

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

CHINO BASIN
Water Conservation District



Table of Contents

2 Letter from the General Manager

4 About Us, Mission & Vision, Service Area

6 CBWCD Water Recharge Metrics

8 Infrastructure Security

10 Conservation Programs Metrics

12 CBWCD's YouTube Channel Emerges as a Major Platform for Delivering Water Conservation Education

14 Community Engagement Metrics

16 Waterwise Lotería Wins EPIC Award

18 Board of Directors

21 Employee Spotlight: George Jimenez

22 Save Water with Us

Letter from the General Manager

Fiscal Year 2024–2025 marked the conclusion of the Chino Basin Water Conservation District's year-long celebration of its 75th Anniversary. As we closed this milestone year, we reflected on how the District was founded by a group of concerned farmers bringing forth an idea for a vote of the people, and on the enduring relationship between the District and the community it serves today.

The Chino Basin Water Conservation District was officially created on December 5, 1949, when the results of a November election were read into the minutes of a meeting of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. In that same election, voters also selected the first Board of Directors for each of the District's seven divisions, setting the foundation for local governance, accountability, and community representation that continues today.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the Chino Valley, as the area was called, consisted of several small communities surrounded by farmland. Dairies in Chino supplied a booming Los Angeles with local milk. Our vineyards were among the first in California – some of them planted before tractors were widely used. Lemons and oranges grown by local farming families were shipped all the way to the East Coast in boxes decorated by iconic citrus labels. Our community's farmers were intimately familiar with water levels in their wells, as they relied on them for daily use and for irrigation. At one point, it was noted that wells were dropping as much as seven feet per year. Recharging the aquifer was an urgent matter, connected to each person's household needs and business success.



However, in the last 75 years we have been fortunate enough to develop multiple sources of water, and most of us get clean drinking water delivered straight to our faucets. In the water industry, we do a great job of talking to each other about water, but reaching out to the community requires a different touch. Therefore, the District created a Waterwise Loteria deck, celebrating our Waterwise Demonstration Garden and the California native plants and animals that call our community home. In November, ninety-two community members played Waterwise Loteria at our first annual Loteria game night and learned about native plants and ways to save water as they competed for prizes that included California Native plants.

In commemoration of our December founding, the District hosted a community celebration in our Waterwise Demonstration Garden, offering free photos with Santa for families from across the service area. It was a simple and heartfelt way to thank our community for 75 years of trust, partnership, and shared commitment to water resilience. As we look ahead, that partnership with the communities we serve remains our greatest strength.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Willis

GENERAL MANAGER

Chino Basin Water Conservation District



About Us

The Chino Basin Water Conservation District (CBWCD) was formed in 1949 to protect and preserve the Chino Groundwater Basin for the San Bernardino County communities that rely on it as a water source. We provide services to increase water supply by recharging the Chino Groundwater Basin through the operation and maintenance of eight large-scale percolation basins. These properties capture stormwater runoff that would otherwise be lost and allow it to be stored underground for later use by area water providers. In collaboration with other local agencies, we also manage these sites to allow for additional groundwater recharge through the percolation of recycled water and imported water.

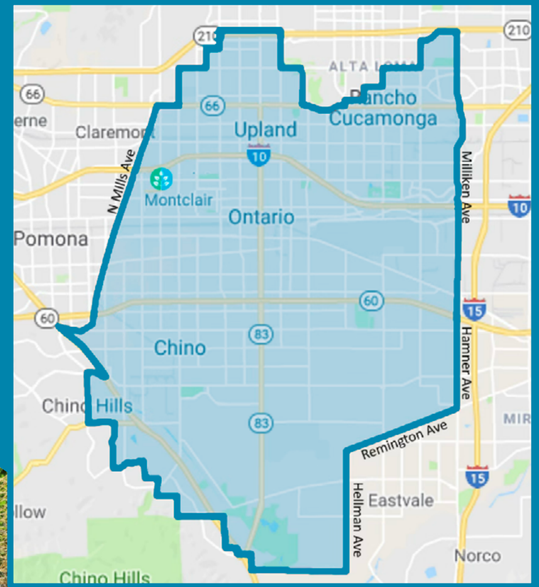
The Waterwise Community Center, located in Montclair, serves as the public face of the District, offering our community free resources and inspiration for water conservation. The Waterwise Community Center provides a nexus in which staff can focus on reducing water demand through community engagement and conservation programming. We provide free resources, events, and workshops to inspire and empower community members of all ages to be stewards of our local water supply.

