

look for



2020 WaterSense

# Excellence Award Winners Make Water Savings Possible

WaterSense and its more than 2,000 utility, manufacturer, retail, builder, and other organizational partners promote water-efficient products, homes, and programs. Since 2006, WaterSense partners have made it possible for consumers and businesses to save more than 4.4 trillion gallons of water. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to recognize 13 WaterSense Excellence Award winners for helping to advance specific aspects of the WaterSense program in 2019.

## EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### The City of Allen (Texas)



The City of Allen earned its second WaterSense Excellence Award for Education and Outreach, educating residents on many different WaterSense campaigns including Fix a Leak Week, Your Better Bathroom, Sprinkler Spruce-Up, and Shower Better. The City promoted outdoor water efficiency and how easy it is to find irrigation professionals certified by a WaterSense labeled program in their area. Through the Block Leader program, 27 resident volunteers “adopted” over 1,000 homes and distributed door hangers to educate residents about WaterSense labeled products and tips to save water outdoors. The City of Allen’s Sustainable Landscape Series featured eight lectures on topics including landscape design and sprinkler repair that reached nearly 600 attendees. The City also worked with the local library to promote WaterSense campaigns and distribute educational materials to visitors. For Fix a Leak Week, the City handed out leak detective activity pages, worksheets, and bookmarks to all fifth graders in Allen Independent Schools. Additionally, the City of Allen’s H2Ome Improvement Rebate program provided incentives for more than 600 WaterSense labeled toilets and 300 WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers in 2019.

### Hilton Head (South Carolina) Public Service District

Hilton Head Public Service District (PSD) won its first WaterSense Award for Excellence in Education and Outreach. Hilton Head PSD promoted WaterSense campaigns such as Fix a Leak Week and Shower Better all year long on social media and in their e-newsletter, *The Liquid Letter*, in 2019; it also celebrated Hug a Plumber Day with water conservation messaging. Sprinkler Spruce-Up provided a great opportunity to educate residents about the importance of smart irrigation. The PSD used WaterSense promotional materials to remind its residential and commercial customers about a local law that limits landscape irrigation and requires rain sensors on irrigation systems. The PSD also partnered with Clemson University’s Cooperative Extension’s “Carolina Yards” program that promotes water-efficient and sustainable landscape practices, including the use of South Carolina native plants.



## Placer County (California) Water Agency

Placer County Water Agency embraced water conservation campaigns in 2019, winning its first WaterSense Excellence Award in Education and Outreach. During Fix a Leak Week, Placer County partnered with a local high school to hold a mascot race, covered by the local news, between the high school's Golden Eagle mascot and the Les Leaky character to promote the importance of finding and chasing down leaks. The Agency also partnered with local Eagle Scout candidates to turn a fire station's yard into a fire-resistant, water-wise landscape of native plants. During summer, residents were encouraged through social media to "Water With the Weather" by installing WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers. The Agency displayed smart landscaping materials in local nurseries and irrigation supply stores during its "Lay the Groundwork for Water Savings" campaign and gave away nearly 400 yards of mulch to over 300 customers during its Mulch Mayhem event.



Fix a Leak Week race mascots.

## EXCELLENCE IN OUTREACH AND PROMOTING LABELED PRODUCTS

### City of Durham (North Carolina) Water Management



City of Durham Water Management undertook a variety of efforts in two different areas to achieve an Excellence Award in Outreach and Promoting Labeled Products. The City's "Where's Wayne Wednesday" social media contest awarded WaterSense labeled showerheads and aerators to customers who correctly guessed their mascot's location in a posted image. Their five-part, "Wasting Wayne" miniseries on YouTube during Fix a Leak Week reached nearly 40,000 users on Facebook and Twitter, and the "Inside Look" show on a local television affiliate encouraged finding leaks and replacing fixtures with WaterSense labeled products to an audience of over 59,000 viewers. Durham Water Management also held its annual Conservation Clinic with The Home Depot and leveraged local Creek Week events, including Canines for Clean Water, to promote Fix a Leak Week. By the end of 2019, the City had issued 609 WaterSense labeled toilet rebates and distributed 337 WaterSense labeled showerheads during its water use assessments. Water efficiency kits, including showerheads and aerators, were also made available to residents to purchase for \$3.

