

Palmdale Water District FAQ Cash for Grass Program



What plants may I use in my water-efficient landscape?

The Cash for Grass Replacement Program requires that PWD customers follow the City of Palmdale's approved plant list guidelines. When plants mature they must cover at least sixty percent (60%) of the converted area. Cash for Grass program applicants should retain any existing trees as they are a valuable resource and provide shade to the home and landscape. Click here to view the City of Palmdale's landscape ordinance.

[\[http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html\]](http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html)

May I receive a rebate for replacing my lawn with artificial turf?

The Palmdale Water District will accept artificial turf as a substitute for irrigated lawn. Any artificial turf must be permeable (allowing both air and water to pass through freely) and must meet all other program terms and conditions including, but not limited to, compliance with installation standards.

May I receive credit for putting in a patio, a walkway or an extension to my driveway?

The District will allow credit if a permeable product is used. Permeable products include permeable pavement, gravel, or brick or flagstone with permeable, mortarless materials for grout lines (such as sand and gravel). All of these options reduce the amount of water runoff by allowing water to pass through the surface and be absorbed into the soil beneath. Keep in mind that the conversion area must still meet the sixty percent (60%) living plant coverage requirement.

I turned off the water on my grass and it has started to die. May I still qualify for the program?

No. Since the purpose of the program is to reduce existing water demand, an applicant must be currently maintaining a grass lawn. Once an applicant has sent in an application and has had a pre-conversion site review with a representative from the District, the applicant may then stop watering the lawn. A Palmdale Water District representative must validate turf areas before an applicant starts the conversion project.

May I receive a rebate for replacing my high water use grass with a lower water use grass?

No. This program provides incentive to convert grass to alternative types of landscaping, including trees, shrubs and groundcovers. These use less water than even the lowest water use grass. However, the District does encourage homeowners to use low water use grass in those areas where grass is needed or desired.

If I have children and/or a dog, how do I incorporate water efficient landscaping into my yard?

One of the seven principles of water efficient landscaping is functional lawn areas. An applicant does not have to eliminate all of its lawn area to participate. Some conversion projects simply involve reducing the amount of lawn area or creating a buffer area around the edge of an existing lawn.

What if my Homeowner's Association or CC&Rs requires me to keep grass in my yard?

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all laws, rules, and appropriate HOA and CC&R policies that may apply are anticipated when commencing a landscaping project. Applicants should also check with the City of Palmdale regarding its laws, rules and ordinances,

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as well as for appropriate plants and materials. Please see the City of Palmdale's related ordinances here for more information. [http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html]

What is mulch and why is it required?

The most common types of mulch are decorative rock or bark. Mulch helps maintain the moisture level. Wood mulches help retain the temperature of the soil. Without mulch, wind and heat pull the moisture out of the soil and more water is then needed to keep plants healthy. Also, the temperature of the soil constantly fluctuates causing plants a lot of stress. Additional benefits include the reduction of weed growth, erosion and certain insect diseases. The City of Palmdale's ordinances and engineering standards only require 2" of mulch. [http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html]

May I still get a rebate for removing my high water use plants?

No. The District's Cash for Grass program focuses solely on the removal of turf grass. To conserve water, please keep in mind that most shrub beds may be watered more effectively by converting to a drip irrigation system.

I have many plants surrounding the grass that I'm removing. Will these plants count toward the 60 percent (60%) coverage requirement?

Yes. A District representative inspector may approve existing plants or shrubs that may be used as part of the 60 percent (60%) conversion factor. The existing plants, shrubs, or trees must be approved at the first site visit. The plant conversion sheet has a location for approved existing plants.

Why does the District require plants?

This program encourages the use of water efficient landscaping, and the District promotes attractive landscaping in order to encourage others to participate in the program. Trees, shrubs and groundcovers provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, supply oxygen, reduce soil erosion, give wildlife a home, decrease energy use, reduce stormwater runoff, and save water.

Do plants have to cover 60 percent (60%) of the conversion area when you come and inspect my landscape?

An applicant may choose plants of any size. Planting smaller plants (1 gallon) are less expensive and have a tendency to adapt better to their new environment. The District uses the full mature value of the plant type to determine plant coverage. The District has a plant coverage worksheet and it may be downloaded from the District's web site (www.palmdalewater.org).

I don't like the desert look. What are my options?

Water efficient landscaping can consist of much more than rocks and cactus. There are hundreds of plants that use very little, if any, water. With proper design and plant selection, an applicant can accomplish almost any desired look and still save water.

Do I have to use a weed barrier?

Currently, no. Weed barriers are generally recommended in areas that have a particular weed problem (i.e. areas where Bermuda grass is being removed or under permeable surfaces such as patios and walkways where plants will not be grown). If a weed barrier is used, the District requires that it be permeable allowing both water and air to penetrate. PWD customers are advised to check with the City of Palmdale for approved materials. The City of Palmdale will be requiring a weed barrier underneath all mulch of the next time it revises its engineering

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standards. Please see the City of Palmdale's related ordinances here for more information. [http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html]

Why do I need a filter and pressure regulator?

The emitters on a drip irrigation system have very small openings for water to pass through. A filter prevents sediment from clogging emitters, ensuring that plants will get the correct amount of water. A pressure regulator keeps the irrigation system at the manufacturer's recommended pressure (usually between 20 and 40 pounds per square inch). Not installing a pressure regulator may cause fittings and lines to fail, creating wasteful breaks and leaks in irrigation systems.

What is considered to be an efficient irrigation system?

The installation of an efficient irrigation system begins with good design. A low volume drip system is a proper choice for trees, plants and shrubs applying water directly to the plants roots. For turf areas, systems must apply water uniformly over the desired area with a minimum of overspray into adjacent areas. There are sprinkler heads on the market today that offer low precipitation rates (such as rotating spray heads) and that save water and allow the soil to absorb the applied water, minimizing any runoff. The District recommends installing a smart irrigation Controller that (after proper programming) automatically adjusts itself to provide the right amount of water to your landscape. PWD customers should also check with the City of Palmdale for proper irrigation systems. The City of Palmdale requires a pressure compensating bubbler in deep water wells on both sides of any tree on all new landscaping. Please see the City of Palmdale's related ordinances here for more information. [http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/city_hall/codes.html]

What do I need to send in to get the rebate?

Palmdale Water District customers interested in participating in the Cash for Grass program must complete an official application *prior* to beginning any landscaping work. Landscaping changes made before the application is approved will not count toward the Cash for Grass program. Please [click here](#) to download the Palmdale Water District Cash for Grass Application.

Where can I go to dispose of my grass?

Check with Waste Management in Palmdale a free one time grass drop off might be available. (WM 1200 West City Ranch Rd, (661 947-7197)

Is funding available for every rebate program?

Yes, the Palmdale Water District Board of Directors has approved funding for these programs through 2009, up to \$250,000. However, availability is subject to change without notice.

How long does the rebate process take?

It takes approximately three (3-4) weeks from the approved completion date for the Cash for Grass program.

Are there other rebates available from other agencies?

Yes, Southern California Edison (SCE) For more information, please click here. Southern California Edison [<http://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/>]

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What is the Plant Coverage Worksheet?

The Plant Coverage Worksheet is a tool for approved Cash for Grass participants to use to determine the square footage value that will be received for specific plants installed. The Plant Coverage Worksheet is available from Palmdale Water District by contacting Claudette Roberts at (661) 947-4111 x120.

What if I have additional questions regarding the Cash for Grass program?

Please contact Claudette Roberts at the Palmdale Water District at (661) 947-4111 x120.