



Quarterly E-News

Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership Newsletter Summer | 2024

Eco-Friendly Garden Tour Success!

The 2024 [Eco-Friendly Garden Tour](#) (Tour) was a success! The tour took place on Saturday, May 18th, with over 3,500 attendees visiting 26 gardens throughout Sonoma and Marin counties. Various workshops and events were held at different gardens to promote local landscaping practices. These activities included a California Native Plant Society (CNPS) plant sale, a free compost giveaway, rainwater catchment demos, and the Home Ground Habitat plant and seed sale. The UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County hosted a table at the Sonoma Garden Park, showcasing their programs, answering garden-related questions for visitors, and displaying their new water-wise demo garden. Additionally, Santa Rosa Water and Marin Water hosted tables at gardens in their service areas, providing opportunities for attendees to ask questions about various topics and allowing these agencies to promote their landscape programs to residents. The tour also featured three gardens presented by the CNPS Milo Baker Chapter.



We want to thank those who volunteered to be garden hosts and allowed the public to visit their gardens. Thank you also to those who visited the gardens. We hope everyone enjoyed their day, and we look forward to the 2025 Tour.

If you would like to include your garden or know of a garden that would like to participate in the 2025 tour, please email us at savewater@scwa.ca.gov.

Are You Climate-Ready?

Climate-ready landscapes are designed with climate change in mind. By selecting low-water use plants, implementing rainwater harvesting, and following fire-wise principles, your yard will be better equipped to withstand drought, floods, and fires. We have developed resources to help you create a landscape that can thrive into the future.



[Click here to learn more](#)

Water Smart Plants:

Water conservation is an essential consideration when designing and managing Sonoma and Marin County landscapes. Our area has a Mediterranean climate characterized by wet winters and long, dry summers with little rainfall. Plants that are suited or adapted to local conditions not only use less water but generally grow more successfully and robustly, with fewer insect and disease problems. They ultimately create a healthier and sustainable landscape.

We have recently updated the Water Smart Plant Picker tool on our website. New features include updated plant descriptions, printable plant cards (tags) for your garden for each plant, the ability to create a plant list without a login, and better-defined filters. Visit the plant picker today to help decide which plants to shop for or to share plant lists among friends and family.



Shop for Water Smart Plants at local nurseries!

The Water Smart Plant Label highlights low water use plants so that you can easily find plants that thrive in our climate. Look for a participating nursery near you!

[Click here to access the Water Smart Plant Picker tool](#)

[Nurseries that offer the Water Smart Plant Label program](#)

Recognizing 10 Years of the Garden Sense Program:

Garden Sense is a program of the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership and the UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County. Garden Sense

consultants provide support to Sonoma County residents interested in removing lawn, upgrading to efficient irrigation systems, and selecting low water use plants that will thrive in our climate.

Garden Sense consultants provide planting and irrigation advice, resources, and information on available rebate programs so that residents can feel more confident transforming their yards into low water use gardens. Since 2014, Garden Sense consultants have completed nearly 2,000 site visits and saved over an estimated 16 million gallons of water!



Garden Sense was recently presented with a Gold Resolution by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, recognizing the work of the Garden Sense consultants over the last ten years.

[Click here to learn more about Garden Sense](#)

Water and Energy Efficiency Grant Program:

Sonoma Water, on behalf of the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership (Partnership), recently launched a regional Drought Resiliency Program. The Drought Resiliency Program was awarded \$2,000,000 from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Water and Energy Efficiency Grant Program.

The funding will support water conservation rebate programs offered through the member utilities of the Partnership, which includes the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Sonoma, Cotati, Cloverdale, and Healdsburg, the Town of Windsor, and the North Marin, Marin Municipal, and Valley of the Moon Water Districts.



The program includes funding for rebates to replace lawns with low-water-use plants, high-efficiency clothes washing machines, high-efficiency toilets, smart irrigation controllers, and Flume home water monitoring devices. Additionally, the City of Santa Rosa will implement a high-efficiency fixture direct install program.

Check with your water provider for rebates or, for Santa Rosa customers, to learn more about the direct installation program!

[Click here to find your local provider](#)

Rainwater Rebates Still Available!

