



Long Beach Water Department
The Standard in Water Conservation &
Environmental Stewardship

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Contact: Matthew R. Veeh

(562) 570-2314

(559) 643-7496

matthew.veeh@lbwater.org

LB Water Department Sees Strong Demand for Landscape Rebate Program

Single-family home rebates completely allocated within 45 minutes of opening application system

LONG BEACH, CA – On April 7th, at 8 AM, the Long Beach Water Department began accepting applications from Long Beach residents and businesses for rebates of up to \$2,500 to help fund the replacement of grass lawns with California Friendly landscapes.

By 9 AM, the rebates had all been spoken for.

“We are very pleased with the great response we have received from our customers for this program,” said Matthew Lyons, Director of Planning and Conservation for the Long Beach Water Department. “People are really starting to recognize that California Friendly landscapes not only conserve water, but offer a host of other benefits. They require less maintenance, use less fertilizer and pesticides, decrease the impact on both upstream and downstream environments and create valuable animal habitats and personal outdoor living spaces.”

For those customers who were quick enough to get in their applications before funding ran out, they will have the opportunity to receive rebates to replace up to 1,000 square feet of grass lawn in their front yards. Successful applicants must comply with a set list of requirements, which includes taking an online course and getting rid of any existing inefficient irrigation systems, among others.

The Water Department stopped accepting applications for the program on Monday of this week. Due to the overwhelming response, many applicants were sent letters notifying them that they had been placed on a ranked wait list, which indicated their number in line. The letter explained that applicants will be pulled from the wait list if funding becomes available for their projects.

Kevin Wattier, General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department, had some additional good news for waitlisted applicants who may be worried about whether or not they will eventually receive funds to re-landscape their lawns.

“Now that we know there is considerable demand for this program, we are expecting to fund a second round of rebates in the fall,” said Mr. Wattier. “I encourage those of you on the wait list to



Long Beach Water Department
The Standard in Water Conservation &
Environmental Stewardship

continue to wait until the fall, if possible, because there is a good chance that many of your projects will eventually be funded.”

Although the program limits the square footage for each applicant’s landscape eligible for the rebate to 1,000 square feet, the average area applied for by applicants was slightly more than 800 sq. ft., meaning that well over 100 customers will receive rebates in this first round of funding.

The Water Department estimates that by switching from grass lawns to California Friendly gardens, these properties have the potential to **save a combined 40 million gallons** of water over the next ten years.

“Every gallon of water we save through this program is another gallon of expensive imported water that we no longer have to purchase,” said Paul Blanco, President of the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners. “As more of our customers switch over to drought-tolerant landscapes, we anticipate seeing a continued, steady decrease in water consumption in Long Beach.”

Current applicants and other interested customers can continue to read about the rebate program and California Friendly landscaping in general, by visiting www.lblawntogarden.com.

The [Long Beach Water Department](#) is an urban, southern California, retail water supply agency and the standard in water conservation and environmental stewardship.

###