



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State-wide smart irrigation controller rebates save water and money

Changes coming to rebate program

SALT LAKE CITY – Changes are coming to the Utah Division of Water Resources’ smart irrigation controller rebate program. The current program rebates 50% of the cost (up to \$150) when you purchase an eligible WaterSense labeled smart controller. The program is transitioning to a fixed rebate of up to \$75 beginning Nov. 1.

“Smart controller costs have come down since the program’s inception in 2018. Now you can get a great controller starting as low as \$59,” said Marcie Larson, the division’s manager over water conservation and public information. “Currently the average rebate is about \$55, so the new fixed-rate program that gives consumers up to \$75 is a great deal and also allows more rebates to be awarded. The current rebate works well for those who want to purchase a more expensive controller.”

In the 2020 General Legislative session, the legislature directed the division to switch to a fixed-rebate program. The change goes into effect Nov. 1, which gives participants time to determine which program works best for them and get their rebate turned in (applicants must apply for rebate within 30 days of purchase). The statewide rebate program is administered through [Utah Water Savers](#).

“This change is designed to provide ample opportunity for everyone who wants a smart controller to afford one because the rebate can cover the entire cost of some models,” said Larson. “We’re all responsible to make sure we’re doing our part to save Utah’s most precious resource. These controllers are a simple way to do that.”

The biggest outdoor water savings happen in the spring and in the fall, which makes now the perfect time to cash in on the state’s smart controller rebate program.

“The majority of the water savings happen at the beginning and end of the irrigation season when the temperatures are fluctuating,” Shelby Ericksen, the division’s conservation coordinator said. “In the middle of the summer, the division’s [Weekly Lawn Watering Guide](#) recommends three waterings per week for the entire state. As temperatures change, so do watering needs, and cutting back your waterings by just one saves an average yard about 3,000 gallons, so the water savings – and money – really add up.”

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Utah Department of Natural Resources Water Resources

Smart controllers take the guesswork out of how often and how long to water. These devices connect to Wi-Fi and access weather data and adjust the watering schedule to account for rain, temperature, humidity, UV index and even evapotranspiration or “ET” (simply put, the process of evaporating water from leaves through plant transpiration). ET is important because if you can determine how much water has entered and left plants and the surrounding soil, you can determine how much water a landscape needs at any point in time.

With a smart controller, you can “set it and forget it” because you’re letting technology make the watering adjustments your landscape needs. Money-saving rebates and information are found at UtahWaterSavers.com.

Background information

The rebate program provides a way for those who want a smart controller the ability to afford it. Through incentivizing and encouraging Utahns to save its most precious resource, water, Utah’s waterwise ethic will be enhanced by individuals choosing to be waterwise. In the 2017 Legislative General Session, the Utah Legislature and Governor Herbert approved \$750,000 for ongoing funding for water efficiency rebates and \$300,000 carryover. In June 2020, the budget for ongoing funds was cut to \$700,000 and the program changed to a fixed-rebate program.

Envision Utah’s 2015 survey [Your Utah. Your Future](#). found that 85% of Utahns want to reduce per capita water use. In general, human behavior is hard to change without reason, the rebates provide a reason for people to change behavior and help reduce Utah’s water use.

About the Division of Water Resources

The Utah Division of Water Resources is one of seven divisions housed under the [Department of Natural Resources](#). Tasked with planning, conserving, developing and protecting Utah’s water resources, the Division of Water Resources serves as Utah’s water steward. Visit water.utah.gov to learn more about the division.

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