

SAVING WATER TOGETHER FOR



YEARS

WaterSense Description and Mission



Launched in 2006, WaterSense® is a voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that is both a label for water-efficient products and a resource for helping consumers and businesses conserve water. The WaterSense label makes it easy to find water-efficient products, new homes, and programs that help people save water, energy, and money on their utility bills.

In October 2018, Congress passed the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018 to improve drinking water and water quality. As part of its commitment to improving water infrastructure, it included the formal authorization of the WaterSense program.

WaterSense aims to transform the marketplace for products that use water and promote a nationwide ethic of water efficiency to illustrate the value of water and the importance of saving water for future generations. Under WaterSense's vision, all Americans will understand the importance of water efficiency and take actions to reduce their water use—in their homes, outdoors, and at work.

WaterSense Partners Make it Possible

A great deal of the program's success is due to the more than 2,100 partners that produce and promote WaterSense labeled products, homes, and programs. [WaterSense partners](#) represent public and private utilities; state, federal, and local governments; non-profit organizations; manufacturers; retailers and distributors; builders; professional certifying organizations; and other organizations with the goal of saving water. To promote WaterSense's campaigns such as Fix a Leak Week, partners host online webinars or workshops to show residents how to find and fix household leaks. Others organize running races to promote water savings. Some reach out to younger audiences with contests, festivals, characters, and events. Manufacturer partners educated contractors on WaterSense labeled products in advertising, trade shows, and even on the radio!



Irvine Ranch Water District (California)



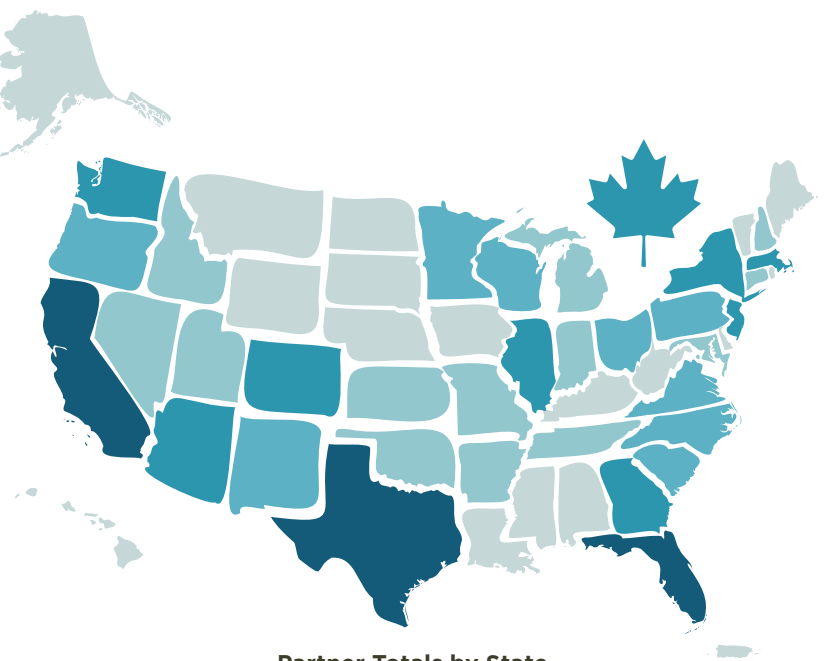
City of Surprise (Arizona)



The Toro Company



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District



Partner Totals by State



WaterSense Labeled Product Search Tool and Rebate Finder

To connect more consumers with WaterSense labeled products, the program provides a Product Search Tool and Rebate Finder on the WaterSense website. Originally created in 2007 and 2009, respectively, the [Product Search Tool](#) and [Rebate Finder](#) got a new look in 2019. Consumers can use the improved Rebate Finder to find WaterSense partners in their area that offer incentives for purchasing water-efficient indoor and outdoor fixtures. In 2020, the tool included 285 different rebates; the most popular incentive programs are for WaterSense labeled toilets and irrigation controllers. With over 36,000 product models of toilets, showerheads, faucets, urinals, controllers, and sprinkler bodies available in a wide variety of styles and prices, consumers and businesses can search for products that have been independently certified to earn the WaterSense label. More than 257,000 searches were conducted in 2020, with the most popular searches for toilets (112,711) and controllers (64,586), followed by faucets (30,546) and showerheads (29,820).

