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Partners Make It Possible

2020 Sustained Excellence and Partner of the Year Awards

WaterSense and its more than 2,000 utility, manufacturer, retail, builder, and other organizational partners promote water-efficient products, homes, and programs to help them defeat water waste. Since 2006, WaterSense partners have helped consumers and businesses save more than 4.4 trillion gallons of water. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to recognize eight WaterSense Sustained Excellence and eight Partner of the Year Award winners for making water savings possible in 2019.

SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE

Athens-Clarke County (Georgia) Public Utilities Department



Public Utilities
water. wastewater. conservation.

With a wide variety of creative ideas to promote water efficiency in 2019, Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department earned its fourth WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award. To celebrate its Shower Better Month in February, Athens-Clarke offered a romantic tour of the North Oconee Water Reclamation Facility on Valentine's Day. In addition to passing out chocolates, the utility provided toilet leak tablets and new showerheads as gifts to attendees.

In another creative approach to water conservation education, Athens-Clarke hosted its annual Ripple Effect Film Project, complete with a blue carpet premiere for Fix a Leak Week. A total of 26 filmmakers submitted short videos that were shown to over 200 attendees. Before the film debut, Athens-Clarke broadcast WaterSense trivia and information on finding and fixing leaks on screen. As part of its observation of World Toilet Day in November, Athens-Clarke gave away free toilet flappers during the month to help residents fix toilet leaks.

Athens-Clarke cooked up some other great promotional ideas all year long. The utility's entry in the Athens Gingerbread Guild's Gingerbread Home Competition was a completely edible "Look for WaterSense"-themed gingerbread house. The house, viewed by 700 visitors, included a WaterSense snowman, edible WaterSense labeled products, and a logo reminding consumers to "look for" labeled products. And as part of its Level 1 Drought response strategies, the Public Utilities Department gave away 500 fortune cookies in its Water Business Office lobby with five different WaterSense-related fortunes baked inside.



Athens-Clarke's gingerbread house contest submission.

Citrus County (Florida) Utilities

Citrus County Utilities earned its second Sustained Excellence Award for its work in 2019 educating citizens and encouraging use of WaterSense labeled products. In January, staff attended the Manatee Festival, where they

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distributed more than 150 toilet leak tablets and 100 faucet aerators. During the annual Shrimpalooza festival, the utility celebrated Fix a Leak Week Mardi Gras style, hosting a booth with WaterSense information, toilet leak tablets, and water drop-shaped masks for children to decorate. The utility also hosted its 12th annual water conservation expo, where it promoted

its Schedule a Specialist program to help customers save water at home. Additionally, Citrus County collaborated with WaterSense partner Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to send over 4,800 letters to consumers promoting Fix a Leak Week and explaining how to fix common leaks.

Citrus County hosted three Irrigation 101 workshops in 2019 to educate over 70 residents who are new to irrigation systems about outdoor water efficiency. The workshops discussed the benefits of WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and promoted Citrus County Utilities' rebate program. In 2019, the utility had great participation in its Schedule a Specialist program, with over 300 residents taking advantage of the free home audit and receiving free WaterSense labeled fixtures, WaterSense materials, and rebate information. The county also held a raffle for residents to win a free WaterSense labeled irrigation controller.

Citrus County Utilities collaborated with a local Holiday Inn Express and SWFWMD to take advantage of the Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency program. Through this collaboration, the hotel was able to install 78 WaterSense labeled toilets and qualified for approximately \$6,000 in rebates. The utility also collaborated with SWFWMD on an email and phone survey of its high water use customers to help implement a conservation education program in 2020.

