



Frequently Asked Questions Turf Replacement - Drought Tolerant landscape Rebate Program

1.) How much is the rebate?

The rebate is \$1 dollar per square foot of lawn replaces. The maximum rebate for residential accounts is \$500 dollars and \$1,000 dollars for all other accounts. The rebate amount cannot exceed the total cost of the project.

2.) Who is eligible to participate?

The program is available to residential and non-residential customers, who receive water directly from the City of Ceres.

3.) What lawn areas are eligible for the program?

Lawns areas to be converted can be the front, side or back yard. The goal of the program is to provide both visible examples of water-efficient landscapes to the community and to reduce overall outdoor watering to the property.

4.) What plants can I use in my water-efficient landscape?

Any low water needing plant can be used in your water-efficient landscape project. The City of Ceres Water Conservation website <http://www.ci.ceres.ca.us/213a.html> list several links to make reference to including: 40 local favorites Drought Tolerant Plants, WUCOLS, Don't Plant a Pest & a Guide to estimating irrigation water needs of landscapes planting in California.

5.) What is WUCOLS?

WUCOLS stands for Water Use Classifications of Landscape Species. It is a University of California Cooperative Extension Publication. The project was developed by the San Francisco and San Mateo County Office in cooperation with 32 landscape

professionals. This project was initiated and funded by the DWR with the purpose & intent to provide guidance when selecting plant material, while taking into consideration water needs. It also serves as a guide to assist in developing irrigation schedules for existing landscapes.

- 6.) I already replaced my lawn with water-efficient plants. Can I get a rebate?

No, the program is not retroactive and cannot provide rebates for projects that were started prior to receiving an approval number from the City of Ceres Water Conservation Program. The program was created to help our City meet the 28% state water conservation reduction goal. However, if you feel you have all the documentation the program requires than you can submit an application and it will be reviewed by the Director of Public Works. The City reserves the right to deny any application that it receives.

- 7.) Can I receive a rebate for replacing my lawn with artificial turf?

Yes, if artificial grass is used in any part of the conversion it must be permeable to water and air. Patio carpet or "Astroturf" type products are not eligible for the rebate.

- 8.) Can I receive a rebate for installing a concrete patio, a walkway or an extension to my driveway?

No, the program does not allow non-permeable hard-scape. However, permeable hard-scape, such as gravel, brick, brick pavers or flagstone with permeable, mortar-less materials for grout lines (such as sand and gravel) are allowed. Keep in mind that the conversion area must still meet the requirement that for every 5' by 5' square there shall be one drought tolerant plant.

- 9.) Can I receive a rebate for replacing an existing dead lawn?

Maybe, the program states "Areas to be converted must have live turf that has been irrigated for at least a year prior to the rebate request." However, because of the drought, it is understood that some customers may have let their lawns die to conserve water. Those applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

- 10.) How can I get help with landscape water use calculations when submitting a landscape design package to the City?

DWR offers an online calculator for determining the Maximum Applied Water Allowance and Estimated Applied Water use for landscape at

<http://www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/landscapeordinance/>

- 11.) Can I receive a rebate for replacing my high water use lawn with low water use lawn?

No! This program provides incentives to convert lawns to alternative types of landscaping such as trees, shrubs, ground-covers and native bunch grasses. These use less water than even the lowest water use lawn.

- 12.) Can I receive a rebate for replacing high water use plants other than lawn?

No, the program only credits lawn that is removed.

- 13.) What is mulch and why is it required?

Mulch deters weeds, reduces the amount of water that evaporates from the soil, acts as an insulating layer, and keeps the soil cooler in the summer. The most common types of mulch are bark chips, shredded bark, and wood chips. Rock or decomposed granite can also be used. Organic mulch breaks down and adds nutrients to the soil. The program requires that converted areas have a minimum of 2-3" of mulch in all planting areas. A local resource is BTY Concrete & Materials, Inc. located at 4107 Morgan Road Ceres, CA 95307 phone number (209) 538-8492.

- 14.) Why is there a plant cover requirement?

The primary goal of the program is to reduce water use by removing water-thirsty lawn, and at the same time, encouraging the use of environmentally beneficial, water-efficient landscaping. Trees, shrubs and ground-covers provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, supply oxygen, reduce soil erosion, give wildlife a home, decrease energy use, reduce storm water, and save water.

- 15.) What type of irrigation system do I need to use?

If you are installing irrigation for the new landscape area, it must be low volume drip. The drip system must include a pressure regulator, filter and emitters. If only part of the lawn is converted, the remaining lawn must be irrigated separately from new landscape, and the sprinkler system for the lawn must be modified to eliminate over-spray onto the new landscape area.