



FAQs Turf Removal Rebate Program

1. When can I submit my application for a rebate?

Pre-applications can be submitted beginning May 1, 2011. The water conservation turf removal rebate requires approval prior to the installation of the project. You can start planning your turf removal project now.

2. How long will it take to get my rebate approved and receive my rebate on my water bill?

Lakewood's Department of Water Resources staff will review your turf removal project prior to approving the pre-application. This process could take 2 to 3 weeks. Once approved you have 60 days to complete your project and submit the rebate application. The final approval may take an additional 2 to 3 weeks. You will receive a notice via email or U.S. mail upon approval of your rebate. The rebate will appear on the water bill following rebate approval.

3. How do I calculate the square footage of the area where I want to remove turf?

See the section called How to Measure Turf Areas.

4. How did you pick the dollar amounts for the rebates?

The rebate amount of \$1.00 per square foot is consistent with the rebate other water agencies are offering customers. While the rebate will not pay for the total installation of your project, it does allow you to recoup some of the cost. Remember, removing grass areas and installing low water use plants and irrigation will save you water and additional money on your water bill for years to come.

City of Lakewood rebates fall into two categories: devices and turf projects. Device rebates run \$5 to \$50 towards the purchase cost of water saving irrigation devices like low-waste "rotor" sprinkler heads, drip irrigation kits and hose timers. Additional rebates are available for irrigation timers/controllers and moisture sensors. The rebates are worth approximately 20% of the device cost.

The program offers up to \$80 for the removal of thirsty grass landscaping and the cost of re-landscaping, irrigation or installation of water permeable surfaces. This can be done in conjunction with a device rebate.

5. I live in the part of Lakewood served by the Golden State Water Company. Why can't I get a rebate from the City of Lakewood?

Golden State Water Company funds rebates for high efficiency washing machines, rotor nozzles, weather based timers and turf removal at www.bewaterwise.com. Golden State Water Company customers are not eligible for the City of Lakewood's water conservation rebate program, because it is funded entirely through the revenue the City receives from its water customers.

6. Why can't businesses, apartment buildings or multi-family units like duplexes get rebates?

Commercial and industrial businesses and multiple family dwelling units are eligible for a variety of rebates through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California at www.bewaterwise.com many of which are not available to the single family homeowner. These rebates can have a positive impact on the businesses' bottom line. The City decided to focus the water conservation rebate program on single family residential customers to reach the largest group of customers. Over 90 percent of Lakewood's water users are single family accounts. In addition, outside water use accounts for up to 70 percent of the water used by single family homes.

7. Is there an application and step by step guide that I can download?

The City's website (Lakewood Online) has the complete application and instructions for completing the turf removal rebate application. Go to www.lakewoodcity.org/waterrebates.

8. I'm planning my projects, but they won't be done for a while. What's the deadline to apply for a rebate?

There is no deadline for the rebate program, but rebates will cease when the existing funds are expended. The Lakewood City Council has appropriated \$25,000 for the current fiscal year ending on June 30, 2011, but no decision has been made regarding future year allocations.

9. I need help. Is there a list of affordable and reputable plumbers, nurseries or landscapers that can help me?

The City cannot recommend particular businesses. Referrals from friends and family members may be a good place to start. Take the time to interview a potential contractor before you ask for an estimate. Visit the California Consumer Affairs Contractors State License Board website for advice on selecting a contractor. You can verify the status of a contractor's license and learn what to look for in a binding contract.

<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/Consumers/>. Also, make sure the contractor provides pictures and references from previous clients. Take the time to call the references to ask questions about the workmanship, cost and timeliness of the contractor.

10. I need to plan my project. Who should I talk to?

The City cannot provide assistance with project planning. There are several websites that can provide assistance with project planning.

There are two proven free resources for learning about doing a complete yard makeover. They are the Los Angeles County "[Smart Gardener](#)" program and the Water Replenishment District's (WRD) "[Eco Gardener](#)" workshop series. Both offer information online and workshops locally.