The City of Charlottesville (Virginia)



It was water-saving business as usual in the City of Charlottesville in 2019, as the City earned its third Sustained Excellence Award. Charlottesville moved its annual Fix a Leak Family 5k race to May, as part of the first annual Rivanna RiverFest, to better link important water concepts. A local radio show host ran the race dressed as the “running toilet” mascot, and each participant received a race T-shirt and a WaterSense labeled faucet aerator. The City also held its annual Imagine a Day Without Water art contest to promote the importance of water conservation. The theme of “Only Use What You Need” yielded over 300 submissions, and the winning artists received a variety of WaterSense labeled products.

To promote water savings on social media, Charlottesville continued with its weekly #WaterTipWednesday to highlight conservation tips and WaterSense information. Advertisements on a local weather platform app asked visitors questions such as, “When is the best time to water your lawn?” These ads generated over 150,000 impressions, and nearly 400 clicks to the City of Charlottesville’s website. Throughout the year, the City distributed over 500 water conservation kits, which included labeled showerheads, faucet aerators, toilet leak detection tablets, and information on the City’s WaterSense labeled toilet rebate program.

In 2019, the City created a new Energy and Water Management Program that promotes WaterSense information on a dedicated internal website for City staff, which encourages installing WaterSense labeled products and promotes water saving behaviors in the office whenever possible. The City program also partnered with local schools to implement energy and water efficiency projects and education, working with the assistant superintendent and STEM coordinator and focusing on ways to include students. To

“Citrus County’s continuing partnership in the EPA WaterSense program furthers the goal of educating our community on efficient water use. The program makes it easy to promote the use of WaterSense labeled products to our customers, which provides immediate cost savings to them and long-term benefits to the overall community by preserving our water resources.”

Ken Cheek, Director, Citrus County Department of Water Resources



Runners chasing the “running toilet” mascot at the Fix a Leak Family 5k race.

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broaden water-efficient design into other local projects, Charlottesville also incorporated WaterSense references into its Standards and Design Manual for City contractors and builders.

The City of Plano (Texas)



The City of Plano earned its first Sustained Excellence Award, following several Partner of the Year Awards. The City's Sustainability and Environmental Education Division updated its brand with a new logo and mascot, "Owlbert," who models sustainable behaviors such as saving water. The City of Plano also created a new social media campaign, "Flo's Favorite Things," where WaterSense "spokesgallon" Flo was photographed with toilet flappers, a soil moisture sensor, and other items to promote water efficiency. The social media posts of Flo's Favorite Things reached over 3,000 people through the "Live Green in Plano" Facebook page.

In collaboration with a local sprinkler company, the City created its first-ever Sprinkler Fair in response to residents' desire for hands-on irrigation education. A total of 45 attendees rotated between five stations focused on various irrigation components that were led by the City of Plano and irrigation professionals. Over 170 soil moisture devices, irrigation flags, hose nozzles, and other items were distributed to attendees. A post-event survey found that 84 percent of attendees planned to check their irrigation system for broken sprinkler heads and make sure they were directed away from pavement, while 92 percent reported that they would also adjust watering habits to the cycle-and-soak method to help reduce water waste.

The City also collaborated with The Home Depot and Lowe's Home Improvement stores to provide applications for its WaterSense labeled toilet rebate program to customers; over 900 toilets were rebated in 2019, saving customers over \$80,000. Additionally, the City offered free WaterSense labeled showerheads, shower timers, faucet aerators, toilet flappers, toilet leak detection dye tablets, soil moisture meters, and other items to residents year-round.



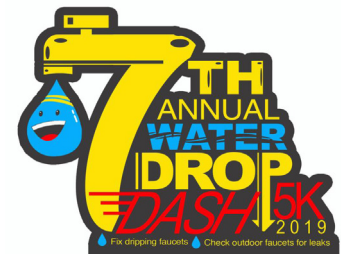
A Sprinkler Fair event station.

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District



For the third year in a row, Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District earned a WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award for its work supporting 17 partner utilities in their water conservation efforts. For Fix a Leak Week 2019, the District continued its successful Water Drop Dash 5k race; over 900 participants saw water conservation messaging along the route and received water-saving giveaways, including faucet aerators and toilet flappers. A new race T-shirt design competition had 30 designs submitted for the 2019 Water Drop Dash T-shirt.

