



Commercial Grass Replacement Rebate Program Guidelines

Application Period December 1-15, 2017

Rebate Per Square Foot	Maximum Rebate	Minimum Square Feet	Maximum Square Feet
\$1.50	\$15,000	1000	10,000
\$0.20*	\$2,000	1000	10,000

*Customers can receive the additional \$0.20 per sq ft for the purchase and delivery of Certified Compost and Composted Mulch used in the project. Details are below in the Mulch guidelines.

Projects that have been started or completed before the rebate application has been approved by the City and a pre-project inspection completed are not eligible to receive a rebate from the City.

What is the value of replacing grass with water wise sustainable landscape?

Grass is one of the thirstiest plants used in our landscapes. The conversion of grass to water-wise plant material and the implementation of a low precipitation rate irrigation system is estimated to save approximately 44 gallons of water per square foot annually.

Rebate Program

The Grass Replacement Rebate Program is intended to encourage a reduction in water use through;
 Conversion of grass to water-wise plant materials,
 Conversion of a high application rate irrigation system to a low application rate irrigation system,
 Amending the soil to retain water and reduce evaporation.

Property owners in the City of San Diego Public Utilities water service area can receive a rebate of up to \$1.70 sq ft* for replacing their water thirsty turf grass with water-wise plant material. Minimum project area is 1,000 sq ft, maximum project area is 10,000 sq ft, and maximum rebate is \$17,000. Funding for a limited number of rebates is provided through the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department, Transportation & Storm Water Departments and/or a State of California Integrated Regional Watershed Management grants. **Applications will be accepted during the application submission period Oct. 10-23, 2017 and will be selected through a lottery process until funding has been exhausted.** This program is subject to change without prior notification.

General Requirements / Information:

1. **Read and understand these Grass Replacement Rebate Program Guidelines.** Please read these requirements prior to submitting your application to the City of San Diego.
2. **Complete the Commercial Grass Replacement [Rebate Application](#)** and submit to the City via email at waterconservationrebates@sandiego.gov or U.S. Mail. Customer must agree to and sign the application agreement. **This is not approval to begin your project.**
3. **Schedule a Pre Project Visit:** Once your application is deemed complete by the City, a scheduler will contact you to set up a pre-project visit. Qualification to participate in the rebate program will be determined at the pre-project visit. If you qualify, you will be given a project start date. Project must be completed within 120 days of the pre-project visit.
4. **Submit plant coverage worksheet within 45 days of project start date:** Submit a plant coverage worksheet to the City (or scan and e-mail it to waterconservationrebates@sandiego.gov) before planting. The City will contact you once the plant list has been approved.
5. **Submit the IRS Tax Form W-9** by postal mail to the Water Conservation Program. Please consult with a tax advisor if you have questions regarding any potential tax implications of your rebate.
6. **Schedule a Post Project Visit:** Notify the City of project completion at (619) 533-6661 to schedule your post project visit.
7. **Submit qualifying receipts**, invoices with proof of payment, and supporting documentation to the waterconservation@sandiego.gov. Water Conservation Program 525 B St Suite 300 San Diego, CA 92101

Detailed Program Parameters and Requirements

- **Qualifying Grass To Be Replaced:**
 - ✓ Grass can be living, dead or dormant (brown), but must be apparent that the area had been grass.
 - ✓ Project area (area where grass will be removed) must be defined and quantified. Dirt lots or planter areas with grass sporadically growing do not qualify.
- **Irrigation Requirements:** Conversion of traditional “high application rate” irrigation system to a “low application rate” irrigation system such as micro-irrigation system and/or industry recognized high efficiency spray nozzles.
 - ✓ The newly converted project area must be on a separate irrigation valve from any remaining grass.
 - ✓ All irrigation systems must have a backflow prevention device. Customer must provide evidence of a backflow prevention device for all converted valves at the time of the post-project inspection. Some sites may have pre-existing backflow devices that will qualify.
 - ✓ A filter is required for each valve controlling micro-irrigation system, or at each individual head that is retrofitted with a micro-irrigation emitter (see manufacturer’s specifications).
 - ✓ Pressure regulators are required for micro / high efficient irrigation systems. Either a pressure regulator upstream of the emitter, or heads with built in regulators are acceptable (see manufacturer’s specifications).
- **Mulch Requirement** - Mulch and compost retain water in the soil, reduce evaporation and inhibit weed growth as well as add beneficial organic matter to the soil.
 - ✓ **3” of natural mulch** must be spread in all areas except hardscaped areas. Project area(s) must be permeable to air and water so as to reduce storm water run-off. Examples of qualifying permeable surfaces include rock, mulch, decomposed granite, gravel, and sand. Flagstones and other stepping-stones are acceptable as long as they are not mortared (cemented in).