Los Angeles County offers more than three dozen beginning and advanced "[Smart Gardener](#)" workshops throughout the region. Two beginning workshops will be held in Long Beach – on Saturday February 26 and April 30 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at [Birney Elementary School at 710 W Spring Street](#). An advanced workshop will be held there on Saturday, May 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Call 888-CLEAN LA for additional information. They also have a complete page on instructional videos online.

The WRD eco-gardener workshops series cover the concepts of water efficient gardening and landscaping, irrigation basics, best horticultural practices, drought tolerant and native plants, and garden design concepts. Residents will get design tips, irrigation scheduling, maintenance tips and troubleshooting information for choosing appropriate plants and fertilizers. Call 562-275-4234 or call Marisol Carlos at mcarlos@wrd.org or go to www.ecogardener.org to sign up.

Please visit www.bewaterwise.com or www.lakewoodcity.org/waterrebates for a variety of websites dedicated to water conservation.

If you have questions regarding the rebate program you can email the City at waterrebates@lakewoodcity.org or call the Lakewood Department of Water Resources at 562.866.9771, extension 2700. If you have questions regarding permits for installation of new landscaping and/or irrigation please contact the Lakewood Community Development Department at 562.866.9771, extension 2300.

11. I heard you do field checks. What's that?

The turf removal rebate requires a site inspection. The inspection allows staff to verify the proper installation of the water conserving measures included in the project and the square footage of the project area. Lakewood Department of Water Resources staff will call to schedule an appointment to inspect.

12. Are there sample plot plans? Photos?

Yes. Please visit www.lakewoodcity.org/waterrebates for sample plot plans and photos, and additional links to other resources on the internet.

13. Do I need a permit to install any of these water saving devices? What upgrades to my landscaping require a permit?

A plumbing permit is required when changing, adding, altering, repairing, or replacing a sprinkler control valve; and an electrical permit is required when changing, adding, altering, repairing, or replacing a circuit for a time clock for a landscape sprinkler system. A permit is not required when changing, adding, altering, repairing, or replacing a sprinkler head. Projects requiring permits must be inspected by a building inspector from the Lakewood Community Development Department, Building Division. It is your responsibility or your licensed contractor's responsibility to arrange for the inspection. Inspection requests can be made by calling (562) 866-9771, extension 2350.

14. Are there any classes I can take?

The City does not offer any water wise gardening classes at this time, but Los Angeles County and the Water Replenishment District of Southern California do. The City's website www.lakewoodcity.org/waterrebates provides links to these classes.

15. Is the retrofit of existing irrigation mandatory under the City's Water Conservation Ordinance?

No. The Lakewood City Council placed the community in a voluntary water conservation phase in 1991 and it remains at the voluntary stage. The City asks that our water customers voluntarily cut water use by 10 percent, and the community has complied. Since 2008, the city has reduced water use by 10 percent. However, statewide water supply issues can impact Lakewood, and the mandate for a 20 percent per capita reduction in water use by 2020 looms in the future. The City implemented this program to help the community reach the 20 percent by 2020 goal.

16. How much can I really save? Is it really worth the effort?

Water is a precious resource, and the supply to southern California is limited, so any savings will benefit the region, the state and your pocketbook. What you save depends on the type of landscape and irrigation changes you decide to make. The removal of high water using plants, such as grass, reduces water consumption. The accurate placement of water on grass and shrubs will direct where it needs to go and reduce the amount of watering time. Timers that automatically shut off when it rains or senses moisture in the soil will reduce the number of times your irrigation runs.

17. Is there a website with photos and examples of plants and garden designs for how to turn a yard into a water wise garden?

Yes. Please visit www.h2ohouse.com, www.bewaterwise.com or www.lakewoodcity.org/waterrebates for sample plot plans and photos, and additional links to other resources on the Internet.