Another Fix a Leak Week promotion included a collaboration with a local digital influencer, @UnlikleyMartha, to create a blog post about the campaign with more than 18,000 views, as well as a potential reach of over 13,000 across Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Other WaterSense campaigns Metropolitan North Georgia celebrated in 2019 included Sprinkler Spruce-Up, Your Better Bathroom, and Shower Better. And the District continued its partnership with Caribou Coffee to give discounts to customers who answer trivia questions about water conservation such as, "What is the most common cause of water loss in the average home?"



Winning T-shirt design.

In 2019, the District launched a new pilot program with its partner utilities to offer qualifying commercial properties free assessments to find potential areas for water savings and labeled fixtures. The program referenced the WaterSense at Work best practices guide for commercial and institutional facilities. Finally, the District researched availability, cost, performance, and efficiency of labeled products in the Metropolitan North Georgia region. Results from this survey were submitted to WaterSense as the program considered its product specification reviews; the District plans to continue this work and share data with its stakeholders in the future.

Kohler Co.

KOHLER®

Kohler Co. earned its sixth Sustained Excellence Award this year. One notable achievement in 2019 was developing three rain-style showerheads that earned the WaterSense label based on recent specification updates. By collaborating with EPA, Kohler helped WaterSense determine the rain shower criteria in its showerhead specification, broadening opportunities for consumers to save water in this product category. In total, Kohler earned the WaterSense label on 36 tank-type toilet models, 30 new faucets, 58 showerheads, one urinal, and one flushometer valve toilet in 2019 alone!

Throughout the year, Kohler featured its WaterSense labeled products at major trade shows, including the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show in January 2019, where 80,000 attendees viewed WaterSense labeled toilet demonstrations. Other WaterSense promotion included several articles and weekly emails to consumers focused on WaterSense labeled products and water conservation. Kohler also offered online training to over 1,400 industry professionals, and 25 in-person training sessions highlighted WaterSense in the presentation.

In 2019, Kohler donated over 1,200 WaterSense labeled plumbing products to various charitable projects. As a Gold Sponsor of Habitat for Humanity's Home Builders Blitz, Kohler also donated over 500 WaterSense labeled toilets and 250 faucets for 152 new homes, 61 repairs, and 16 rehabs made as a part of this program. The company's KOHLER Relief Showering Trailer, which features WaterSense labeled fixtures, has provided nearly 3,000 showers to hurricane relief volunteers in Florida and those fighting wildfires in California. Kohler also provided WaterSense labeled fixtures to Lava Mae, a mobile showering project that provides resources for homeless citizens in California.

The Sonoma-Marín (California) Saving Water Partnership



For the fourth year in a row, the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership (Partnership) has earned a WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award as a professional certifying organization (PCO). In 2019, the Partnership finished a Spanish version of its Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program to help its adopting organizations expand their reach to the Hispanic community. After being tested by a panel of bilingual subject experts, the Spanish version of the QWEL reference manual was made available free on the QWEL website. The Partnership also hosted QWEL-focused booths, held a number of events, and distributed postcards and bill stuffers in both English and Spanish.

To help launch a Bay Area QWEL program, the Partnership collaborated with nine other Bay Area water utilities and the California Water Efficiency Program (CalWEP). To recruit new trainers for the program, CalWEP hosted a train-the-trainer event, and its first QWEL certification workshops certified 60 participants. QWEL was also adopted by the Southern Metro Water Supply Authority in the South Denver Metro region of Colorado, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California initiated a pilot program for 2020. The Partnership worked with a local community college, Santa Rosa Junior College, to make the QWEL program an integral part of its landscape irrigation class; students take the QWEL exam at the end of the semester and have to install an irrigation system with a WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controller.



A QWEL certification workshop.

