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Irvine Ranch  
WATER DISTRICT

## Water-Saving Tip of the Month

# Get Rebate on Smart Controller

About 60% of an average home's water goes toward the landscape. Save water with one or more of IRWD's outdoor rebates.

This month, consider WaterSense-labeled irrigation controllers, which act like thermostats for your sprinkler system, telling it when to turn on and off. These controllers, which can be added to your existing system, use local weather and landscape data to tailor watering schedules to actual conditions on the site, instead of relying on a clock and a preset schedule.



Smart controller

With proper installation, programming, and maintenance, WaterSense-labeled controllers help watering schedules match your plants' water needs.



Visit [RightScapeNow.com/rebates](https://RightScapeNow.com/rebates) for more information.

## IRWD's Marsh Has New Distinction



Tucked away in the heart of Irvine suburbia, more than 230 species of birds find refuge. Adults and children tour the surroundings, where each year more than a billion gallons of urban water runoff is cleaned naturally.

IRWD's San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary has long been a hidden gem. But its lack of fame is about to change: The international Society of Wetland Scientists has named the ecological preserve California's only "Wetland of Distinction"—one of just 32 in the nation. Candidates are judged on biology, ecology, conservation status and public access.

"This is a very prestigious recognition," General Manager Paul Cook said. "It showcases the significant work done by Irvine Ranch Water District to protect native plant and animal species, to create a public oasis and educational center, and to improve the quality of water that flows into the environmentally sensitive Upper Newport Bay."

Established in 1996, the 320-acre marsh offers 12 miles of walking trails. It is open to the public every day during daylight, and hosts educational field trips, tours and activities conducted by Sea and Sage Audubon and Discovery Cube Orange County.

"As one of very few freshwater marsh habitats left in the South Coast area, it provides a crucial habitat for migratory bird species," said IRWD wetlands scientist Mo Wise.

Yet Wise is most proud of the marsh's role cleaning urban runoff to protect the Back Bay. Sunlight deactivates harmful bacteria, and marsh plants and sedimentation capture pollutants. The marsh removes more than 33,000 pounds of nitrogen, 140 pounds of selenium, 36 pounds of copper, 4,929 pounds of trash, and 47 tons of sediment each year.

For more, visit [IRWD.com/san-joaquin-marsh](https://IRWD.com/san-joaquin-marsh).

# 2019 Vision Leads to 2020 Efficiency

It's important to make the most of the resources we have. That's why IRWD continues to innovate in the production and use of recycled water, and why renewable energy is an ever-increasing part of our plan.

Here's a look back at some of our top accomplishments for 2019, and a glimpse into what's on tap for 2020:

## Recycle Water

- IRWD distributed more than 10 billion gallons of recycled water in 2019—enough to fill 15,000 Olympic swimming pools. Every gallon of that water used for irrigation, flushing toilets, cooling buildings and commercial processes saves a gallon of drinking water.
- Great Park Ice & FivePoint Arena opened as the second rink in the nation to use recycled

water to make its ice, saving 4.3 million gallons of drinking water a year.

- CUCINA enoteca Irvine was named IRWD's first-ever WaterStar Restaurant for adopting water-saving devices.
- IRWD's WaterStar program, showcasing water-efficient businesses, was honored with the O.C. Business Council's Sustainable and Green Development Award.
- The proposed Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project will continue its environmental review process into 2020. The project will add capacity to store recycled water.

## Renewable Energy

- The District just completed installation of 2,360 solar modules capable of producing 1.1 megawatts at the Baker Water Treatment Plant in Lake Forest.

## Ask Juan



**Q:** Someone told me to consider bioswales when redoing my landscape. What is a bioswale?

**A:** This is a timely

question, because we're in the rainy season, and your goal should be to keep the water on your landscape, out of the storm drains. A bioswale will help. It is a landscape feature that slows and collects stormwater or irrigation runoff. You shape the land to create low points like a dry creek where water can run, collect and sink into the ground. A bioswale also qualifies as a sustainability component, which is required for our turf-removal rebates. Learn more at [RightScapeNow.com/rebates](https://RightScapeNow.com/rebates), or sign up for our Turf Be Gone workshop (details at right).



Got landscape questions? Email [AskJuan@IRWD.com](mailto:AskJuan@IRWD.com) or ask on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with [#irwdcommunity](https://www.facebook.com/irwdcommunity). See past answers at [RightScapeNow.com/landscape-resources/ask-juan](https://RightScapeNow.com/landscape-resources/ask-juan).

## California Native Corner Juan's January Plant: Lemonade Berry

Each month, I will unveil a recommended California Native plant. This month's pick is the Lemonade Berry. This plant has leathery evergreen leaves, with flowers from February to May. The seed or fruit is dark red, block-shaped and sticky, and has a tart flavor that gives the plant its name. The berries are a significant food source for birds and small mammals, and the thick sprawling form provides excellent animal shelter. Lemonade Berry is extremely drought tolerant once established. Check out [calscape.org](https://calscape.org) for details. — Juan



## Save the Date

### Turf Be Gone

Wednesday, Feb. 12  
6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

IRWD  
Multi-Purpose Room  
15600 Sand Canyon Ave.  
Irvine

Learn the steps to remove your lawn and replace it with a water-efficient garden.

### Don't Spring a Leak: Checking Fixtures

Wednesday, March 4  
6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

IRWD  
Multi-Purpose Room  
15600 Sand Canyon Ave.  
Irvine

Learn to prevent waste inside and out at this special workshop during Fix a Leak Week. We'll discuss how to examine your sprinkler components and find leaks from indoor fixtures.

**Sign-up required:**  
[RightScapeNow.com/events](https://RightScapeNow.com/events)

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