

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / December 2005
Volume 2005 Number 12

Four Ways It Really Pays to Save Water at Home

Now customers can save even more with increased rebate amounts

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) residential customers can now save even more money and water by taking advantage of IRWD's increased water conservation rebates. Customers are now eligible to receive the following four increased rebate amounts, provided by IRWD in partnership with several regional water agencies:

- \$75 per Ultra Low Flush Toilet (ULFT)
- \$250 per Dual Flush Toilet
- \$350 per High Efficiency Clothes Washer
- An average of \$440 to upgrade to a weather-based irrigation controller, or \$40 to \$44.50 per activated valve.

Each rebate program has limited funding issued on a first-come, first serve basis. Toilet rebates are limited to three per household.

Residential customers must install their new weather-based irrigation controllers by January 31, 2006, to receive the increased rebate amount.

Residents who replace old "water guzzling" toilets (installed before 1992 and using more than

1.6 gallons per flush) with the new models can receive a rebate of \$75 per ULFT toilet using 1.6 gallons per flush and \$250 per Dual Flush toilet using 1.0 to 1.6 gallons per flush. Toilets account for more than 25% of all indoor water usage. By installing a ULFT or Dual Flush Toilet, IRWD customers can save about 68% of that water. For each flush, 1.9 to 4.0 gallons of water are saved. When purchased with the new increased rebate amounts, a ULFT or Dual Flush Toilet can pay for itself in one to two years. For an application or details on these toilet rebates, call 1-800-954-4344.

Residential customers can now receive a \$350 rebate for purchasing a High Efficiency Clothes Washer (HEW) with a water factor of 6.0 or less. HEWs save money over time by using only 18 to 25 gallons of water per load, which can save 6,000 gallons of water or more per year. The better water extraction of HEWs also means less drying time and more energy savings, in fact, up to 50% less energy use per load. For a rebate application or a list of qualifying washing machines call 1-800-954-4344.

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save water . save money . save water . save money . save water . save money . save water

RECEIVE RIGHTEOUS REBATES
By retrofitting your residence with these really effective water-savers:

\$350 REBATE
on select high-efficiency washing machines with a water factor of 6.0 or less

\$75 or \$250 REBATE
CALL 1-800-954-4344 FOR DETAILS

\$75 rebate on ultra-low-flush toilets
\$250 rebate on dual flush toilets
limit 3 toilet rebates per residence

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Water Conservation Tips



- Too much water can stress plants and leave them susceptible to disease. According to the California Association of Nurserymen, more plants are lost due to over-watering than to any other cause. If you think you need to water, check the moisture of the soil 3-6" below the surface. With our heavy clay soils, the surface may look dry, but the clay remains moist beneath the surface.
- **Avoid fertilizing your lawn this month.** Fertilizers applied during this time of year are more likely to get washed away by rain, contributing to pollution in the waterways. Cool season lawns can be fertilized in the spring and fall; warm season lawns can be fertilized in late spring and summer.
- **Cut back roses.**
- **Bare root season for fruit trees and roses.** Water to keep the plants moist, but not wet. Water deeply, not frequently. Build a mound 3-4" high around the planting hole and hand water the new plants directly in the early morning.

SUGGESTED WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE FOR THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY

WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE FOR SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

	Turf grass	Trees, shrubs, groundcover	Percent Option*
December and January	2 days, 2 cycles * of 2 minutes	1 day, 2 cycles* of 3 minutes	30%*

Turn water off when it rains and let soil dry before turning water on again.

**By "cycling" your irrigation timer to turn on for the suggested number of minutes an hour apart, you reduce runoff and gain deeper watering and healthier root growth. Start with this weekly schedule and increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system before increasing the time.*

***Some irrigation controllers have a feature by which the watering time can be set by changing the percentage instead of specifically entering the days, cycles and minutes.*

If you don't have the instructions for your controller, check the manufacturer's website. Many controller manufacturers provide online access to the owner's manual.

Check Out the New IRWD Web Site

If you haven't visited our web site at www.irwd.com lately, you've missed a great deal!

- A completely redesigned and enhanced Web site was launched with a totally fresh appearance and format.
- The new design structure makes it easier for customers to navigate.
- Sign up for workshops, tours and other events electronically.
- Enhanced employment section - submit your application online.
- Easy access to publications and brochures (most available on-line).

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Save Water at Home

In Orange County, approximately half of a typical family's water usage is for landscape irrigation. IRWD, and several regional water agencies, are now providing increased rebates to customers who upgrade their old irrigation controllers to new weather-based technology. These "smart" controllers conserve water and reduce runoff by automatically changing the amount of water applied according to the weather and water needs of the plants. These rebates, called the SmarTimer Rebate Program, provide \$40 to \$44.50 per activated irrigation valve. This will amount to an average rebate of \$440 for a typical home. To participate, residents must possess a fully operational automatic irrigation system on a minimum of 1200 square feet of irrigated landscape. The existing controller may not exceed a maximum of 48 valves. Residential customers must install their new weather-based irrigation controllers by **January 31, 2006**, to receive the increased rebate amount. To receive a packet with full details on the SmarTimer Rebate Program, call 1-866-846-3725.



e-Bill is Coming!

