



# St. Johns River Water Management District Water Conservation Rebate Program Applicant Handbook



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*The St. Johns River Water Management District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in any of its activities or programs, including any activity or program receiving assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or programs covered by section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. The District has designated the following individual as its Civil Rights Coordinator:*

**Ms. Robin W. Hudson, Director, Office of Human Resources  
Civil Rights Coordinator**  
4049 Reid Street  
P.O. Box 1429  
Palatka, FL 32178-1429  
Phone\*: 386-329-4500 or 800-451-7106  
Fax: 386-329-4801

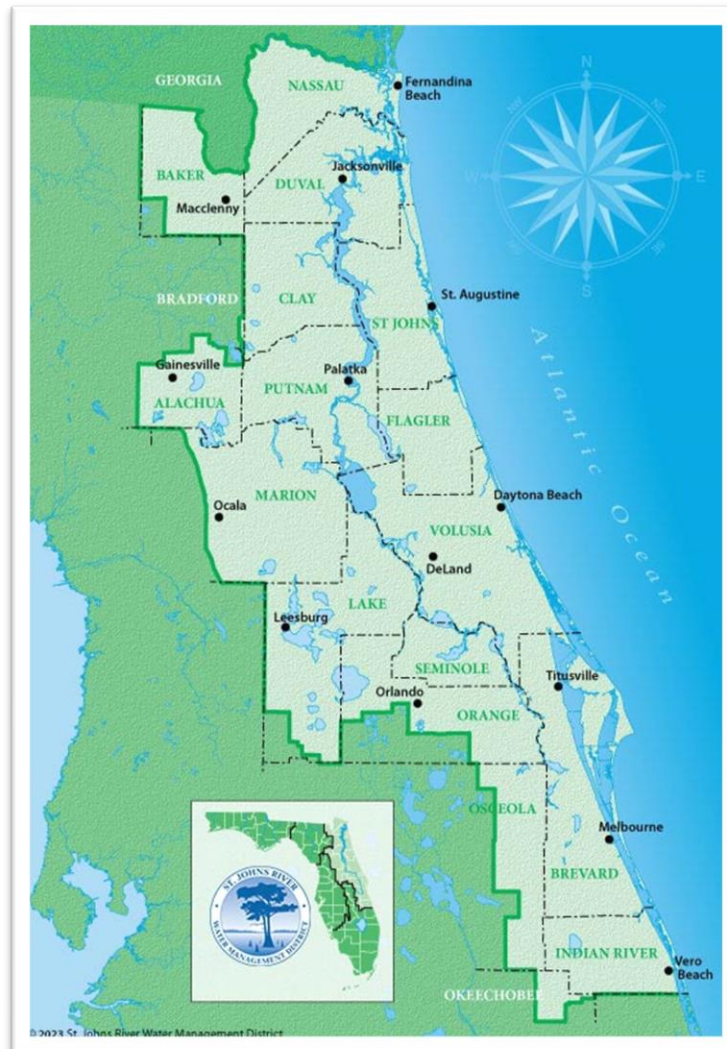
*\* If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1 800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1 800-955-8770 (voice).*

## Introduction

The Water Conservation Rebate Program's purpose is to support eligible water conservation projects for non-agricultural water use through a cost-share rebate. This supports the District's mission to ensure the public's water needs are met while simultaneously protecting water resources. One of the District's strategic goals is to promote and incentivize water conservation. The cost-share is provided as an up to 50% rebate of actual costs with a not-to-exceed maximum amount per item. Applicants are limited to no more than \$10,000 per year. Approved programs are rebated on a "first-come, first-served" basis until program funds are depleted.

This handbook provides information to applicants wishing to participate in the Water Conservation Rebate Program.