The Waterwise Community Center's Demonstration Garden is free and open to the public six days a week. It offers a living example of the wide varieties of waterwise plants that thrive in our warm, sunny, Southern California climate.

MISSION: PROTECTING AND REPLENISHING OUR REGIONAL GROUNDWATER SUPPLY SINCE 1949.

VISION: Ensuring our community understands the true value of water and uses it wisely in every home, every business and every neighborhood, while expanding our local water supply through basin recharge.

SERVICE AREA: Our formal service area includes all or part of the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Montclair, Ontario, Fontana, Rancho Cucamonga, and Upland.





CBWCD Water Recharge Metrics

INFILTRATION TOTAL RECHARGED

FY25: 13,407 AF
FY24: 29,700 AF
FY23: 9,687 AF
FY22: 2,433 AF
FY21: 2,807 AF
FY20: 11,980 AF
FY19: 8,621 AF
FY18: 21,678 AF

IMPORTED WATER

FY25: 10,660 AF
FY24: 25,952 AF
FY23: 4,418 AF
FY22: 98 AF
FY21: 1,564 AF
FY20: 8,089 AF
FY19: 3,962 AF
FY18: 19,272 AF

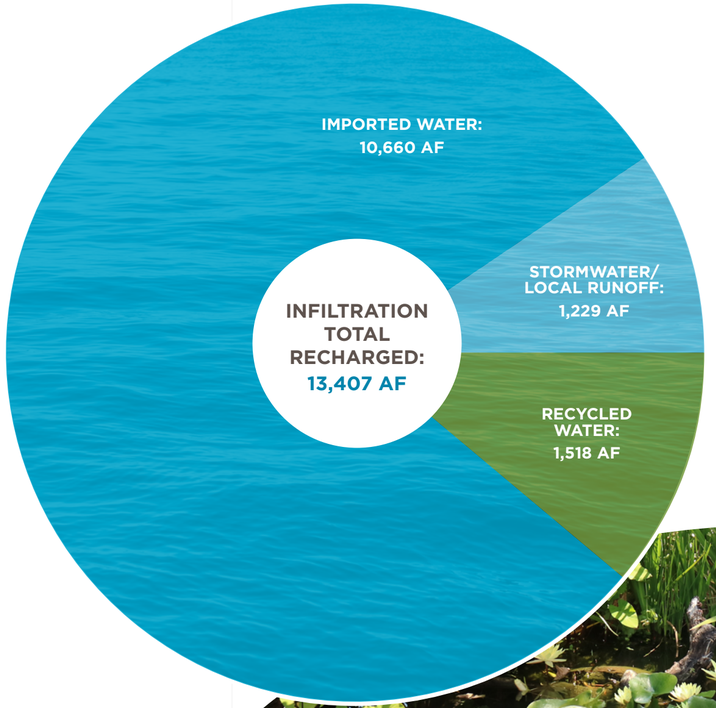
RECYCLED WATER

FY25: 1,518 AF
FY24: 625 AF
FY23: 934 AF
FY22: 623 AF
FY21: 396 AF
FY20: 1,585 AF
FY19: 1,842 AF
FY18: 1,771 AF

STORMWATER/LOCAL RUNOFF

FY25: 1,229 AF
FY24: 3,123 AF
FY23: 4,335 AF
FY22: 1,712 AF
FY21: 847 AF
FY20: 2,306 AF
FY19: 2,816 AF
FY18: 635 AF

An acre-foot (AF) is about 325,851 gallons of water, enough water to cover an acre of land, about the size of a football field, one foot deep.



ANNUAL PRECIPITATION:

(Precipitation data from Ontario Airport – Ontario, CA. National Weather Service. January – December 2024)

2024: 16.44 inches
2023: 21.90 inches
2022: 5.73 inches
2021: 12.03 inches
2020: 9.83 inches
2019: 18.34 inches
2018: 8.11 inches

WATER CAPTURED AT CBWCD DEMONSTRATION GARDEN, PARK, AND PARKING LOT:

(January – December 2024)

2,365,678 gallons



Securing Our Infrastructure
(and Being a Good Neighbor)

Brooks Basin is one of the Chino Basin Water Conservation District's eight groundwater recharge basins, located in the City of Montclair. Like many of the District's facilities, it sits in the middle of an active community—bordered by a residential neighborhood to the north, industrial businesses on multiple sides, and the Union Pacific Railroad corridor along its southern boundary.

Because of this unique setting, Brooks Basin has occasionally experienced challenges common to properties near major transportation corridors. At times, individuals entered the basin property without authorization, including people using the site as a shortcut between the railroad corridor and nearby residential, commercial, and industrial areas. In addition to creating safety concerns, these incidents sometimes resulted in fence damage, vandalism, and concerns from nearby residents and business owners.