### Cobb County (Georgia) Water System

Cobb County Water System did double duty last year to win an Excellence Award in Outreach and Promoting Labeled Products. As Cobb County partnered with Lowe's Home Improvement and The Home Depot to promote its WaterSense labeled toilet rebate program, county staff visited the stores to update materials and educate sales staff about WaterSense, resulting in 862 residential and 305 commercial toilet rebates in 2019. To promote Fix a Leak Week, Cobb County distributed WaterSense labeled aerators and leak detection tablets at the library and a local senior center. The utility also attended a number of community events, including several farmers markets and local festivals. In May, Cobb County promoted Sprinkler Spruce-Up and gave residents flags labeled "Inspect, Direct, Connect" with instructions on how to assess and repair their landscape irrigation systems. The County hosted a lobby display to celebrate Better Bathrooms Month in October and distributed WaterSense labeled showerheads and aerators to customers. The

"The WaterSense program helps our customers easily identify and purchase efficient and high-performing water-saving products. Encouraging our customers to purchase these products is an important component of our water efficiency efforts in Cobb County. Our partnership with WaterSense provides benefits for both Cobb County citizens and our water resources."

Judy Jones, Agency Director, Cobb County Water System

utility also partnered with a local electricity provider on an Energy and Home Water Makeover project to replace old appliances and fixtures with WaterSense labeled models for a deserving family.

### EXCELLENCE IN OUTREACH AND TRAINING

#### The Toro Company



The Toro Company has continued its tradition of promoting WaterSense and water efficiency, winning another Excellence in Outreach and Training Award for its work in 2019. Throughout the year, Toro showcased its WaterSense labeled products at 35 home expos and trade shows, reaching several thousand homeowners and industry professionals. Toro conducted several training sessions in a variety of locations to educate attendees on water management trends, share best practices, demonstrate WaterSense labeled irrigation products, and provide hands-on product experience.

Toro once again sponsored the Irrigation Association's E3 Program that provides scholarships to professional irrigation students; the program awarded students a record number of scholarships last year. The Toro Company also continued its sponsorship and production of the weekly WaterZone radio program focused on outdoor water efficiency best practices and products. Since the show has been available on iHeart Radio, it now has up to 19,000 listeners per month!

### EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING LABELED PRODUCTS

#### City of Flagstaff (Arizona) Water Conservation Program

The City of Flagstaff Water Conservation Program won its first WaterSense Excellence Award for Promoting Labeled Products, thanks to a concerted effort to get residents and businesses to replace their old plumbing fixtures with more efficient models. The City offered rebates to both businesses and homeowners to encourage them to install WaterSense labeled toilets, showerheads, and faucet aerators. Nine businesses took advantage of the rebates and replaced over 500 toilets, 1,000 showerheads, and 3,200 aerators with WaterSense labeled models. Through its commercial rebate program, the City formed a relationship with one of the largest property management companies in Flagstaff and helped them retrofit outdated apartments with thousands of WaterSense labeled plumbing fixtures. To help businesses and homes identify fixtures they could upgrade to WaterSense labeled products, the City offered free water consultations and gave customers free faucet aerators and showerheads, in addition to over 100 residential rebates. In 2019, the City of Flagstaff also held 28 WaterSense-related events, which provided free labeled product giveaways and incentives for retrofits.



**WATER RESOURCES  
& CONSERVATION**

#### Municipal Water District of Orange County (California)

“With the help of WaterSense, we take an active role in educating the public about being efficient with their water use and giving them the tools and incentives to do so. MWDOC relies on WaterSense product testing and labeling for rebate programs and incentives; an invaluable service that is woven throughout MWDOC Water Use Efficiency Program fabric.”

Sat Tamaribuchi, MWDOC Board President

The Municipal Water District of Orange County, California (MWDOC) earned its second WaterSense Excellence Award for Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products in three different consumer-based rebate programs. MWDOC's Disadvantaged Communities Multi-Family High Efficiency Toilet Program provided property owners with a \$200 rebate per toilet for replacing toilets that used over 3.5 gallons of water per flush with a WaterSense labeled model. In 2019, MWDOC helped property owners replace 1,125 toilets in local apartments through this program. MWDOC also provided homeowners, businesses, and public agencies with rebates for over 7,000 WaterSense labeled toilets and urinals, and more than 2,500 WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers. MWDOC promoted rebates for these devices through bill inserts and social media posts. To assess the effectiveness of WaterSense labeled controllers,

MWDOC has conducted statistical water savings evaluations using participant water use data from its smart timer rebate program (before and after retrofit and comparison to the control group). The most recent study found that residential customers who installed WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers reduced household water use by an average of 50 gallons per day or 11 percent of total residential use.

