



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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POPULAR CASH-FOR-GRASS INCENTIVE RETURNS **Metropolitan's upgraded turf replacement program rolls out this week**

The most popular water-saving rebate in Southern California history is available, again.

Just in time for spring plantings, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California once again is offering \$2 per square foot for every square foot of grass removed from yards and replaced with sustainable landscaping. Consumers can visit bewaterwise.com to review program requirements and apply.

To help spread the word, Metropolitan also is launching a marketing and advertising campaign on radio and billboards throughout its six-county, 5,200-square-mile service area.

"After so much rain this winter, people may be wondering about the continued need to be water efficient," said Metropolitan General Manager Jeffrey Kightlinger.

"The reality is California's long-term trend is toward hotter and drier weather. The turf replacement program will help residents and businesses get paid to make a permanent change to grow beautiful yards more suitable for the changing climate," he added. "And the crowds migrating to see this year's wildflower superbloom is a reminder of just how beautiful and popular California's native plants are."

The last time Metropolitan offered a \$2-per-square-foot incentive was during the drought of 2014 and 2015. Southland residents and businesses flocked in record-setting numbers to bewaterwise.com to apply for the incentives. After awarding about \$340 million in rebates, Metropolitan had to close the program because available funding ran out.

The enormously popular program ultimately spurred the removal of 160 million square feet of grass across Southern California—projected to save 21,600 acre-feet of water per year, enough to serve about 64,000 households annually.

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As part of the new turf replacement program, updated rules adopted by Metropolitan's Board of Directors in February require all eligible projects to have at least three plants for every 100 square feet of area transformed, a stormwater retention feature and the replacement or modification of overhead spray sprinklers. Hardscapes within a transformed area, except for permeable elements, are not allowed.

The outreach and marketing campaign includes multi-lingual 15- and 30-second radio advertisements and traffic report sponsorship, as well as online, mobile and digital ads. About 230 digital billboards at shopping malls, movie theaters and grocery stores across the region also will feature the tagline, "DITCH YOUR GRASS, CLAIM YOUR REBATE."

More information about the turf replacement program and about water-efficient landscaping, as well as other water-saving rebate programs, is available at Metropolitan's online water conservation portal, bewaterwise.com.

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative that, along with its 26 cities and retail suppliers, provide water for nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.