Figure 1. Map of the St. Johns River Water Management District



## Program Guidelines

To be eligible to participate in the Water Conservation Rebate Program, the application must meet the following guidelines:

1. The project location must be located within the District's boundary or search your property at: [Map of the St. Johns River Water Management District](#).
2. All participants must submit a pre-qualification application (Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application Form) and be approved by the District before being eligible for the Water Conservation Rebate Program
3. The applicant and project must be in compliance with all District regulatory requirements and municipalities and counties must have a landscape irrigation ordinance that is consistent with the District's model irrigation ordinance.
4. The water source being conserved through the project must be groundwater.
5. Applicants are limited to local governments and public and private water utilities.
6. Applicants should focus efforts on high water-use customers.
7. Project must be completed during the fiscal year of application submittal.
8. Projects currently (open and closed contracts that received funding during the current fiscal year) awarded funding in the same fiscal year from any other District program for items included in this rebate program are not eligible for funding under the Water Conservation Rebate Program.
9. Applicants must consent to the terms of the Water Conservation Rebate Program as set forth in the Applicant Handbook and the Water Conservation Rebate Cost Share Agreement.
10. Within two months of project completion and if available to the applicant, water use data are required to be submitted to the District for the six months before and after installation/completion for each property.

## Rebate Amount (District Cost-Share)

1. The District has established maximum rebate amounts for each eligible item in the table below. The District will reimburse the lesser amount of 50% of the actual cost to implement each item or the maximum rebate amount.
2. The District's maximum contribution per applicant is \$10,000 per fiscal year.
3. Any costs which exceed the program guidelines will be borne by the applicant. The District reimburses for materials and installation costs. No administrative or overhead costs are included in or will be reimbursed by the Water Conservation Rebate Program.
4. Rebates will be paid monthly on a "first-come, first-served" basis until funds are

depleted. Monthly available fund updates will be shared at <https://www.sjrwmd.com/water-conservation/water-conservation-rebate-program/>

5. Rebate payments will be made to the applicant.

## Eligible Water Conservation Items

The District is offering rebates for a variety of outdoor water-saving items. In addition to the hardware components, the necessary labor for installation are eligible expenses. Table 1 identifies conservation items, reimbursable costs, and the maximum amount of rebate for each item.

Table 1. Eligible rebate items.

Conservation Item	Reimbursable Costs* (to be documented on the reimbursement requests)	Maximum Rebate Amount (per item)
1. EPA WaterSense®-labelled smart irrigation controller	Material and installation	\$100
2. Irrigation conversions (high-volume spray to a high-efficiency rotary nozzle or micro irrigation in landscape beds)	Material and installation	\$100
3. Irrigation evaluations and timer modification	Contractor cost per visit	\$75
4. Landscape soil amendments (for new construction)	Material and installation	\$250

**\* Note: required invoice detail for utility or government staff implementation: address for conservation site, material cost (copy of receipt), staff-hour cost with benefits (no indirect cost; system report or timesheet), and vehicle cost (IRS mileage) per visit for work done by an employee of the applicant.**

### Smart Irrigation Controllers

Smart sensors and controllers monitor the weather and other site conditions and adjust the irrigation system to apply the correct amount of water at the appropriate

time. These products are also referred to as weather-based controllers, climatologically based controllers and smart controllers.

A soil moisture-based controller shuts off an irrigation system when the ground is saturated, preventing over-watering. The controller turns the system back on when the soil moisture is at a level requiring irrigation.

For the purposes of this rebate program, applicants must install and use an EPA WaterSense®-labelled product.

### **Irrigation Conversions/Retrofits**

Retrofitting older less-efficient irrigation systems with more-efficient emitter devices can reduce the amount of water used. Emitter devices in the correct location will increase application efficiency and water-saving nozzles apply water precisely and typically use less water than traditional nozzles. This rebate program will allow rebates for sprinkler head nozzles, rotary nozzles, high-efficiency type nozzles and micro-irrigation in landscaped. For this program, use the following guidance: U.S. EPA WaterSense®-labelling specifications at <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/spray-sprinkler-bodies> and <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/spray-sprinkler-nozzles>