All told, the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership itself has issued nearly 1,000 QWEL certificates since the program began, issuing 55 new certifications in 2019 alone. Organizations that have adopted QWEL held more than 40 certification workshops in 2019, resulting in close to 650 individuals becoming QWEL certified—more than any other year on record!

KB Home

For its continued commitment to sustainability and building WaterSense labeled homes, KB Home has earned its sixth Sustained Excellence Award. In 2019, KB Home had 147 homes earn the WaterSense label, bringing the total of KB WaterSense labeled homes to nearly 2,000. KB installs WaterSense labeled products in all of the homes they build. Overall, the company has installed 700,000 WaterSense labeled fixtures to date. By KB's

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estimation, these homes and fixtures have saved an estimated 1.5 billion gallons of water annually!

KB Home constructed a concept home, KB ProjeKt, in a Las Vegas community to demonstrate how technology could help reduce environmental impacts and affect homeowner wellness. This

WaterSense labeled home debuted during the 2019 Consumer Electronics Show and was also featured at the 2019 International Builders' Show. Thousands of attendees were able to tour the home and learn about sustainable homes and WaterSense.



A WaterSense labeled KB Home's bathroom.

KB Home continued promoting WaterSense and featured information on the program and labeled products in its sales materials, website, signage, social media, and more. KB Home team members attend employee training on the company's sustainability initiatives and water-saving options. To further promote the use of WaterSense labeled fixtures and water-efficient landscaping, KB Home partnered with the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) to host a HERS H2O rating demonstration during the RESNET Conference in February 2019.

PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS OF THE YEAR

Big Bear Lake (California) Department of Water and Power



Service, Quality, Community

Big Bear Lake (California) Department of Water and Power (BBLDWP) earned its first Partner of the Year Award for an impressive array of outreach and education programs. BBLDWP has a long-held change-of-service policy requiring that customers have water-efficient plumbing fixtures installed when they purchase a property. The utility helps its customers achieve that water-saving goal with a multitude of incentives. For example, BBLDWP rebated nearly 200 water-efficient toilets for residents, most of which were WaterSense labeled, and gave away more than 150 WaterSense labeled showerheads and nearly 400 bathroom and kitchen faucet aerators to residents. To promote commercial water savings, BBLDWP rebated an additional 50 WaterSense toilets and distributed showerheads and aerators to commercial customers.

On Earth Day 2019, the department cohosted an event for more than 750 attendees, even providing transportation so that 300 elementary students could attend. The event featured multiple stations. Students received a passport upon entry they could get stamped and earn a prize for visiting all the exhibits. One station included a hands-on leak fixing activity with real tools. The utility distributed WaterSense educational materials and encouraged residents to sign up for free indoor and outdoor water audits. Big Bear Lake also co-hosted a self-guided Xeriscape Garden Tour with the local Sierra Club chapter. Seven water-efficient yards in the Big Bear Valley served as stops on the tour, and the utility's own demonstration garden was staffed with a native plant expert. Attendees received native plant seeds, WaterSense outdoor educational materials, and information on the utility's free rain barrel program.



Earth Day event booth.

In collaboration with another WaterSense partner, Resource Action Programs, BBLDWP distributed Water Wise kits to fifth graders at three local schools featuring WaterSense labeled showerheads, aerators, toilet leak detection tabs, and educational materials. Following the program, 37 percent of students and their families installed the showerheads, 27 percent installed faucet aerators, and 39 percent repaired a toilet leak after using the leak detection tabs. The program estimates cumulative water savings of nearly 300,000 gallons of water and wastewater. BBLDWP promotes WaterSense in their lobby, on their radio ads, in the local newspaper, on their Facebook, Twitter, website, and at all in-person events.

