

TUOLUMNE-STANISLAUS IRWM REGION
TUOLUMNE COUNTY RCD REGIONAL WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Partially funded by California Department of Water Resources Proposition 84 IRWM Drought Grant

The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District's (TCRCD) project is an aggressive and proactive water end-user engagement strategy involving water conservation activities, water use efficiency education and improvements, water demand response/control methods and alternative water source development programs. This project builds on existing water conservation programs that were developed by regional water providers by significantly expanding the scope of conservation efforts, implementing conservation components that are not locally cost effective, and integrating a regional one-on-one approach with individual residents and business owners. The project will provide a suite of program elements that promote high-efficiency technologies and best water conservation practices.

GOAL: The primary goal is to significantly expand and coordinate existing local non-cost effective water conservation education and rebate programs offered by the various water providers, PG&E and others by hiring a full-time Regional Water Conservation Coordinator to work with the various water providers, local jurisdictions, residents, and business owners. The program will use the skills and staff from TCRCD, water purveyors, UC Extension, Tuolumne River Trust and Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency. The Six specific program elements will provide quantifiable, sustainable water savings including: 1) regional water conservation coordination; 2) regional water conservation education and outreach including workshops, info graphics, flyers, PSA's, door hangers and tent cards for restaurants and hotels, bill stuffers, website widgets, multi-media, etc.; 3) a house call program providing free water use evaluations and audits, leak repair, water saving devices and leak detection tablets to DAC and non-DAC households and businesses throughout the region; 4) a coordinated and integrated incentive program including cash rebates for residential/ commercial/industrial users for high-efficiency toilets, urinals, and washers, rain barrel rainwater harvesters, rain gardens, weather-based smart irrigation devices, laundry-to-landscape irrigation systems; and commercial kitchen pre-rinse sprayers; 5) large scale rainwater-to-irrigation program; 6) development of elementary and high school, vacation home, motel, and restaurant water conservation programs. The project will ensure the same story is being told region-wide, the same level of rebates and DAC assistance are available for all within the region, and there is a centralized location residents and business owners can contact regarding water conservation programs. The IRWM region will be a full partner with the DWR/ACWA Save our Water program and the EPA Water Sense program and utilize standardized materials and branding.

DELIVERABLES:

1. Regional Water Conservation website, presentation materials, poster boards, on-line and newspaper articles, brochures, technical papers, radio and television PSA's, landscape design documents for demonstration projects.
2. Development and delivery of a series of water conservation workshops including "how-to" demonstrations of rainwater harvesting, laundry-to-landscape installations and other water saving activities to be held in various locations throughout the entire IRWM region;
3. A locally relevant published version of the "Slow It, Spread It, Sink It" educational materials for household stormwater management developed by Santa Cruz and Southern Sonoma Counties' RCDs;
4. A regional one-stop shop and IRWM Water Conservation Website and Water Conservation Phone Hotline;

5. Various newspaper articles, advertisements, and brochures related to water conservation available to the public and on the website (IRWM region will be a full partner with the DWR/ACWA Save our Water program and the EPA Water Sense program and utilize standardized materials and branding); A regional “storefront” for a water conservation office in downtown Sonora where residents, business owners, and tourists can find detailed conservation information and learn about water conservation projects. Provision of free leak detection tablets, toilet flappers, showerheads, and aerators, as necessary.
6. Provision of on-call free water-wise house calls for residents to include home water-use surveys to identify opportunities for conservation and installation of free showerheads, aerators and other needed water saving fixtures. (DAC households will receive additional financial and installation assistance)
7. Completion of proactively scheduled and water user approved water usage audits for residential, commercial, industrial and government water users with the highest winter to summer seasonal change in water usage and the greatest potential to reduce water consumption immediately, provide for long term cost savings and water use efficiency, improve drought resilience and reduce community drought impact. 100 water usage audits will be completed in the remainder of 2014 and 200 audits will be conducted in 2015. The audits will result in a detailed, prioritized water use and efficiency report listing the variety of irrigation improvements, landscape renovations, greywater and rainwater alternatives, fixtures, process and practice changes that can be implemented on the property to reduce water consumption short and long term. Audit results will be used to prioritize and craft content for educational workshops, outreach materials, and for incentive/rebate funding.
8. Implementation of an aggressive water conservation action incentive and rebate program for residential, commercial, industrial and government water users to fund the installation/completion of a variety of water conservation actions including: (a) rain harvest equipment, rain water storage tanks, barrels, cisterns and associated irrigation systems, (b) greywater reuse systems including region-wide laundry-to-landscape irrigation systems and full greywater plumbing and irrigation systems in approved locations, (c) appliance and fixture upgrades to water efficient (d) turfgrass elimination or reduction, landscape renovations to efficient plantings and groupings, smart irrigation system installation, replacement of spray or flood irrigation with drip, and irrigation system piping, and control/ nozzle upgrades to remedy inefficient systems. Incentive funding will be provided for properties on which a water usage audit reveals immediate, significant benefit in water use reduction and the property owner does not have the capacity or resources to complete the improvements within an appropriate schedule. Reimbursement funding will be provided on a dollar value for lower cost items, and a percentage of total improvement cost for purchases and/or installations of over \$500. A maximum per property reimbursement will be established based on ongoing need and funding available.
9. Provision of free water conservation outreach materials for commercial businesses including door hangers, table cards, signs and placards for every motel room in the region; provision of table tents and water conservation materials for restaurants in the region;
10. Vacation home program designed to provide education, outreach materials, and engagement to vacation homeowners and installation of technology, flow monitoring, and/or seasonal water supply shut-off valves where appropriate.
11. Installation of 2-3 demonstration high efficiency landscapes in prominent community locations such as Mary Laveroni Community Park, Groveland, and installation of 3-4 large scale rainwater-to-landscape projects at shopping centers, government buildings and other locations where irrigation water need is high.