



Water Conservation Update

Water Conservation Division
City of Austin | Austin Water



Revisions to existing incentives

- **Increased rebate amounts (effective Dec. 1, 2019)**
 - Based on updated cost benchmark of avoided/delayed LCRA payments
- **“Bucks for Business” (effective Dec. 1, 2019)**
 - Water balance using AW approved calculator required for alternative water systems
 - Annual progress reports required for alternative water systems in new development
- **Commercial Kitchen Equipment (effective Dec. 1, 2019)**
 - Increased maximum rebate amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000

Rebate revisions (con't)

- **Commercial Irrigation System Improvement (effective March 1, 2020)**
 - Increased rebate amount for central computer controller system from \$5,000 to \$10,000
 - Added pressure reduction components (other than PRV)
 - Removed once-per-lifetime application limitation to allow phased applications for larger commercial properties
- **Residential Irrigation System Upgrade (effective March 1, 2020)**
 - Increased total rebate cap for each property from \$400 to \$1,000
 - Increased rebates for PRV (also for Multi-family) and converting from spray to multi-stream, multi-trajectory rotor nozzles
 - increased the rebate from \$50 to \$100 for the removal of an irrigation zone
 - Added new rebate for conversion to 6 inch sprinkler heads
 - Streamlined invoice submission process for parts and labor

Rebates/incentives being developed

- **Consolidated rebate for all residential alternative water sources (October 2020)**
 - Includes graywater and rainwater
- **“Non-traditional” incentives for alternative water systems (October 2020)**
 - Applies to new commercial development >250,000 square feet
 - Includes impact fee reductions
 - Includes “grants” totaling up to \$1 million annually

Other rebates being considered

💧 Home water use monitoring/control devices and related mobile apps

- Launch may be affected by AMI meter deployment

💧 Residential Irrigation Efficiency

- EPA WaterSense certified WiFi smart irrigation controller with flow sensors
 - 1x week watering schedule may conflict and limit effectiveness

💧 WaterWise Landscape

- Current rebate amount significantly exceeds cost benchmark
- May consider limiting rebate to landscapes with automatic irrigation systems (preliminary data shows no significant water reduction found for yards watered by hose-end sprinklers)

Other rebates considered (con't)

• **Graywater reuse (e.g., Laundry-to-Landscape)**

- Low yield/low cost negatively impacts cost/benefit
- Aquifer recharge zone limitations further negatively affects cost/benefit
- Graywater may be incorporated into alternative water rebate
- Backflow protection, permitting and enforcement an issue for graywater other than Laundry to Landscape systems

• **Revised Rainwater Harvesting**

- Current rebate amount significantly exceeds cost benchmark; RWH systems save significantly less potable water than assumed;
- Customers with RWH systems in the aggregate using more potable water than other customers without RWH systems
- Pressurized systems not shown to save more water than non-pressurized
- Maintaining or increasing rebate amount for water quality protection that does not also result in a potable water offset needs further evaluation for benefit to AW customer based on cost of service requirements

Other rebates considered (con't)

💧 Commercial Irrigation System Abandonment

- Rebate would be similar to residential program i.e., cut out the valves for each station; cap the main irrigation lines
- Section 2.4.6 (B) Environmental Criteria Manual (Model Landscape Ordinance) requirements to install an irrigation system to establish and maintain newly planted trees and required landscaping areas may conflict with rebate
- Section 2.9.2(F)(2) Utility Criteria Manual requirement for commercial and multi-family facilities to install a separate meter for common areas and outdoor purposes may conflict with the rebate
- Requirement to pay fees for irrigation meter to system that has been abandoned would be an impediment to rebate participation
- Concerns from the landscaping community about the ability to adequately water trees and maintain the city's tree canopy

Ordinances being proposed

💧 **Alternative water benchmarking and mandatory reclaimed water hook-up (April 2020)**

- Water balance submittal and meeting with staff to review alternative water use opportunities for large commercial development \geq 250,000 square feet (LDC)
- Increase distance for mandatory reclaimed water hookup from 250 to 500 feet (LDC)

💧 **Cooling towers (Dec. 2020)**

- Administrative penalties for cooling tower efficiency standards, equipment, registration, and inspection requirements (pre-2008 towers grandfathered) (WCC)
- Non-compliant cooling towers ineligible for evaporative loss wastewater billing credit (UC)

💧 **Commercial irrigation meters (Dec. 2020)**

- Add waiver provision in ECM for commercial/multi-family requirement to install separate irrigation meter if:
 - No landscape
 - No automatic irrigation system and adequate hose bibs to meet outdoor water needs
 - Well being used to meet outdoor water demands

Ordinances being proposed (con't)

💧 **AC condensate (June 2021)**

- Conforming changes to alternative water ordinances (UMC)

💧 **Cooling towers (June 2021)**

- Conforming changes to alternative water ordinances (UMC)

💧 **Irrigation system criteria (June 2021)**

- Move from UPC to ECM with prohibition in certain landscape areas and for existing residential landscapes

💧 **Residential landscape (June 2023)**

- Limits turf grass and automatic irrigation systems to 2.5 X building footprint or not more than 10,000 sq. ft., whichever is less; landscape may only include native drought tolerant plants on city's Preferred Plant List. (LDC)



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