

NEWS RELEASE



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Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD Receives the Prestigious WaterSense® Sustained Excellence Award!

Monrovia, CA – Today, Upper District was honored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with its first WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award. Upper District received today’s award at the WaterSmart Innovations (WSI) Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Sustained Excellence Award is the highest honor the WaterSense program provides for its exceptional efforts in assisting residents and businesses save water and bring awareness to the WaterSense program.

“Throughout 2021, our award-winning partners helped people protect this precious resource by promoting WaterSense labeled products and water-efficient behaviors,” said Veronica Blette, Chief, WaterSense Branch. “Saving water is particularly critical in areas impacted by drought but is also a path to helping consumers stretch dollars by reducing their water and energy bills.”

The EPA highlighted Upper District’s creative outreach efforts to promote water efficiency in 2021 despite the continued challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Upper District remained committed to educating its residents on the importance of water use efficiency while expanding outreach strategies and increasing virtual engagement.

“We are extremely proud of our staff and their creative efforts to promote water efficiency and awareness to our communities. On behalf of the Board, we appreciate the recognition from WaterSense and remain committed to making water conservation a way of life.” said Ed Chavez, Board President for Upper District.

Upper District promoted numerous WaterSense outreach efforts throughout 2021, including Fix a Leak Week, Shower Better, Sprinkler Spruce-up, Save Water at Home, We’re for Water, Find an Irrigation Pro, and “bath hacks”. For the end of the year the Upper District produced a “12 Days of Conservation Christmas” video featuring WaterSense labeled devices, water-saving techniques, and drought-tolerant plants set to a 12 Days of Christmas jingle posted on their website, social media, and e-newsletter to over 13,000 contacts.

Upper District held *Conserve-a-palooza*, a five-week virtual program, for the second year to engage residents during the continued pandemic restrictions. The program featured weekly conservation trivia and raffled various water-efficient devices, including WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and high efficiency washer machines. Winners were announced weekly, and water-saving tips were shared during a “Water Smart Minute” video on Upper District’s website and social media.

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Additionally, Upper District modified its landscape workshops to be featured as online classes. During 2021, ten landscape and edible gardening webinars hosting over 500 residents were conducted. The workshops discussed best practices and devices to reduce landscape, outdoor, and gardening water usage, as well as WaterSense labeled products and how to find an irrigation professional who is certified by a WaterSense labeled program. The District continued their Water Smart Home Program, which provides direct installation of WaterSense labeled products and included leak kits with WaterSense labeled products and leak detection materials in a variety of languages.

Upper San Gabriel Valley supported a landscape water efficiency program with Suburban Water Systems that completely updated the landscapes in two locations and featured WaterSense labeled products. Upper District also offered water education grants of \$1,000 to projects at K-12 schools for water efficiency curriculum or projects that included lawn retrofits and other irrigation measures.

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by EPA, seeks to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering consumers and businesses simple ways to use less water with water-efficient products, homes, and services. For more information about WaterSense, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.

Upper District's mission is to provide a reliable, sustainable, diversified, and affordable portfolio of high-quality water supplies to the San Gabriel Valley; including water conservation, recycled water, storm water capture, storage, water transfers and imported water. Upper District services nearly one million people in its 144 square mile service territory. Upper District serves all or parts of the following cities: Arcadia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, City of Industry, Covina, El Monte, Glendora, Duarte, Irwindale, La Puente, Monrovia, Rosemead, San Gabriel, South El Monte, South Pasadena, Temple City, and West Covina. Governed by a five-member elected board of directors, Upper District is a member agency of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Annually, more than 78 billion gallons of water is used in Upper District's service area. For more information about Upper District, please visit our website www.upperdistrict.org or call 626-443-2297.



(Water Use Efficiency Analyst, Jennifer Aguilar accepts the 2022 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award on behalf of Upper District.)

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