Did you know that with just one inch of rain falling on a 1,000 square-foot roof, you could collect 600 gallons of water? By installing a rain barrel or cistern, you can reuse the stored water from the rainy season to water your plants during the spring and summer months.



Rebates vary depending on your location and water provider.

- Sonoma County rebate options: https://www.savingwaterpartnership.org/programs_list/sonoma-county-rainwater-harvesting
- North Marin Water District customers: <https://nmwd.com/rainwater-rebate/>
- Marin Water customers: <https://www.marinwater.org/CatchTheRain>

Check out this YouTube video with the founder, Jesse Savou, of Blue Barrel Rain Catchment!

Upcoming QWEL Training:

Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) classes promote sustainable landscaping and efficient irrigation training for landscape professionals working in Sonoma and Marin Counties. The trainings not only promote sustainable landscaping but also soil properties and health, plant water needs, irrigation system maintenance, and much more.



Register now to become QWEL certified!

**July 2024 - In-Person
Training (Spanish)**

**August 2024 - Virtual Training
(English)**

Upcoming Events:

Santa Rosa Water's 2024 WaterSmart Expo:

Join Santa Rosa Water at the WaterSmart Expo on **Wednesday, June 26, from 5 to 8:30 p.m.** at the Wednesday Night Market in Courthouse Square.

The free, family-friendly Expo will host 14 interactive booths demonstrating the best ways to save water year-round. Come learn how to be



WaterSmart this summer!

- Pick up FREE water-saving devices
- Ask an expert about sustainable landscaping
- View graywater and rainwater harvesting demonstrations
- Discover native and drought-tolerant plant displays
- Learn how to check your toilets for leaks
- Register for the WaterSmart Portal to track water use online



[Click here for more information](#)

Marin County Fair to feature unique, interactive ode to water:

It may take place in Northern California's dry season, but this year's Marin County Fair is going to be all about water.

With a theme of "Make a Splash," this year's fair promises a focus on the many areas where water impacts our lives, including local watersheds, water conservation and even sea level rise.

That splashy approach has also yielded an exciting partnership: Marin Water will team with the North Marin Water District for a unique interactive experience that will guide fair attendees through the fascinating intricacies of their water's journey while also seeking to spark fair goers' interest and imagination as it relates to sustainable water use habits for their own homes and gardens.



The 2024 Marin County Fair will take place July 3rd-7th at the Marin County Civic Center.

[Click here for more information or to purchase tickets!](#)

Town of Windsor Farmers Market Sustainability Booth:

Town of Windsor staff will be hosting a sustainability booth at the Windsor Farmers Market. Come talk to Town staff about sustainable landscaping, stormwater,

NetZero Wastewater and about the Town's climate goals. There will be free giveaways and a free raffle to win an extra special yard sculpture from a local artist.

The event will take place on Sunday, July 7th from 9:30am-12:30pm.



Sonoma County Fair - "The Greatest Care of Earth":

The Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership and the UC Master Gardeners Program of Sonoma County are partnering to present "The Greatest Care of Earth" at this year's Sonoma County Fair, a climate ready landscape installation located in the outdoor annex to the Hall of Flowers. Stop by to see and learn about elements that make a garden climate ready including efficient irrigation, rainwater management, and beautiful, climate appropriate plants that provide habitat and food for beneficial insects and birds.



The 2024 Sonoma County Fair will take place August 1st-11th

[Click here for more information or to purchase tickets!](#)

Town of Windsor Wastewater Treatment Plant Open House:

Join the Town of Windsor at a special Wastewater Treatment Plant Open House on **Saturday September 7th from 10am-2pm** at the Wastewater Treatment Plant located at 8400 Windsor Rd.

Learn more about the Town's ambitious NetZero Wastewater Program, connect with other Town programs and local organizations and join in on a FREE tour of the treatment plant.

Celebrate Windsor's small town with big solutions, with an afternoon of food, games,



giveaways and MORE!

Contact sparkhurst@townofwindsor.com with any questions about this event



California American Water - Larkfield · City of Cloverdale · City of Cotati · City of Healdsburg
Marin Water · North Marin Water District · City of Petaluma · City of Rohnert Park · City of Santa Rosa
City of Sonoma · Sonoma Water · Valley of the Moon Water District · Town of Windsor

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