### **Irrigation Evaluation and Timer Modifications**

Effective irrigation water savings start with a system evaluation. The first step to reduce water use is to adjust the irrigation controller so that it meets both the needs of each zone and watering restrictions ([www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/#restrictions-summary](http://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/#restrictions-summary)). The second step is to teach the homeowner how to set and reset the controller, how to inspect the system for leaks and how to troubleshoot other system issues. Both steps are required as part of the evaluation. For this program, use the following guidance: <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/sprinkler-spruce-up> and <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/documents/ws-outdoor-landscaping-find-it-flag-it-audit-checklist.pdf>

### **Landscape Soil Amenities for New Construction**

Residential landscape soil amendments are organic materials incorporated into the soil to improve its condition before installing residential turf or gardens. According to research ([Guidance for Amending Urban Soils with Organic Amendments, University of Florida – Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences \(UF IFAS\), 2020](#)), amendments are recognized for their ability to improve soil texture and structure, add nutrient content, adjust pH levels and help with drainage or water retention. Organic matter creates a better environment for turf and plants to grow, particularly in new construction. The amendments reduce both the irrigation requirements and the need for supplemental fertilizer application.

Those applying for rebate funding for residential landscape soil amendments must meet the standards of the US Composting Council’s Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) Program. Application should follow the manufacturer’s recommendations and irrigation should be adjusted to reflect the reduced requirements for establishment. The applicant should include how these will be met in the project description of the rebate program qualification application form.

## Estimated Program Water Savings

Data from UF IFAS and the Water Savings, Analytics and Verification (H<sub>2</sub>O SAV) tool has provided data documenting the water saving from use of the practices utilized in this program based on hundreds of sites utilizing the practices. The range of savings can be seen in Table 2. below.

Table 2. Estimated water saving per conservation measure

Conservation Measure	Average Savings
1. U.S. EPA WaterSense®-labelled smart irrigation controllers	95–100 gallons per day per property
2. Irrigation conversions (high-volume spray to a high-efficiency rotary nozzle)	95–100 gallons per day per property
3. Irrigation evaluations and timer modification	50–155 gallons per day per property
4. Landscape soil amendments (for new construction)	50% less water to establish a landscape

Source: UF IFAS/ H<sub>2</sub>O SAV

## **Application and Rebate Process for Projects**

### **Step 1: Qualification of Applicants and Projects**

This step may be carried out any time after the start of the program year but must be done prior to incurring project costs. Interested applicants may schedule a pre-application meeting with District staff listed on page 10.

- Submit a complete Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application.  
(<https://www.sjrwm.com/static/waterconservation/Qualification-form-WC-Rebate-Program.docx>)
- District staff will notify the applicant when the application was received.
- District staff will contact the applicant with any questions and will verify the eligibility of the applicant and determine whether the project meets the program requirements.

### **Step 2: Project Approval / Issuance of Water Conservation Rebate Cost Share Agreement**

- If approved, District staff will notify the applicant via email whether the project has been qualified for funding. However, qualification does not guarantee funds availability for reimbursement.
- District staff will email the applicant and provide them a secure (encrypted) portal where the applicant will enter their tax ID and register as a vendor.
- District staff will issue a Water Conservation Rebate Cost-share Agreement to the applicant.
- Once the applicant received the issued Agreement, the applicant may proceed with their project.

### **Step 3: Reimbursement through the Rebate Program**

- To apply for rebate payment, the applicant must submit a Request for Rebate Invoice utilizing the form provided in this handbook.  
(<https://www.sjrwm.com/static/waterconservation/Request-for-Rebate-Invoice-Form.docx>)
- For a rebate request to be considered complete, the Request for Rebate Invoice Form and rebate detail spreadsheet  
(<https://www.sjrwm.com/static/waterconservation/WC-Rebate-Cost-Share-Invoice-Request-Data-Form.xlsx> ) must be fully completed and submitted along with all invoices or other appropriate proof of



payment.

