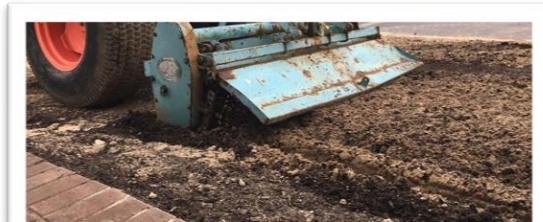
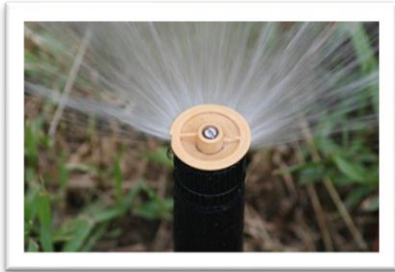




St. Johns River Water Management District Water Conservation Rebate Program Applicant Handbook



Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (February 2025)

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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

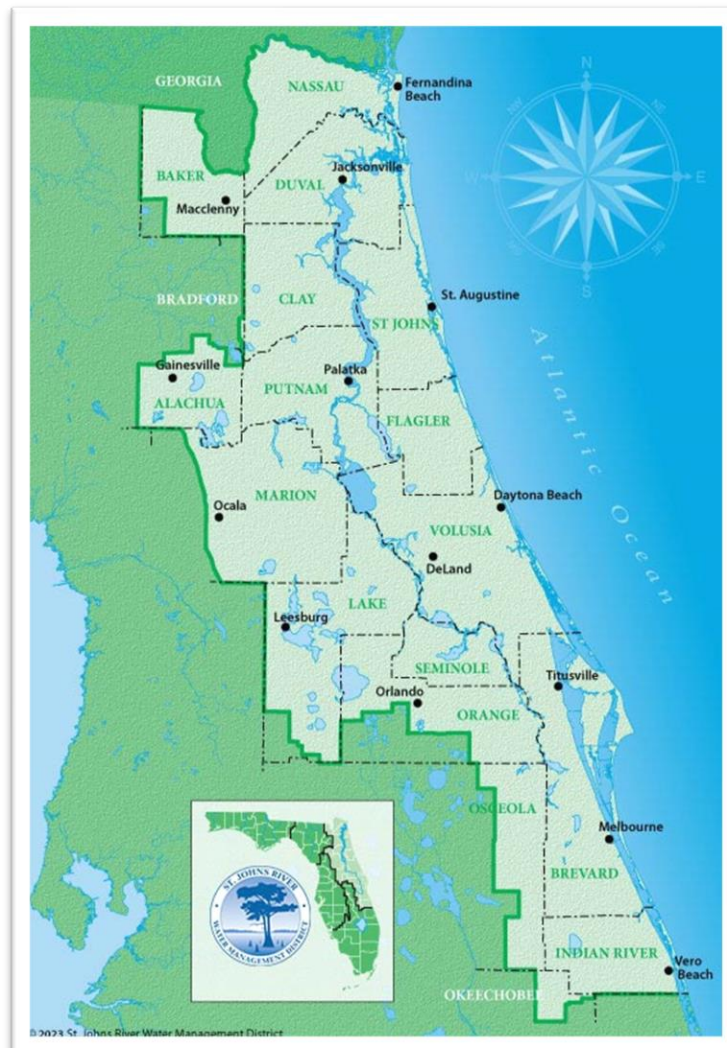
** If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1 800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1 800-955-8770 (voice).*

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 efficiency practices and programs. 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 fiscal 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 second year (FY 2024-2025) of our Water Conservation Rebate Program and was last revised February 2025.

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. Search for 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 or reclaimed water that is constrained or supplemented with groundwater.
5. Applicants are limited to:
 - Local governments;
 - Public and private water utilities;
 - Incorporated homeowner and property owner associations, as defined by Chapter 720, FS, Chapter 617 FS, or Chapter 163, FS;
 - Condominium associations, as defined by Chapter 718, FS.; and
 - Community development districts as defined by Chapter 190, FS.
6. For homeowner, condominium, and community development district associations, the projects must be for residential implementation and/or common area irrigation.
7. Applicants should focus efforts on high water-use customers.
8. Projects must be completed during the fiscal year of application submittal.
9. Projects that receive funding in the same fiscal year from any other District program are not eligible for funding under the Water Conservation Rebate Program.
10. 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.
11. Applicants awarded funding must submit water use data for the six months before and after installation/completion for each property (if available) to the District within two months of project completion.

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 reimbursement, cumulative for all conservation item rebates, 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 program funds are depleted. Monthly available fund updates will be shared at <https://www.sjrwm.com/water-conservation/water-conservation-rebate-program/>
5. Rebate payments will be made to the applicant.

