



GO GREEN, AND GET GREEN BACK!

Welcome to **Orange County's Water Wise Lifestyle**, an ongoing series to help you navigate the new normal of California's water resources. Various water districts will be offering important information and tips along with rebates and cost-saving incentives for homeowners and businesses.

BY CATHI DOUGLAS

A host of local and regional rebates are available to savvy consumers who are willing to install and implement water-saving plants, utilities and gadgets. Read on for many ways to save money while keeping your yard green and your home efficient.

Be sure to check the Municipal Water District of Orange County rebate website, www.ocwatersmart.com and your local agency website before making any purchases or starting any projects to ensure you comply with program guidelines. Your local water supplier may also have additional programs or funding, as well.

Find Local Offers

Save water at home with rebates on select water-saving devices. Orange County residents and businesses can participate in the regional SoCal WaterSmart Rebate Program. And local water providers may offer additional rebates, incentives and programs for customers. For a map that shows your provider, visit www.ocwatersmart.com.

Plug That Leak!

The amount of water leaked from U.S. homes could exceed more than 1 trillion gallons per year. That equals the annual water use of Los Angeles, Chicago and Miami combined. Take the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation and do your part to conserve water at www.mywaterpledge.com. For information to determine if you have a leak, see www.smwd.com/your-water/leak-detection.html.



Learn More about the Water Wise Lifestyle at the OC Register's Knowledge Café: ocregister.com/sections/knowledge-café

AGENCY PROFILE: FOUNTAIN VALLEY

Early settlers called the Fountain Valley area "Gospel Swamps," but the name Fountain Valley originates from the area's many artesian wells. Once canals were constructed to drain the land, 1880s pioneers grew sugar beets, beans, barley and wheat, and cattle grazed on open land.

Fountain Valley was incorporated in 1957 and now has about 55,000 residents. Unlike many local communities, Fountain Valley's master plan did not have to play "catch up" with existing developments, so the city is often referred to as Orange County's best-planned community.

The city's water supply is a blend of groundwater from six city wells and one imported water connection originating from Northern California and the Colorado River. Groundwater comes from a natural underground aquifer.

In keeping with its progressive, forward-thinking reputation, Fountain Valley is the only OC city that has retrofitted all of its water meters to an Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI). Smart water technology is bringing those efforts to the next level by regularly monitoring water usage and proactively sharing that data with residents and businesses, enabling the entire city to work together to conserve water and prevent leaks.

Fountain Valley residents and businesses can monitor their own water consumption in real time through the city's new Water Customer Portal, which tracks water consumption data online, and can request email alerts. Simply logon to www.fountainvalley.org/978/Water-Customer-Portal for more information.

Get the Drop on Inside Savings

By switching to a high-efficiency clothes washer, you can use up to 55 percent less water while getting clothes just as clean. Less water means less energy needed for heating water, which can help lower your energy bill, too. Almost 15 percent of the water used inside your home goes toward doing laundry, so high-efficiency savings make sense. Rebates up to \$85 are available on select washers, too.

The largest amount of water used inside your home - 30 percent - goes toward flushing the toilet. But you can replace your old toilets with premium high-efficiency toilets that use just 1.06 gallons or less per flush. Premium high-efficiency toilets use almost 20 percent less water than the WaterSense standard and flush the same amount of waste effectively. Rebates of \$40 per qualifying toilet are available!

Save Time and Money When Watering

Sign up for free sprinkler adjustment email reminders that are customized to your area and get on a watering schedule that can save you time and money while keeping your yard looking spiffy. Sign up at www.csans.net.

Look Outside for Rebates and Incentives

In collaboration with local water agencies, the Municipal Water District of Orange County offers rebates on outdoor water-saving devices. Rebate and incentive levels vary depending upon the location and program:

- Smart Timers, \$80 or more in select areas
- Soil Moisture Sensors, \$80 or more in select areas
- Rotating Nozzles, \$2 or more per nozzle
- Drip Irrigation, up to \$175 per kit
- Rain barrels, \$75 per barrel
- Turf Removal, Check with your water supplier and see www.ocwatersmart.com.



Smart Irrigation Timer

Take control of your sprinkler system with a 'smart' irrigation timer. Smart timers use information about your plants, soil, and weather conditions to give your landscape the right amount of water year-round.



Soil Moisture Sensor Controller

Soil moisture sensor controllers are placed below ground in the root zones of lawns and landscapes to determine when to water. They are available as stand-alone controllers or add-on devices to existing controllers and have been shown to reduce outdoor water use by up to 70 percent without sacrificing the quality or health of your landscape.



Rotating Sprinkler Nozzles

Rotating nozzles can help you reduce harmful water that flows off your landscape and eventually enters the ocean. Using multi-trajectory rotating streams of water, the nozzles water more efficiently and uniformly than traditional sprinkler heads and can reduce your outdoor water use by up to 30 percent.



Rain Barrels

With rain barrels you can capture rain that falls onto your roof and reuse it to water your garden. Plants and microbes prefer rainwater because it is naturally "soft" and free of chlorine, fluoride and other chemicals.



Drip Irrigation

Water your landscape more efficiently while saving water by converting areas irrigated by spray heads to drip irrigation. Rather than spraying wide areas, drip systems utilize point emitters to deliver water to specific locations at or near plant root zones. Water drips slowly from the emitters and as a result, less water is lost to wind and evaporation and weed growth is minimized.



Turf Removal

The Municipal Water District of Orange County, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and your local water agency jointly sponsor the Turf Removal Program. Its goals are to increase water use efficiency and reduce runoff for residential and commercial customers. Regional program funding is not as robust as in past years, so check www.ocwatersmart.com and with your local agency to sign up for a waiting list, or to see if your water supplier offers a local turf rebate.

Orange County's Water Wise Lifestyle page is brought to you weekly by the family of OC water providers, including the cities of Brea, Buena Park, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, La Habra, Newport Beach, Orange, San Clemente, Seal Beach and Tustin, and the East Orange County, El Toro, Irvine Ranch, Santa Margarita, Serrano, South Coast, Trabuco Canyon and Yorba Linda water districts. The Municipal Water District of OC and the OC Stormwater Program are also participating.