### Sonoma-Marin (California) Saving Water Partnership



The Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership in California has received its third WaterSense Excellence Award, this time for Excellence in Promoting Labeled Products. The Partnership had WaterSense on full display at its exhibit at the 2019 Sonoma County Fair. Sonoma-Marin's interactive booth featured water-saving fixtures in a mock home. Signage throughout the booth showed visitors how much water they could save by switching to WaterSense labeled toilets, faucet aerators, and showerheads. The booth even had a working WaterSense labeled showerhead so visitors could actually see how it compared to a traditional model. In an effort to help people save water while at work, the Partnership created a series of bathroom door fliers with seasonal water conservation tips

from WaterSense campaigns such as Fix a Leak Week and Sprinkler Spruce-Up in a pilot effort that reached more than 200 employees.

### SUEZ North America

SUEZ North America - New York won its first WaterSense Excellence Award for Promoting Labeled Products, thanks to SUEZ New York's consumer and commercial outreach and rebate programs in Rockland and Orange counties. In 2019, the water service company designed a booklet for commercial customers that highlighted the benefits of WaterSense labeled fixtures and offered rebates on labeled flushometer valve toilets, as well as high-efficiency pre-rinse spray valves for kitchens. SUEZ New York is committed to connecting with consumers in the community by promoting WaterSense on local radio shows and through their sponsorship of a minor league baseball team, the New York Boulders. During every local game, they hit the ball out of the park by airing a commercial about WaterSense labeled fixtures. Residential and multifamily customers can also get rebates from SUEZ New York on WaterSense labeled toilets, showerheads, and smart irrigation controllers; the company used a variety of creative advertising approaches throughout 2019 to promote them to consumers. Notably, in 2019 they debuted their conservation character "Bailey the Beaver," who is not only nature's engineer of the waterways, but a great team player at events reminding SUEZ customers of all ages to save water!



Bailey the Beaver mascot.

## EXCELLENCE IN MULTIFAMILY OUTREACH AND WATER SCORE IMPROVEMENT

### Santa Clarita Valley (California)



Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency won its first WaterSense Excellence Award, thanks to its efforts reaching out to multifamily buildings to improve their EPA Water Score. SCV Water used the EPA Water Score tool to collect water use data for nearly 80 percent of the multifamily complexes in the valley. Based on the EPA Water Score it generated for each complex, SCV Water targeted three properties that could achieve the most water-saving improvements and enlisted property management as partners. Contractors then conducted water efficiency check-ups, inspecting toilets for leaks and installing 1,800 showerheads and 2,600 aerators in the units' bathrooms and kitchens. Each resident received a card describing the

WaterSense labeled products and water-saving tips, and nearly 3,000 toilets were replaced in the first phase of the program, along with leak repairs. This initial effort saves an estimated 55 million gallons of water per year, and SCV Water planned to expand the program to other properties.

## EXCELLENCE IN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM GROWTH

### G3, Green Gardens Group of Los Angeles (California)



G3LA—also known as G3, Green Gardens Group—of Los Angeles won a WaterSense Excellence Award in Certification Program Growth as they continued to make training and certification more accessible to irrigation professionals. Attendees at G3’s professional training classes doubled between 2018 and 2019; over 90 students attended G3 trainings and 38 became certified Watershed Wise Landscape Professionals. The organization

formed partnerships with municipalities, water agencies, and stormwater departments to expand its reach within and outside its California community. These partnerships allowed G3 to offer trainings at reasonable rates and promote certified professionals to property owners. G3 encouraged one of its partners, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, to take a watershed approach to landscaping, which increased the need for certified irrigation auditors with demonstrated knowledge of water efficiency and landscaping best practices.

## EXCELLENCE IN BUILDER SUPPORT

### Energy Inspectors Corporation

A six-time WaterSense Award Winner, Energy Inspectors Corporation has again won a WaterSense Award for Excellence in Builder Support for making it possible for WaterSense builder partners to earn the WaterSense label for homes in Arizona, Nevada, and California. To help home builders meet WaterSense criteria, Energy Inspectors provides analyses showing what home features they may need to change to meet the WaterSense specification for homes. Energy Inspectors gets involved early in the planning process with builders, helping implement water-efficient designs into the initial home construction. In 2019, Energy Inspectors helped over 130 homes earn the WaterSense label in California alone, adding to the hundreds already certified by Energy Inspectors in multiple states. This year, Energy Inspectors supported first-time Partner of the Year Award winner Fulton Homes by certifying the builder’s first WaterSense labeled home. And a partnership of home builders and vendors completed a new concept home design that was certified net-zero-energy and WaterSense labeled; the home was shown to 65,000 attendees at the 2020 International Builders Show in Las Vegas, thanks to Energy Inspectors’ services.



**ENERGY INSPECTORS®**

## Learn More

WaterSense congratulates all of the 2020 Excellence Award winners. For more information and to learn about all the benefits of partnership, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).