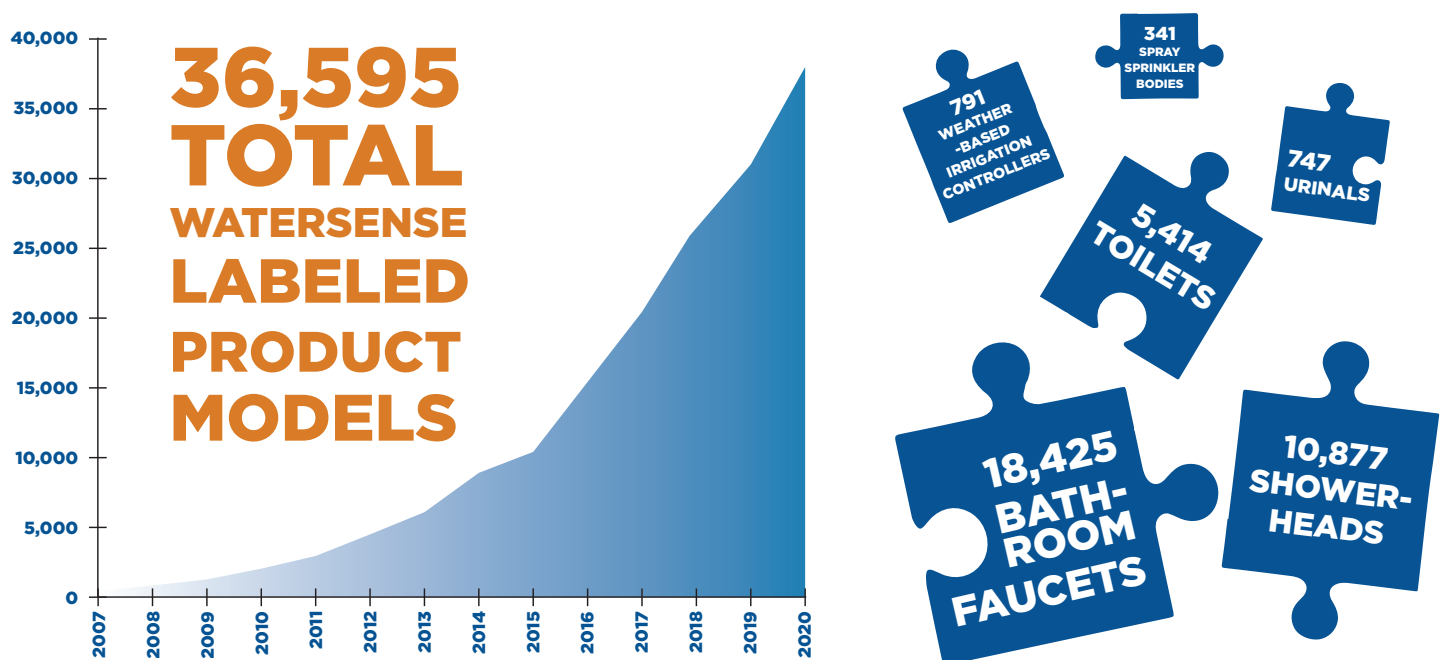


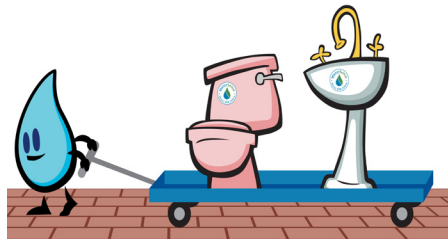
Review of Product Specifications

The 2018 AWIA required that EPA review existing WaterSense product specifications for tank-type toilets, flushing urinals, bathroom faucets, showerheads, and irrigation controllers for potential improvements to water efficiency and/or product performance. EPA conducted a review in 2019, including public meetings, webinars on the specifications, and a public comment period. In 2020, EPA released a notice that explained its decision that it would not make updates or changes to those WaterSense product specifications. The program will continue to review the efficacy and effectiveness of its product specifications to determine if revisions are appropriate.

