

Holiday closures

IRWD offices will be closed Nov. 23 and 24 for Thanksgiving. For online service, visit IRWD.com.

pipelines

NOVEMBER 2023



Irvine Ranch
Water District

Going from blah to beautiful

After more than 35 years of parenting and grandparenting, the Hays' home was best described as well-loved. A wooden deck was rotting away, and the lawn sat unused and uninviting. Committed to making the most of their home in the years ahead, the Tustin couple reinvented their yard to make lounging out back their favorite place to be.



Linda and Scott Hay

"The online rebate application makes it really easy," Linda Hay said. "You can track the progress of your application and IRWD does a great job of keeping you in the loop and helping you along the way."

They used California native plants as the focal point of their new landscape, along with a row of drip-irrigated vegetable beds. Hardscape features included a recirculating rock fountain that brings harmony to the landscape—doubling as a water source for birds and pollinators—and a fire pit to warm evening conversations with friends and family.

The new landscaping has reduced the couple's water consumption and their monthly water bill. "Best of all," Scott Hay said, "our family and friends like to come over more often to enjoy our beautiful backyard." Read more at IRWD.com/hay.



A recirculating rock fountain brings harmony to the Hays' new landscape.

Another WaterSense award, thanks to you!

Irvine Ranch Water District has won its fifth WaterSense Excellence Award, this time for Education and Outreach, thanks in large part to customer participation in these and other water-saving promotions last year:

- **How Do You Drought**, in which more than 19,000 customers liked, shared, or commented on social media posts about saving water.
- **Better Yards by Design** expo, where over 600 customers learned more about the District's \$5 turf removal rebate program.
- **Sprinkler Repair Program**, in which more than 300 homes have taken advantage of 50% savings on repairs.
- **Fix a Leak Week**, when 110 customers submitted photos of themselves checking for leaks around their home.

The U.S. EPA's WaterSense program, epa.gov/watersense, is both a label for water-efficient products, programs and homes, and a resource of water-saving tips and information.



The science of weather and your water budget

Your landscape's water needs change with seasonal shifts in weather patterns—and that can vary, depending on where you live.

IRWD's service area has three distinct microclimates: the Coastal, Central and Foothill zones. We maintain a separate weather station in each climate or "evapotranspiration" zone to monitor exact wind and weather conditions, including air temperatures, relative humidity, precipitation, solar radiation, and wind direction and speed to calculate our customers' monthly water budgets.

To learn more and find out which zone you live in, go to IRWD.com/etzone. Click on the "MAP" link in the "Reports" section.



Q: Our family is always in the "inefficient" tier for water use, even though we live in an apartment and try to save water. What can we do?

A: IRWD calculates customer water budgets based on property type, the estimated number of residents per household, and default area of landscape.

If your family is larger than the base number of residents for your home, you may qualify for a variance to increase your water budget. The base number of residents for apartments is two; for single-family homes, it is four; and for attached homes and condominiums, it's three.

Visit IRWD.com/variance for more information, or to apply for a review of your account. Be sure to upload the appropriate documentation required.

Ask Juan



Q: Juan, I'm considering changing up my landscape and doing a little planting. Should I wait for spring to do so?

A: Why wait? Late fall is the best time to plant. Take advantage of upcoming winter rains for plants to establish deep and vast root systems. When selecting plants for your landscape, choose climate-appropriate varieties, along with California native plants that will help create habitat for local beneficial wildlife and insects to thrive.

Got landscape questions? Email AskJuan@IRWD.com or ask on Facebook or Instagram with [#irwdcommunity](https://www.facebook.com/irwdcommunity). See past answers at IRWD.com/AskJuan.

California native corner Juan's November plant: Western redbud

Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) is a beautiful shrub that can also be trained into a small- to medium-sized tree. When in bloom, it is spectacular. It is winter deciduous, with long slim branches that explode with clusters of pinkish to red flowers in late winter through spring. The blooms give way to shiny heart-shaped leaves that shimmer in the breeze. It is a perfect habitat plant that supports birds, butterflies, moths, and caterpillars. Once established, it needs very little water but does well with an occasional summer watering. — Juan



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