* Customers can receive an additional \$0.20 per sq ft for the purchase and delivery of Certified Compost and Composted Mulch used in the project, which can be obtained from the [City of San Diego Miramar Greenery](#).

- ✓ 1" of **Certified Compost** must be spread over all exposed soil.
- ✓ 3" of **Composted Mulch** must be spread in all areas except hardscaped areas and where ground cover will grow. See [Cubic Yard Calculator](#)

- **Plant Requirement**

- ✓ [Water-wise plants](#) that are planted must cover **at least 50%** of the project site when fully mature and must have moderate, low, or very-low-water use requirements.
- ✓ New trees that are 15 gallons or larger will be counted as 50 sq ft of the plant coverage requirement.
- ✓ Invasive plants are not eligible. Refer to the [California Invasive Plant Council](#) website for a list of invasive plants or the [San Diego County Invasive Ornamental Plant Guide](#).

Other Important Program Information

- ✓ Applicant's water account must be in good standing.
- ✓ Grass replacement project site must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years or for the duration of ownership of the property, whichever is the shortest. Failure to meet this requirement may require the customer to refund all or portion of the rebate to the city.
- ✓ Installing artificial turf is **not allowed** in the project area. Project square footage including artificial turf will be deducted.
- ✓ Photos of the project site may be taken by city staff to illustrate transitions from high water using landscapes to water efficient landscapes.
- ✓ Estimated rebate shown on the Rebate Application is based on information entered by the customer. Actual final rebate amount will be determined by supporting documents provided. Rebate will be the lower of the following: Total eligible costs for the project or the maximum dollar amount based on actual square footage.
- ✓ Make sure you measure carefully prior to submitting your application. Funds reserved will be based on square footage information entered by the customer on the Rebate Application. Project square footage may be decreased at the pre-project inspection based on a City verified measurement and depending on funding availability.

What does not qualify for a rebate?

- Projects that have been started or completed before a pre-project inspection has been conducted by the City
- Parkway (sidewalk strips).
- Installation of vegetable gardens where grass once was.
- Water features and fountains.
- Properties that use recycled water for irrigation.
- Installation of artificial turf where grass once was.
- High water use plants as classified by [WUCOLS](#), the plant label, or other plant reference source.
- Exposed soil surfaces (exceptions made to accommodate specific garden design motifs).
- Impermeable surfaces such as concrete or asphalt that does not allow water to permeate into the ground directly under that surface.
- Planting of invasive species. For a list of invasive species go to the [California Invasive Plant Council](#) website or the [San Diego County Invasive Ornamental Plant Guide](#).
- Expenses associated with fences, retaining walls, tools, lighting, outdoor/garden furniture, fountains and decorative items.
- Taxes or tariffs associated with purchase of rebate-related device/product or work performed.
- Project sites that are not part of the City of San Diego water service area.
- Rubber Mulch is not allowed.

Documentation / Invoice Requirements

- **Original Paid receipts and/or invoices** must include transaction date(s), name and telephone number of the service provider, and payment method. To determine paid invoice/receipt authenticity, the City may request additional payment method documentation such as copies of canceled checks and/or credit card records. The City may also contact the landscaper/contractor directly to verify project costs and payment methods used. [Invoice Spreadsheet](#)
- **Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and Certification** Submit [Form W-9](#) after approval to start the project in order to be paid for participation in the Residential Grass Replacement Rebate Program. Customer will not receive a rebate check after project completion until the FormW-9 has been received by the City. Please consult with a tax advisor if you have questions regarding any potential tax implications of your rebate.
- **Rebate check** will be sent to the customer of record 8-10 weeks after post-project visit is successfully completed and the supporting documentation is deemed correct and complete by the City.

If you have questions after reading these guidelines, please call **(619) 533-4126** or e-mail waterconservationrebates@sandiego.gov.

Mail correspondence:

Water Conservation Program
525 B St Suite 300
San Diego, CA 92101

Please visit SoCalWaterSmart.com or bewaterwise.com to determine eligibility for additional rebates and to obtain more information on water conservation related issues.

Site changes made related to rebate program must comply with all applicable laws, codes, policies, covenants, conditions, and restrictions.