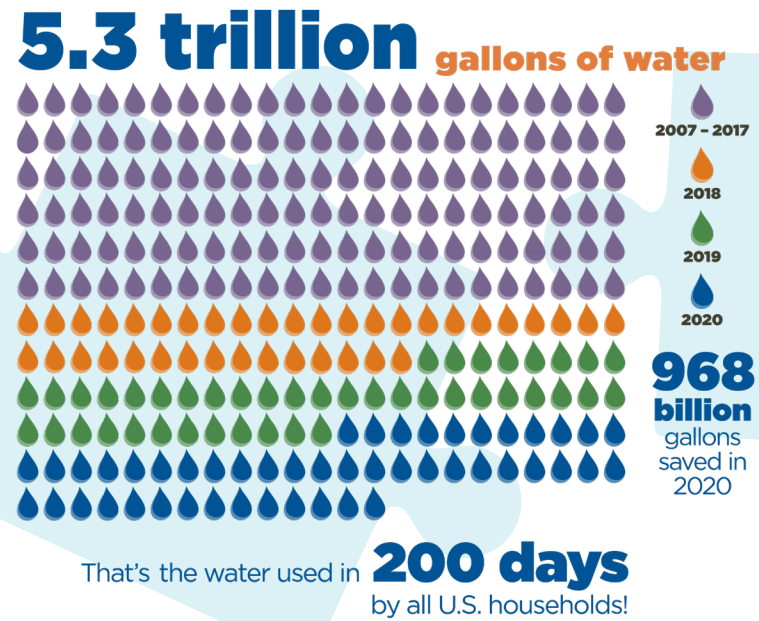
New Product: Soil Moisture-Based Irrigation Controllers

In 2020, EPA completed the public input process to add a new product to its suite of WaterSense labeled landscape irrigation products. The final [WaterSense Specification for Soil Moisture-Based Irrigation Control Technologies](#) was released in February 2021. Also known as soil moisture sensors (SMSs), these technologies detect the amount of moisture in the ground beneath the landscape and override scheduled irrigation when plants don't need water. EPA estimates that replacing a clock-based controller with a WaterSense labeled SMS will save an average home with an automatic landscape irrigation system more than 15,000 gallons of water annually. WaterSense labeled SMSs or weather-based irrigation controllers can be paired with WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler bodies to save even more water outdoors.



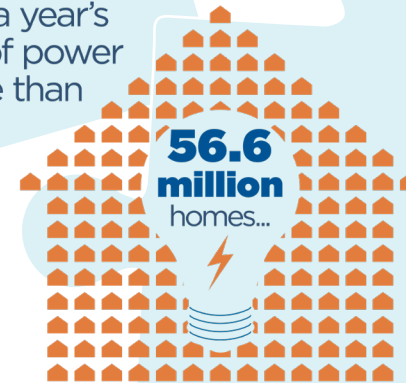


Since 2006, WaterSense labeled products have saved:



\$108 billion in **water** and **energy bills**

The amount of energy needed to heat, pump, and treat water by **603 billion kilowatt hours**, enough to supply a year's worth of power to more than

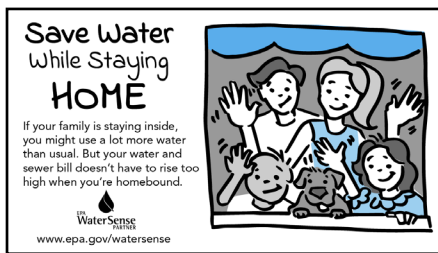


242 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions...
...the equivalent of planting **4 billion trees**...



Partners Find Creative Ways to Promote Savings

Due to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, most WaterSense partners could not hold in-person events, school visits, outreach, or inspections during 2020. Although they missed face-to-face interaction with their customers, many partners found creative ways to promote water savings remotely. For example, Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, packaged its water festival in a box and delivered conservation ideas and tools to local kids. Cobb County, Georgia, held its rain barrel workshop outdoors, establishing six feet of distance between each participant or family.



In December 2020, WaterSense held a series of roundtables to learn how partners pivoted on outreach, education, audit, and incentive programs to accommodate pandemic requirements. Partners shared their successes, from virtual 5k races to online leak detection workshops, and WaterSense used their input to create

Remote Possibilities, a document partners can use to help plan future outreach.

Since many families used more water while working and learning from home, WaterSense created several new tools to promote saving water at home, including social media posts, a flier, and a coloring book for kids, to encourage consumers to conserve water. These resources include simple actions people can do around the home, like turning off the tap while brushing their teeth and only running full loads of laundry, to save water every day.