- Rebate requests may be submitted on a monthly basis for project work that has been completed and for which vendors have been paid. However, the aggregate amount of reimbursements to an applicant may not exceed \$10,000.
- District staff may verify the item(s) were installed by in-person inspection or other means.
- Rebates will be made on a “first-come, first-served basis” until all Program funds are depleted. If Program funds are available, the District will issue reimbursement within 45 days of a complete rebate request.

### **FY 2023-24 Key Dates**

January 31, 2024	Start of FY 2023-24 program; first day to submit Qualification Application; if qualified, eligible expenses may be incurred after this day.
September 30, 2024	Last day of FY 2023-24 program; last day eligible expenses may be incurred; last day to submit a Request for Rebate Form, Invoice Spreadsheet, and other forms of proof of payment.

## Program Contacts

Primary:

Project Manager

Kraig McLane

Bureau of Water Supply Planning

P.O. Box 1429

Palatka, FL 32178-1429

Cell: 386-937-0522

Email: [Kmclane@sjrwmd.com](mailto:Kmclane@sjrwmd.com)

Alterative:

Technical Information

Gretchen Smith

Bureau of Water Supply Planning

P.O. Box 1429

Palatka, FL 32178-1429

Cell: 386-268-7405

Email: [Gcsmith@sjrwmd.com](mailto:Gcsmith@sjrwmd.com)

**Forms:**

**Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification  
Application Form**

**Request for Rebate Invoice Form**

# Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application Form

<p><b>Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application</b></p> <p><i>The purpose of this application is to confirm the eligibility of an applicant and project and confirm the applicant's consent to the Program terms. Qualification <u>does not</u> guarantee funding availability for reimbursement.</i></p>	
Date:	
County:	
Applicant (entity's legal name):	
Applicant type: <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Local Government</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Private utility</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public utility</b>	
Contact person:	
Mailing Address:	
City:	Zip Code:
Phone (with area code):	
Email Address:	
Project location (if different from above, for projects with multiple locations – please provide a map with a project boundary):	
Consumptive Use Permit # (if applicable):	
Estimated project start date:	
Is this project currently (open contract) awarded funding from any District program? <input type="checkbox"/> <b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b>	
Describe the project below (list which program items will be included in your project and if they will be implemented with contractor or staff resources):	
<p><b>Confirmation Statement:</b></p> <p>On behalf of the applying entity, I confirm the entity's consent to the terms of the Water Conservation Rebate Program as set forth in the Applicant Handbook and the Water Conservation Rebate Cost Share Agreement.</p>	
Participant's Name and Title: _____	
_____	_____
Participant's Signature	Date

# Request for Rebate Invoice Form

<b>Water Conservation Rebate Program – FY 2023–24</b> <b>Request for Rebate Invoice Form</b>		
Project:		
For Month/Year:		
Applicant Name:		
Address:		
City/State/Zip Code		
Rebate Cost Share Agreement Number:		
<b>Conservation Item and maximum amount allowed</b> (for multiple items locations – provide a list of a detailed cost summary using the spreadsheet provided. The Request for Rebate Form and rebate detail spreadsheet must be fully completed and submitted along with all invoices or other appropriate proof of payment)	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
Smart Irrigation Controller (\$100 max rebate per unit)		
Irrigation Conversions (\$100 max rebate per unit)		
Irrigation evaluations and timer modifications (\$75 max rebate per unit)		
Landscape Soil Amendments (\$250 max rebate per unit/property)		
<b>Current Requested Rebate</b>		
<b>Total Prior Rebates</b>		
<b>Total to Date</b> (Not to exceed \$10,000)		
<b>Certification Statement:</b> I certify that the item(s), as indicated on this form has/have been implemented on the property(ies) within the SJRWMD jurisdiction.		
Participant's Name and Title:		
_____ Participant's Signature	_____ Date	
District – approval of accuracy and amount of rebate:		
_____ Authorized Signature	_____ Date	