Irvine Ranch (California) Water District



In recognition of its creative outreach to customers, Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) received a WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year Award. Through its Water Efficiency Blockbuster Series, IRWD's social media posts featured photos of employees recreating superhero characters sharing water-saving tips. During Fix a Leak Week 2019, IRWD held a contest on social media; over 80 customers submitted photos of themselves fixing leaks or they completed online training and took a quiz for a chance to win a prize. Customers were also encouraged to find a hidden WaterSense logo in the IRWD monthly newsletter for a chance to win a water efficiency kit. More than 200 submissions were received over the six-month contest period.

To help residents save water and energy, IRWD partnered with local energy utilities, Southern California Edison and SoCalGas, on the Get Smart Program. This direct-install effort provided over 300 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers in 2019. IRWD also continued its popular "Ask Juan" newsletter column, where customers submit irrigation and landscape questions to Senior Water Efficiency Specialist Juan Garcia.

In 2019, IRWD's residential rebate program provided incentives for nearly 200 WaterSense labeled toilets and more than 650 WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers. To promote water efficiency in local businesses, IRWD certified six businesses through the WaterStar Business Recognition Program, which provides financial incentives for efficiency improvements and use of the WaterStar logo.



Irvine Ranch Water District team.

City of Sacramento (California) Department of Utilities



After the City of Sacramento (California) Department of Utilities earned an Excellence Award last year for its education and outreach efforts, it found more ways to help customers save water, earning a Promotional Partner of the Year award. During Fix a Leak Month in March 2019, the utility conducted its Leak Free Sacramento program, which provides home leak repair assistance to customers

in disadvantaged communities. There were 43 applications to the program and 20 completed repair projects, a significant increase from the previous year. Broadening their efforts to identify and fix household leaks, the utility sent nearly 15,000 letters to customers who might have had leaks in their homes, based on their water use. For those who couldn't find any leaks themselves, the City offered free inspections to help them determine the cause of the leak. Following that mailing, Water Conservation Office representatives completed 2,600 inspections to identify water leaks. The Water Conservation team conducted more than 600 free WaterWise House Calls and also encouraged customers to access a web portal where they could monitor water usage to detect future leaks and take advantage of product rebate programs.

In July 2019, the utility hosted the first annual Sacramento WaterWise Garden Showcase, where more than 120 homeowners learned about WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers from Rachio, Rain Bird, and Hunter; discussed water-wise plants and trees with local nurseries and native plant associations; and explored landscape design ideas with local Association of Landscape Designers. In the fall, the City of Sacramento promoted Break Up With Your Lawn, a three-week social media campaign that used humor to suggest alternatives to residential landscapes that require heavy water usage and to "break up with their lawn." Sacramento is known for its extensive urban tree canopy, and the utility held two workshops in partnership with Sacramento Tree Foundation about smart irrigation, mulching, and maintenance of trees.



Break Up With Your Lawn promotion.

Another spring and summer campaign, Made Possible By, promoted the City of Sacramento's rebates for WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers and drought-friendly landscaping as a way to make beautiful yards

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with less water. In 2019, over 1,000 WaterSense labeled controller rebates were issued--twice as much as the previous year! The utility attributes this increase to its new instant rebate feature on an online e-commerce platform launched in partnership with the local electricity utility provider. The utility provided funding for two Alliance for Water Efficiency studies on the impacts of drought and landscape transformation programs.

Upper San Gabriel Valley (California) Municipal Water District



The Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (California) built upon its 2018 water efficiency outreach success, culminating in winning a WaterSense Partner of the Year Award for a second year in a row. To expand its reach to more residents, the Upper District offered educational materials in Mandarin, as well as Spanish and English. Upper District also initiated collaborative efforts to begin translating some of the WaterSense materials into Mandarin. For Fix a Leak

Week, the agency hosted leak detection workshops, including one presented in Mandarin co-hosted with the City of Arcadia. The Upper District also engaged the commercial sector through water-smart landscape equipment retrofits and offering a new workshop on finding and fixing leaks for businesses.

