



*The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California*

# NEWS RELEASE

P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • (213) 217-6485 • [www.mwdh2o.com](http://www.mwdh2o.com)

Contact: Bob Muir, (213) 217-6930; (213) 324-5213, mobile

Sept. 24, 2015

## SOUTHLAND WATER-SAVING REBATE NUMBERS DEMONSTRATE THERE'S MORE TO CONSERVATION THAN TURF REMOVAL

**Public response to record drought includes robust interest in other water-saving devices such as high-efficiency toilets, clothes washers, rain barrels**

Replacing lawns with drought-tolerant landscaping has not been the only game in town when it comes to the investments made by Southern California consumers and businesses to save water in response to Gov. Brown's statewide mandate to reduce use by 25 percent in response to the historic drought.

While the unprecedented interest in turf removal captured news headlines, the public's appetite for other water saving devices such as high-efficiency toilets, clothes washers and rain barrels also exploded throughout the Southland, according to numbers released this week by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

A report to a committee of Metropolitan's board showed the district issued \$131 million in conservation rebates in fiscal year 2014-15, which ended on June 30. The one-year total established the highest level of funding for consumer and business rebates ever for the agency, dwarfing the previous fiscal year's \$18 million conservation budget.

The 2014-15 rebates are part of the record \$450 million Metropolitan has budgeted for conservation efforts through the 2015-16 fiscal year, representing the largest program of its kind in the nation.

Residential and commercial rebates for turf removal underscored the public response in Southern California as Metropolitan's financial incentives paid for the removal of 50 million square feet of grass in 2014-15, meeting Gov. Brown's goal for the entire state. Along with the extraordinary turf removal numbers, Metropolitan also issued rebates for 215,000 high-efficiency toilets, 27,000 high-efficiency washing machines and 13,000 rain barrels.

more . . . . .

“These results demonstrate there’s more than one way to conserve,” said Metropolitan General Manager Jeffrey Kightlinger. “Removing turf might have gotten the attention, but it’s the investments in other conservation actions and devices that also serve as the foundation for the water savings we will see in the years and decades to come.”

Although Metropolitan closed its turf rebate program in early July to new applications after available funding had been fully allocated, Kightlinger noted that \$17 million in rebates remain available for water-saving devices, including high-efficiency clothes washers, toilets, weather-based irrigation controllers and rotating sprinkler nozzles.

“At this point, there’s still time remaining and rebates available for consumers and businesses that haven’t had the opportunity to hop on the conservation bandwagon. But they better hurry,” Kightlinger said.

###

*The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving 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.*