During FY 2024–2025, the District completed a major fencing improvement project to help address these issues and strengthen overall site security. In 2024, the District installed more than 1,200 linear feet of ornamental iron and steel fencing and new gates around Brooks Basin. This fencing is designed to be more durable and more effective than traditional chain-link fencing, while also presenting a clean, attractive appearance that complements the surrounding neighborhood.

Since installation, the improvements have reduced unauthorized access and vandalism, and feedback from the community has been strongly positive.

This project reflects the District's commitment to protecting public safety, safeguarding critical recharge infrastructure, and being a good neighbor to the residents and businesses that surround its facilities.

New fence at Brooks Basin *–Welded Wire Mesh Fencing & Gates*





Conservation Programs
Metrics

LANDSCAPE EFFICIENCY AUDITS

FY25: 45 landscape efficiency audits with the potential to save 3.7 million gallons or 11.25 acre-feet of water per year.

FY24: 58 landscape efficiency audits with the potential to save 2.7 million gallons or 8.2 acre-feet of water per year.

FY23: 111 landscape efficiency audits with the potential to save 23.8 million gallons or 73 acre-feet of water per year.

FY22: 148 landscape efficiency audits with the potential to save 4.4 million gallons or 13.7 acre-feet of water per year.

FY21: 16 landscape efficiency audits were conducted, potentially saving 16.3 million gallons or 50.16 acre-feet of water per year.

FY20: 144 audits conducted

FY19: 161 audits conducted

FY18: 106 audits conducted

FY17: 49 audits conducted

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPE WORKSHOPS & ATTENDEES

FY25: 19 in-person and two online workshops with 444 attendees

FY24: 29 in-person and one online workshop with 526 attendees

FY23: 11 online workshops and 30 in-person workshops with 1,084 attendees

FY22: 35 online workshops with 2,389 attendees.

FY21: 44 online workshops with 2,359 attendees.

FY20: 6 online workshops and 33 in-person workshops with 1,208 attendees

FY19: 35 workshops with 893 attendees

FY18: 22 workshops with 385 attendees



**CBWCD programs were closed or canceled March 2020 – February 2022 due to COVID-19 health restrictions.*

WATERWISE GARDEN PLANNER WEBSITE USERS

FY25: 244,624

FY24: 315,001

FY23: 220,000

FY22: 329,963

FY21: 363,878

FY20: 225,374

FY19: 113,386

FY18: 51,543

YOUTUBE ON-DEMAND EDUCATIONAL VIDEO VIEWS

FY25: 285,519

FY24: 132,220

FY23: 42,954

FY22: 37,357

FY21: 9,777

LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

FY25: California Native Landscaper Certificate Program: 84, Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certificate Program: 56, Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper at Valley View High School: 15

FY24: California Native Landscaper Certificate Program: 69, Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certificate Program: 75, Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper at Valley View High School: 25

FY23: California Native Landscaper Certificate Program: 21, Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certificate Program: 61

MULCH/COMPOST GIVEAWAYS

FY25: 640 cubic yards of free mulch, 428 cubic yards of free compost

FY24: 500 cubic yards of free mulch, 544 cubic yards of free compost

FY23: 440 cubic yards of free mulch, 438 cubic yards of free compost

FY22: 400 cubic yards of free mulch, 546 cubic yards of free compost

FY21: 325 cubic yards of free mulch, 619 cubic yards of free compost

FY20: 260 cubic yards of free mulch, 425 cubic yards of free compost

FY19: 1,177 community members received free mulch

FY18: 944 community members received free mulch

CBWCD's YouTube Channel Emerges as a Major Platform for Delivering Water Conservation Education