Financial incentives for WaterSense labeled products in Upper District's area included rebates for approximately 400 tank-type toilets, over 200 flush valve toilets, and nearly 400 weather-based irrigation controllers. The agency also continued its Large Landscape Retrofit Program, installing over 40 WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers at large landscape sites that irrigate more than 125 acres of land. New for 2019, Upper District implemented a Residential Plant Voucher Program that provided 175 vouchers, each redeemable for up to \$250, to encourage homeowners to choose native, climate-appropriate plants to create attractive landscapes that require less frequent watering.

To reach younger audiences, Upper District offered water education grants of up to \$1,000 for K-12th grade schools. Sixteen teachers were awarded grants totaling \$14,642 for projects involving nearly 1,900 students. The agency also continued its "Water is Life" art contest, receiving over 150 student entries from 33 different schools focused on the value of water. Upper District also offered a selfie photo spot during its annual WaterFest, where over 2,000 participants could take a photo with the "look for" WaterSense logo.



WaterFest attendees.

Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District



The Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, also known as Northern Water, is a regional water wholesale provider that earned its first Partner of the Year Award by collaborating with a number of organizations to promote water efficiency, including the 33 cities it serves. The District hosted a Conservation Garden Fair in June 2019 for regional water users, where attendees could

sign up for water audits, learn about WaterSense labeled product rebates in the region, and bring in an old showerhead in exchange for a WaterSense labeled model; the showerhead exchange is also offered year-round. The fair had over 400 attendees in 2019—the highest attendance at that event to date. Northern Water's Collaborative Water-Efficient Landscape Grant Program also helps customers achieve water-efficient landscapes and includes a requirement to incorporate WaterSense labeled controllers when upgrading irrigation systems. A total of \$110,000 was awarded in 2019 for commercial projects that serve as regional examples of attractive, drought-resilient, water-efficient, and sustainable landscapes that are models for other commercial customers to emulate.

Northern Water worked with Colorado State University Extension and Colorado College on various programs and entities to support and encourage students to pursue water conservation professions. The organization hosted a short course lead by the Extension that provided landscape water management and information on WaterSense labeled products to over 100 landscape practitioners. Northern Water also collaborated with a local non-profit, the Energy Resource Center, which focuses on energy retrofits for income-qualified residents. Through this

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partnership and donations to other regional housing agencies, Northern Water distributed 250 WaterSense labeled aerators and showerheads to help residents save water, energy, and money.

To get local municipalities more involved in WaterSense, Northern Water collaborated with the Sonoran Institute on its Growing Water Smart Workshop, a three-day, intensive workshop for municipalities and regional stakeholders on how to incorporate water efficiency into land-use planning efforts. During the workshop, the District promoted the benefits of its WaterSense partnership and WaterSense labeled products.

“WaterSense provides a high-value, national platform for developing and sharing water efficient products and practices, allowing partners to leverage training, technology, and collaboration that continues to save water indoors and in landscapes. We appreciate this partnership and the opportunities it provides for conservation and performance.”

Frank Kinder, Water Efficiency Program Manager,
Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Orange County (Florida) Utilities



After receiving certificates for going above and beyond in its water efficiency outreach in the past, Orange County (Florida) Utilities went to the head of the class this year, earning its first Partner of the Year Award for its outstanding education efforts in 2019. Much of the utilities' efforts were geared toward children, and they reached nearly 9,500 K-12 students with various initiatives. The Blue Thumb Jr. Detective program, which correlates with Florida State Sunshine Education Standards, provided water conservation presentations to over 1,400 students. Orange County also held its Water Conservation Drop Savers Calendar Contests; more than 4,400 students submitted artwork about saving water.

The utility's Full STEAM Ahead Robot Challenge encourages students in middle school to consider careers in the water industry; the program had 23 kids participate in 2019. The Tinker program, meanwhile, is a digital, science-based curriculum that taught water conservation to over 2,700 students. Participants received conservation kits and instructions on how to save water at home. Orange County attended “Touring the Water Facts,” held at the Orlando Science Center, which featured hands-on activities highlighting the different parts of the water production industry. The more than 200 middle school students and teachers who participated got to play the Spin the Wheel game and answer WaterSense and water conservation trivia.