Paying bills taking too much of your time? We have the answer! Starting February 2006, the Irvine Ranch Water District will offer e-Bill, an electronic paperless version of your bill. It has the same details as the paper version but instead of receiving it through the mail, you will view and pay it online. Not only will this save you time, but this optional service is FREE.

IRWD will offer two easy ways to view and pay your bill online. Beginning in February you can sign up through IRWD's Web site or you may choose to sign up with an authorized e-Bill payment provider. Payment providers are typically a bank, credit union, brokerage or other portal that offers you the added benefit of being able to pay your bills online.

Watch for future articles in *Pipelines* describing more details of the e-Bill program.

Marsh Minutes...



This is part of a continuing series designed to better familiarize our customers with Irvine Ranch Water District's San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.

IRWD's marsh expert Lou Denger reminds us that December is an exciting time at the San Joaquin Marsh. Lou invites the community to come to the marsh to see the many birds that flew south from snowy climates and are arriving at the marsh to make it their winter home. Bird-watching opportunities abound at this fresh water wetlands.

As visitors walk around the ponds, they might be treated to the sight and songs of the white-crowned sparrows and yellow-rumped warblers as they feed on insects in the trees.

"Visitors may see Canada geese, white pelicans and more than a dozen species of ducks," said Trude Hurd, project director for Sea and Sage Audubon. Partnering with IRWD, Audubon provides volunteers to lead bird watching walks on the second Sunday of the month. Binoculars are available for loan.

On Jan. 1, Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count takes place. IRWD's marsh is one of 15 local sites in which different species of birds are counted over a 24-hour period. Hurd said this nationwide event has been observed for about 100 years.

IRWD marsh expert Denger also recommends winter for fabulous nature photos. "The lighting is perfect for that closeup shot and the clear air opens up wide panoramas, full of glassy water, puffy white clouds and distant snow-capped mountains." So, come join us at the marsh this winter.

IRWD OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:

- Friday, December 23, 2005
- Monday, December 26, 2005
- Friday, December 30, 2005
- Monday, January 2, 2006

SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

Community service hours are available for all volunteer tree planting activities. For more information call (949) 453-5670 or visit their Web site at www.shadetreepartnership.org.

FAMILIES FORWARD NEWS

The Families Forward pantry is in dire need of nonperishable food items. Food is needed now to insure that families in need continue to receive food. Items most needed include peanut butter, jelly, canned stew, tomato sauce, canned beans, canned meat, rice mix, plain rice, soup, and condensed milk. Donations may be delivered to 9221 Irvine Blvd., Irvine, 92618 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday. All donations are greatly appreciated and needed. To learn how you can contribute to this program, call Brittany Simon at (949) 552-2727, Ext. 231.

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF IRVINE

New to Irvine and want to get involved? Recently retired and have some extra hours to fill? A stay-at-home mom who wants adult interaction? An empty nester who enjoys volunteering? A professional who wants to give back to her community? Be part of this nationally recognized, dynamic group of like-minded women - Assistance League® of Irvine. New members are welcome any time. Visit National Assistance League's Web site at www.nal.org/home2.cfm. For further information call (949) 798-5020.

Special note: Assistance League of Irvine would like to thank the Irvine community for helping to support our philanthropy projects through their generous donations to our Assistance League of Irvine Thrift and Gift Store and through their shopping patronage. Thank you so much.

CITY OF IRVINE AND IRVINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

The Irvine Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the City of Irvine, recently "adopted" the City of Slidell, Louisiana – a small community of 30,000 located northeast of New Orleans – for the purpose of providing disaster recovery assistance. Irvine will help coordinate relief efforts by means of the "Slidell Recovery Gift Card Program." Citizens can purchase gift cards from a select list of national vendors and drop them off at designated City locations for transport to Slidell. Visit www.cityofirvine.org or www.irvinechamber.com for more information.

*As a service to residents we feature a calendar of community events in "Pipelines." Events or activities of community-wide interest can be included in the calendar on a space available basis. We reserve the right to print those items of most interest to the public. If your group has an event you would like to include, please submit written information **at least two months** prior to your event. Please include date, time, place, contact person's name and telephone number. Mail your request to: Public Affairs Department, IRWD, P.O. Box 57000, Irvine, CA 92619-7000, fax your request to (949) 453-0527, or e-mail your request to velazque@irwd.com.*

The mission of Irvine Ranch Water District, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer service in an efficient, cost effective manner and environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction.

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Pipelines

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For comments, suggestions or questions, call (949) 453-5500.

**24 Hour Service
(949) 453-5300**

Should you discover a disruption in your water service or other problems call the IRWD 24-hour emergency line and a representative will assist you.

Visit the IRWD Web site:

www.irwd.com

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