New Addition: WaterSense Labeled Home Program Version 2.0



In addition to labeling products, the WaterSense label can be earned for [water-efficient homes](#). To make the WaterSense home certification process easier and more flexible for home builders, EPA completed work in 2020 to release the *WaterSense Specification for Homes, Version 2.0* in early 2021. The updated specification includes requirements to install WaterSense labeled plumbing fixtures and be at least 30 percent more water-efficient than a home with characteristics typical of new construction as

determined by a Home Certification Organization (HCO). As part of the new specification, EPA has approved both the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) and Home Innovation Research Labs as HCOs capable of certifying WaterSense labeled homes.

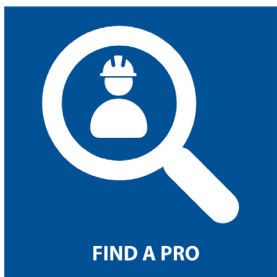
In anticipation of the release of the WaterSense Labeled Homes Program Version 2, RESNET assisted WaterSense in conducting a pilot program to evaluate the effectiveness of the draft Version 2 updated program requirements and criteria. In November 2020, WaterSense builder partner KB Home was awarded the first certification under the pilot program for a home built in Henderson, Nevada. The pilot program provided valuable feedback for EPA and confirmed that Version 2 is effective for meeting EPA's goals for the home certification marketplace.

Water Score for Multifamily Housing

To help multifamily building owners and tenants save water, WaterSense created the [EPA Water Score](#) for multifamily homes. The score, which is generated by the ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® tool, is a 1-to-100 rating of how a building uses water compared to similar buildings across the United States. Once the score is determined, EPA has resources such as worksheets and guides to help owners make changes or upgrades to their properties to save water, energy, and operating costs.

Improving Outdoor Water Efficiency

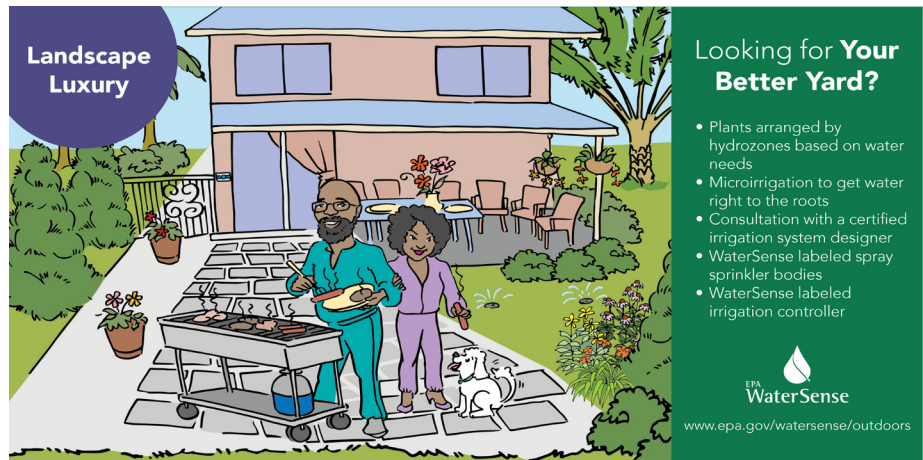
As more people stayed home in 2020, they spent more time [outdoors](#)—and saw how much water their irrigation systems use! For do-it-yourselfers, EPA published mini-reports on both WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler bodies and weather-based irrigation controllers to help customers understand the benefits of installing those fixtures. The program also developed a simple checklist to help homeowners walk through their landscape and look for problem areas that could use some attention. Because landscape choices also can influence water use, WaterSense developed new social media tools to help partners promote the use of mulch and drought-tolerant planting, and a new turfgrass page on the WaterSense website to help consumers make smart lawn management decisions.



To help municipalities learn more about WaterSense labeled products and other irrigation system upgrades, in 2020 WaterSense published a case study highlighting a project in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where upgrading the irrigation systems in median strips saved water and money. In early 2021, WaterSense completed a mini-report on WaterSense labeled soil moisture sensors for do-it-yourselfers and professionals to learn how to install this technology. For those who prefer to hire contractors to help them conserve outdoors, the [Find a Pro](#) tool on the WaterSense website helps people find irrigation professionals certified by a WaterSense labeled program focused on water efficiency.

