades must be done when the landscape

conversion occurs for rebate eligibility. To receive the rebate, all watering in the converted area must be done using drip irrigation, micro-spray irrigation or hand watering.

What type of irrigation system do I need to use?

The Program requires drip irrigation, bubbler, micro-spray irrigation, or hand watering.



Are raised beds or vegetable gardens eligible if turf is removed?

Yes, food-producing trees, shrubs, vines and perennial plants are allowed in place of turf.

Do I need to use any specific method of turf removal?

This program does not specify the method of turf removal. However, Solano County Water Agency strongly encourages the use of sheet mulching to replace lawn (<http://lawntogarden.org/how-to-sheet-mulch> or <http://rescapeca.org/resources/for-communities/sheetmulching/>).

You have the option to complete your project yourself or hire a contractor or landscaper to complete the project for you. They may use any method necessary to completely remove the turf and convert the project area per the Program specifications.

Is Artificial/Synthetic Turf Allowed?

Artificial/Synthetic turf is not allowed in the rebated portion of the converted landscape. This program has two primary goals, 1) to promote landscape water use efficiency and 2) to support the installation of **healthy, sustainable landscapes** that will enhance our local environment by providing habitat for local fauna and promoting healthy soils. ***Sustainable water efficient landscaping should be defined as environmentally beneficial landscaping that reduces water demand, supports the use of native or non-invasive plants, promotes biodiversity by providing habitat for native fauna, and requires minimal resource inputs, such as fertilizer, pesticides, gasoline, time, and water. Sustainable landscaping is about reducing waste, energy and materials. The use of artificial turf does not meet this criteria.***