Spin the Wheel game at local middle school.

Kids aren't the only ones who learn about saving water in the Sunshine state. Orange County Utilities' Water Wise Neighbor program helps customers become more water-efficient at home by educating them on best water management practices. The program distributed nearly 2,000 WaterSense labeled showerheads and over 100 WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers to participants. A Sprinkler Spruce-Up contest encouraged participants to make water-saving changes to their irrigation systems during Smart Irrigation Month in July. Orange County also coordinated with the local library to hold four Efficient Irrigation workshops in July 2019. Additionally, the utility continued its toilet incentive program, rebating more than 300 WaterSense labeled toilets in 2019.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFYING ORGANIZATION PARTNER OF THE YEAR

City of Aspen (Colorado)

The City of Aspen has won its first WaterSense Professional Certifying Organization Partner of the Year Award. The City became a Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) Professional Certifying Organization in 2018, and since that time has actively promoted and encouraged participation in this WaterSense labeled certification program, to provide valuable continuing education for landscape professionals and to inform the public about water-efficient landscaping.

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Aspen is a small, seasonal community of less than 7,500 residents, but its commitment to water efficiency is big. The City implemented new Water Efficient Landscape Standards in 2019 that require all new landscapes and renovations to undergo a third-party irrigation audit by a certified professional that has demonstrated knowledge of water-efficient practices through a WaterSense labeled certification program. Aspen decided to exclusively offer free QWEL trainings to local landscape professionals to ensure that they have a strong cohort of local experts who are able to perform these audits and are trained to practice water-efficient irrigation methods. All professionals who attended achieved certification through this WaterSense labeled program. The City of Aspen lists all QWEL certified professionals on its website so developers and homeowners can find them easily, and they have realized a re-certification rate of approximately 82 percent.

To recruit and promote the certified pros, Aspen conducted a variety of outreach, including email campaigns, direct phone calls, Facebook, Twitter, and newspaper advertising, as well as a quarterly QWEL newsletter that features the WaterSense affiliation. They also opened the trainings to residents who are interested in water-efficient gardening and provided a free lunch-and-learn to professionals to learn more about the Water Efficient Landscape Standards, understand QWEL certification, and receive continuing education credits..



A QWEL class irrigation audit.

BUILDER PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Fulton Homes



As a new WaterSense builder partner, Fulton Homes made a big splash by earning its first Partner of the Year Award for its water-saving construction. In 2019, Fulton installed WaterSense labeled products in almost 900 homes; 30 of these homes earned the WaterSense label.

To promote its labeled homes and its WaterSense partnership, Fulton

Homes featured WaterSense on its website and distributed fliers to prospective buyers with the benefits of purchasing a WaterSense labeled home.

Fulton featured WaterSense labeled homes on its Facebook page and conducted an email campaign with 95,000 prospective home buyers and 36,000 real estate agents. In its communities, Fulton Homes displays large WaterSense flags to catch the attention of those driving near their model home. WaterSense messaging displays on rotating screens in its sales office, and representatives distribute WaterSense stickers to the children of potential home buyers when they visit the sales office.

Fulton Homes conducted in-person training for all sales and design staff on WaterSense labeled homes in 2019 to ensure all employees could describe the benefits of WaterSense labeled homes. Working closely with fellow WaterSense partner Energy Inspectors Corporation, Fulton is also working on developments where all the new homes will be WaterSense labeled, ENERGY STAR certified, and Indoor AirPLUS certified.



Fulton Homes WaterSense flag.

Learn More

WaterSense congratulates the 2020 Partners of the Year and Sustained Excellence Award winners. For more information and to learn about all the benefits of partnership, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.