

Rain in the forecast?

Turn off your sprinklers for rain. Otherwise follow our winter schedule at [IRWD.com/wateringguide](https://www.irwd.com/wateringguide).

pipelines

JANUARY 2024



Irvine Ranch
Water District

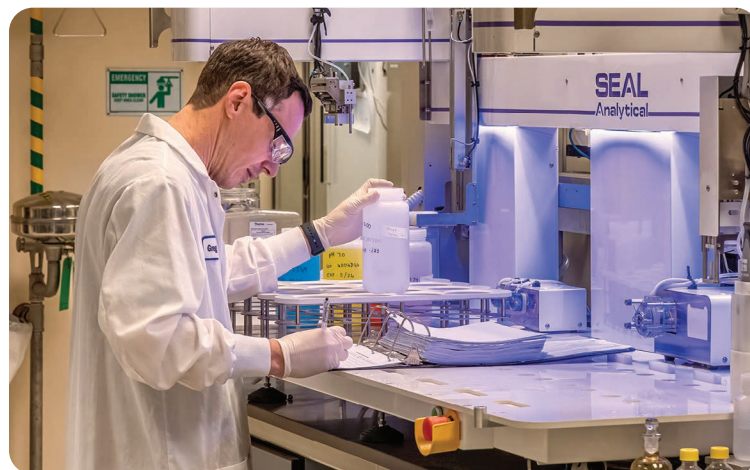
IRWD water quality lab honored for excellence

Irvine Ranch Water District's state-of-the-art water quality laboratory has been recognized with a Certificate of Excellence for achieving 100% quality data.

The certificate is the latest acknowledgement of IRWD's commitment to providing safe, high-quality drinking water to its customers—by investing in top-tier equipment and staff.

The award, based on a study of 742 laboratories, was presented by Waters ERA, a laboratory equipment provider serving commercial, research and government labs in more than 80 countries.

IRWD's Certificate of Excellence awards a superior rating to the District's laboratory evaluations, which are administered daily to monitor water quality throughout our service area.



IRWD scientists conduct more than a quarter of a million laboratory tests annually.

IRWD is vigilant about ensuring the water it delivers to customers meets the quality standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water. For more information, visit [IRWD.com/waterquality](https://www.irwd.com/waterquality).

Kudos to IRWD's latest WaterStars!

Congratulations to **Crean Lutheran High School**, **Fast5Xpress of Tustin**, and **Bandai Namco Holdings** for earning WaterStar status for outstanding water savings.



Crean Lutheran is saving 9.2 million gallons of water annually. School facilities are dual-plumbed, all indoor fixtures are water-efficient—plus, recycled water is used to irrigate the campus landscaping, including the school's athletic complex on Portola Parkway.



Fast5Xpress of Tustin is a car wash on a mission, using nontoxic, biodegradable detergents while recycling 80% of the water it uses. The result: It uses only 20 to 30 gallons per car wash, saving 1.8 million gallons of water per year.



Bandai Namco—a video game developer, publisher, and manufacturer of character merchandise—saves 1.5 million gallons of water annually with dual-plumbing, water-efficient fixtures, and drought-tolerant landscaping that includes permeable hardscape, runoff capture, and drip irrigation using recycled water.



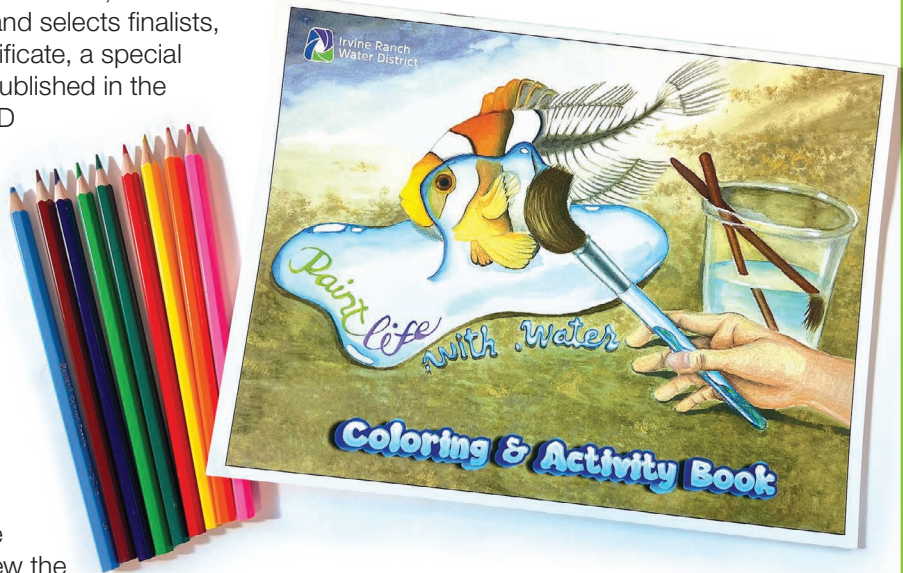
Go to [IRWD.com/waterstar](https://www.irwd.com/waterstar) to learn more.

Calling all water-wise junior artists!

Do you know a budding artist in grades K–12? Students in our service area have until Feb. 14 to enter the annual water awareness poster contest for a chance to win great prizes!

The contest has three rounds. First, IRWD staff judges local entries and selects finalists, honoring them with a certificate, a special gift, and a chance to be published in the IRWD coloring book. IRWD finalists then move on to an Orange County competition, and those finalists compete at the Southern California level. Grand prize winners have a chance to win an iPad and be published in the annual “Being Water Wise is...” student art calendar.

This year’s theme is “Save Blue. Live Green.” To review the rules and enter the 2024 contest, visit [IRWD.com/postercontest](https://www.irwd.com/postercontest).



Q: We want to kick off the new year with a new landscape. How should we get started?

A: Start by applying for our \$5-per-square-foot turf removal rebate at [IRWD.com/turfrebate](https://www.irwd.com/turfrebate). This will begin the process so you can get approved while you map out your design and shop for supplies. Do not remove your lawn until you’re approved for the program.

For design ideas, check out our garden galleries, plant searches and other online resources at [IRWD.com/landscape](https://www.irwd.com/landscape), and take advantage of our irrigation rebates at [IRWD.com/rebates](https://www.irwd.com/rebates) to upgrade your system.

Finally, don’t forget to mulch. IRWD will cover half the cost of bulk purchases made through the end of the year. Go to [IRWD.com/mulchmadness](https://www.irwd.com/mulchmadness) for details.

Ask Juan



Q: Hi Juan, I want to plant some citrus trees like Meyer lemon, grapefruit, and mandarin. Any tips?

A: Citrus trees do best when planted in the spring, so it’s best to wait. Plant in a location with well-drained soil and 6 to 8 hours of direct sun exposure. Build basins around newly planted trees, water them deeply and allow the soil to dry out slightly before watering again—two to three times per week for the first year.

Consider using organic fertilizers that contain trace micronutrients like iron, zinc, and magnesium. Fertilize your citrus in January or February, just before bloom, and again in May.

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](https://www.irwd.com/AskJuan).

California native corner Juan’s January plant: Douglas iris

Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) is a striking winter-blooming wildflower that spreads by rhizomes, forming large clumps of blossoms in showy violet to pale cream. It prefers part or full shade, is very drought tolerant, and does well in rich clay soils. It’s excellent for mass planting, raised planters or just as a flowering accent. — Juan



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