



News from EMWD

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For Immediate Release

Water-wise gardens recognized

Perris, CA (May 1, 2009)—When it comes to embracing alternatives to traditional, water-intensive gardening, sometimes seeing is believing. Although much has been said and written about “California-friendly landscaping” and “water-wise gardening,” residents will have several opportunities in May to appreciate good gardening examples that save water and still produce lush landscapes.

On Saturday, May 9, Eastern Municipal Water District will host a Water-Wise Demonstration Garden Grand Opening from 10 am to 2 pm at its Perris headquarters (2270 Trumble Road) to showcase water-efficient landscaping and irrigation methods. This is part of a project that will replace 57 acres of traditional landscaping, which includes 8.75 acres of turf grass.

“Residents have often asked us for good local landscaping examples that can be incorporated into their own yards,” said Ron Sullivan, EMWD board president. “And that’s why we began two years ago to show what can be done well by reducing the amount of turf grass, replacing wide swaths with water-efficient ground covers, using hardscape more appropriately and installing water-efficient irrigation systems.

“Even though we’ve always used recycled water for our landscaping, we’re showing that we can reduce our own irrigation demands by 75 percent or more,” he said.

EMWD's demonstration garden is partially funded with donations from Synthetic Landscape America, Toro, Rainbird and Irrrometer.

For San Jacinto Valley residents, one garden tour and contest will also be held May 9 from 10 am to 3 pm. Sponsored by Valley Beautiful, a civic group that promotes water-wise and native landscapes, the front and back yards of five home gardens will be viewed.

Some are smaller tract homes that incorporate arroyos (dry river beds) and even appropriate water features. One is a larger hillside property that has been planted with several types of oak trees and other natives, and has evolved over the past two decades into a mature, shade-dappled garden. Docents will be on hand at each location to help answer questions about the gardens. Tour participants can vote for the best water-wise garden.

Residents interested in this tour should contact Carol Tellis (951-927-0134) or Diane Mitchell at dkmitchell@verizon.net for tickets and maps to the locations. Tickets are \$10 for adults and children are free, with the proceeds going to prizes and future gardening programs.

One other opportunity for residents is a chance to win up to \$1,000 in prizes for front yard residential water-wise landscapes. Applications must be received by June 1 and homes must be within the service areas of Western and Eastern municipal water districts, including customers of Rancho California Water District, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District, Riverside Public Utilities and the city of Corona.

Applicants will be judged on attractive use of water-wise landscaping, design, appropriate plant selection and maintenance, and efficient methods of irrigation.

Applications and detailed judging criteria are found online at www.westernlandscapecontest.com or by calling 951-789-5000.

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EMWD is the freshwater, wastewater service and recycled water provider to a 555-square mile area from Moreno Valley southward along the I-215 corridor to Temecula and eastward to Hemet and San Jacinto. Approximately 675,000 people live and work in this area. In addition to its own water customers, EMWD supplements water to eight local water agencies and municipalities that have their own water departments. EMWD operates four water reclamation facilities and treats some 45 million gallons of wastewater daily. More information can be found at EMWD's web site www.emwd.org.