Landscapes Match Lifestyles in the Your Better Yard Campaign

As part of the effort to increase outdoor water savings, WaterSense created the new Your Better Yard campaign in 2020. Your Better Yard is intended to help homeowners enhance their landscapes with water-saving techniques and technologies that fit their lifestyles and yard type. Homeowners can make their yards more attractive and water-efficient by reviewing landscaping and watering tips associated with several different landscape lifestyles. From Backyard Beauty to Low-Maintenance Living, Your Better Yard has something for almost every landscape.



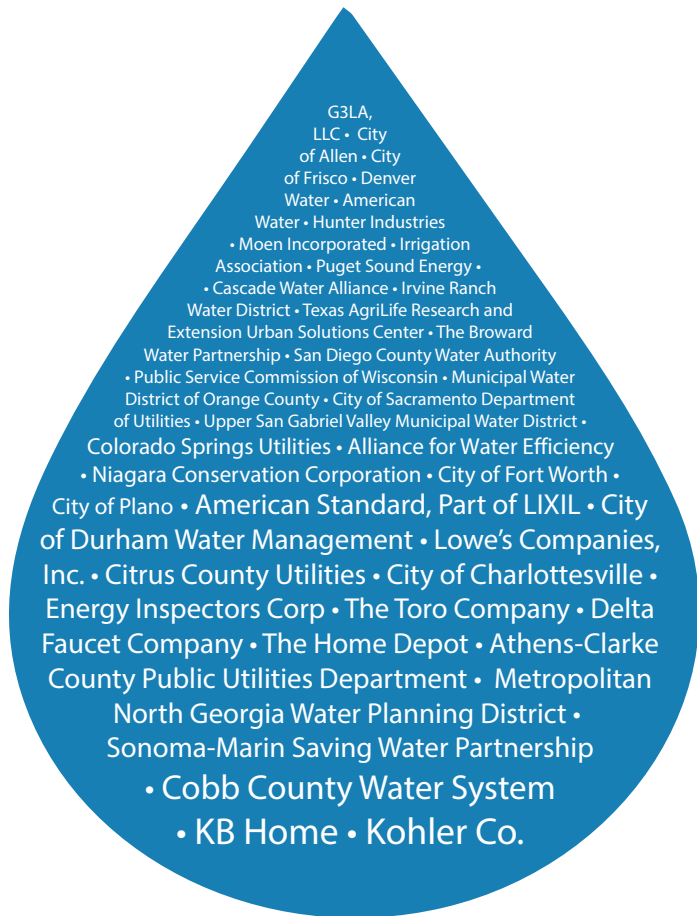
Webinars Made Water Efficiency Education Virtually Easy

Online education was a popular way to share information in 2020. WaterSense continued collaborating with its partner Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) to offer a series of free public webinars on a variety of outdoor water topics. Experts discussed the benefits of soil moisture sensors, plant choices, soil amendments, irrigation tips for a healthy landscape, and landscape transformations during three webinars that 400 people attended in 2020. Recordings are available on the [WaterSense website](#).

To help commercial and multifamily building owners and managers reduce water and energy use, WaterSense also held a webinar series in partnership with EPA's ENERGY STAR program. More than 800 people attended webinars covering topics like controlling water waste, the EPA Water Score for Multifamily Buildings, and how to design and maintain water-smart attractive, healthy commercial landscapes.



The WaterSense Partner of Year and Excellence Awards launched in 2008 to recognize partners who have gone above and beyond in supporting WaterSense and contributing to the program's success by enhancing the market for water-efficient products, practices, and services. Since its beginning, WaterSense has recognized 68 organizations for their tremendous efforts in reducing water use. Over the years, the Awards program has undergone changes to diversify the sectors represented; in 2013, WaterSense added the Sustained Excellence Award for organizations that have consistently won a Partner of the Year Award at least four times.



2020 Winners

Sustained Excellence Award Winners: Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department, Citrus County Utilities, City of Charlottesville, City of Plano, Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, Kohler Co., Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership, KB Home

Partners of the Year: Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power, Irvine Ranch Water District, City of Sacramento Department of Utilities, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, Orange County Utilities, City of Aspen, Fulton Homes

Excellence Award Winners: City of Allen, City of Durham Water Management, City of Flagstaff, Cobb County Water System, Energy Inspectors Corporation, G3LA, LLC, Hilton Head Public Service District (PSD), Municipal Water District of Orange County, Placer County Water Agency, SCV Water (Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency), SUEZ North America, The Toro Company

Each of these partners has won at least two awards; some of the ones in larger text have won as many as 9 or 10!