Eligible Water Conservation Items

The District offers 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. Florida Water Star SM certification for new residential construction	Fees for inspection and certification	\$150
2. EPA WaterSense®-labelled smart irrigation controller: a) residential b) HOA Common property*	Material and installation	a) \$100 b) \$3,000

<p>3. Irrigation conversions (high-volume spray to a high-efficiency rotary nozzle or micro irrigation in landscape beds):</p> <p>a) residential b) HOA common property*</p>	<p>Material and installation</p>	<p>a) \$100 b) \$5,000</p>
<p>4. Irrigation evaluations and timer modification</p> <p>a) residential b) HOA common property*</p>	<p>Contractor cost per visit</p>	<p>a) \$75 b) \$500</p>
<p>5. Landscape soil amendments (for new residential construction)</p>	<p>Material and installation</p>	<p>\$250</p>
<p>6. H2OSAV Subscription</p>	<p>50 percent of first-year annual subscription</p>	<p>\$4,000 per entity</p>

*** Note: Required invoice detail for utility, government, or HOA, property owners', condominium, and community development district 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.**

Florida Water StarSM

Inspection and certification for Florida Water StarSM (FWS) Silver or Gold new residential construction will be eligible for rebate. The FWS is a high efficiency certification program for both indoor and outdoor water conservation. For this rebate effort HOA, property owner, condominium, community development district's common properties would not be eligible. For the purposes of this rebate program, the FWS Silver or Gold guidelines are required and can be found here: <https://floridawaterstar.com/program-criteria/residential/>

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 and program the controller according to the District's irrigation restrictions as this will maximize water savings (<https://www.sjrwm.com/wateringrestrictions/>).

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 landscapes. 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.sjrwm.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 use a product that meets 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.

H2OSAV

H2OSAV is a water conservation evaluation program operated by UF IFAS. In the case of this rebate program, H2OSAV would evaluate a local government or utility water use data to help them implement targeted water conservation. The rebate program will only fund the first-year subscription. For additional information, please visit - <https://clue.ifas.ufl.edu/community-environment/index.html> and <https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/clue/2021/05/10/h2osav-program-is-evaluating-impacts-of-water-conservation-programs/> .

Estimated Program Water Savings

Data from UF IFAS and the Water Savings, Analytics and Verification (H₂O 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. Florida Water Star SM certification	Residential: 132 gallons per day
2. U.S. EPA WaterSense [®] -labelled smart irrigation controllers	Residential: 95–100 gallons per day per property HOA common property: 30% reduction in water use
3. Irrigation conversions (high-volume spray to a high-efficiency rotary nozzle)	Residential: 95–100 gallons per day per property HOA common property: 10-20% reduction in water use

<p>4. Irrigation evaluations and timer modification</p>	<p>Residential: 50–155 gallons per day per property HOA common property: 10-20% reduction in water use</p>
<p>5. Landscape soil amendments (for new residential construction)</p>	<p>Residential: 50% less water to establish a landscape in year one.</p>

Source: UF IFAS/ H₂O SAV and Florida Water StarSM

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 completed prior to incurring project costs. Interested applicants may schedule a pre-application meeting with District staff listed on page 11.

- Submit a complete Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application and submit to kmclane@sjrwmd.com.
<https://www.sjrwmd.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 is eligible for reimbursement.

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 monthly 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 per fiscal year.
- 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 2024-2025 Key Dates

October 1, 2024	Start of FY 2024-2025 program; if qualified, eligible expenses may be incurred after the day your qualifications form is approved.
September 30, 2025	Rebate work must be completed on or before this date.
October 31, 2025	Last day eligible expenses may be submitted for reimbursement (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

Alternative:

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

Forms:

**Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification
Application Form**

Request for Rebate Invoice Form

Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application Form (submit to kmclane@sjrwmd.com)

<p>Water Conservation Rebate Program Qualification Application - <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"/> Local Government <input type="checkbox"/> Private utility <input type="checkbox"/> Public utility <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporated: HOA, Property Owner Assoc., Condominium Assoc., and Community Development Districts	
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"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Will this project conserve groundwater or reclaimed water that is constrained or supplemented with groundwater? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
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): <i>please attach description</i>	
<p>Confirmation Statement: 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

Water Conservation Rebate Program – FY 2024–25 Request for Rebate Invoice Form		
Project:		
For Month/Year:		
Applicant Name:		
Address:		
City/State/Zip Code		
Rebate Cost Share Agreement Number:		
Conservation Item and maximum amount allowed (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)	Number of Units	Amount Requested
Florida Water Star SM Certification		
Smart Irrigation Controller		
Irrigation Conversions		
Irrigation evaluations and timer modifications		
Landscape Soil Amendments		
H2OSAV – first-year annual subscription		
Current Requested Rebate		
Total Prior Rebates		
Total to Date		
Not to exceed \$10,000)		
Certification Statement: 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	