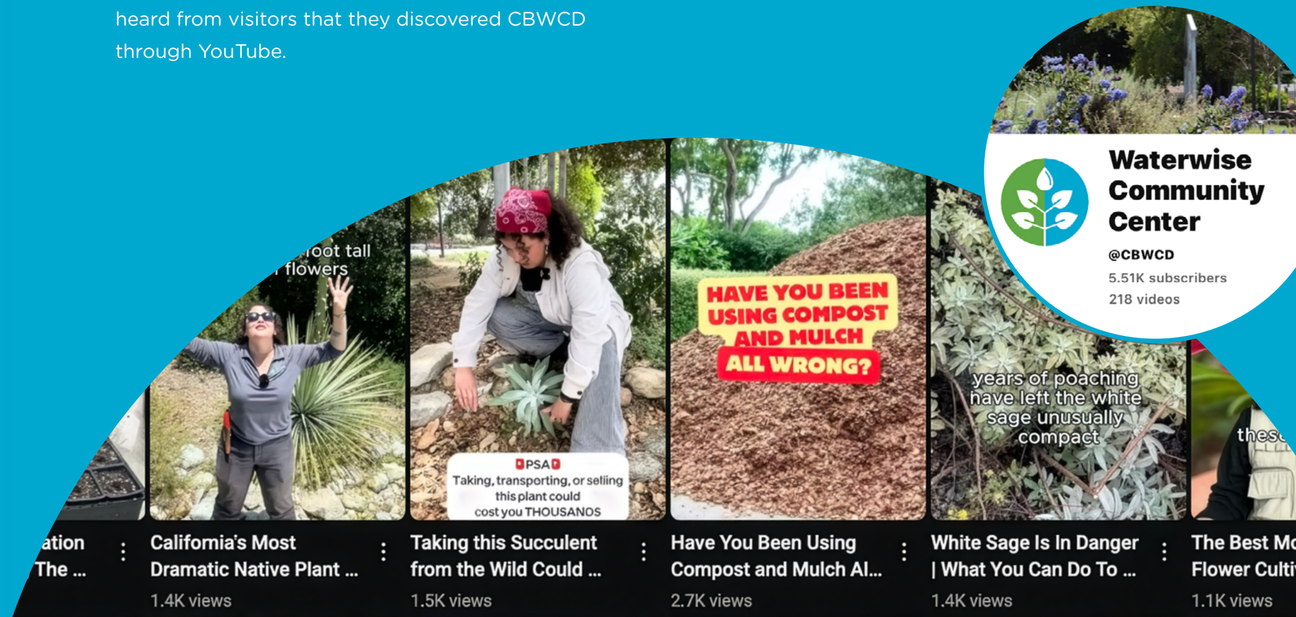
This year, the District's YouTube channel surpassed a major milestone, reaching over 500,000 views of staff-produced landscape water conservation educational videos. Available at cbwcd.org/youtube, the channel has become the District's most widely used resource for actionable guidance on designing, installing, and maintaining California native and waterwise landscapes.

The channel began as a simple archive for recordings of online workshops offered during COVID-19 restrictions, intended for participant review. However, staff observed that viewership quickly far exceeded this original purpose. Recognizing both the lack of detailed, regionally relevant landscape water conservation content online and YouTube's role as a primary learning platform, staff shifted to intentionally developing content specifically for this medium.

YouTube content is especially valuable to community members because it is accessible anytime and anywhere, offering guidance and inspiration at every stage of a water-conserving landscape project.

Most videos are filmed in the Waterwise Community Center's Demonstration Garden, allowing the District's investment in the garden to support conservation education beyond the physical site. The videos also serve as an outreach tool, encouraging new audiences to visit the facility in person. Over the past year, staff increasingly heard from visitors that they discovered CBWCD through YouTube.

Building on this success, CBWCD plans to further expand its YouTube presence to ensure high-quality, practical, and comprehensive landscape water conservation education is easily accessible to the community and the broader region.



Community Engagement
Metrics

WALK-IN VISITORS TO THE WATERWISE COMMUNITY CENTER

FY25: 9,506
FY24: 9,188
FY23: 3,578
FY22: 0*
FY21: 0*
FY20: 0*
FY19: 3,190
FY18: 3,233

K-12 STUDENTS SERVED BY CBWCD NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS-ALIGNED YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FY25: 6,111
FY24: 5,497
FY23: 6,460
FY22: 4,832
FY21: 1,817**
FY20: 5,928 (In-person field trips ran through March 12, 2020)*
FY19: 7,738
FY18: 8,430



**CBWCD programs were closed or canceled March 2020 – February 2022 due to COVID-19 health restrictions.*

***All field trips were virtual due to COVID-19 health restrictions.*

FOLLOWERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

(Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn):

FY25: 5,757
FY24: 4,605
FY23: 4,050
FY22: 3,626
FY21: 3,656
FY20: 3,225
FY19: 2,848
FY18: 2,419

ATTENDEES TO CBWCD SPONSORED EVENTS

FY25: 1,788
FY24: 1,404
FY23: 1,331
FY22: 260* (Small in-person events restarted in March 2022)
FY21: 0*
FY20: 1,189* (In-person events were cancelled in March 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic)
FY19: 800
FY18: 1,435



Waterwise Lotería Wins EPIC Award

One of the Chino Basin Water Conservation District's proudest highlights of the year was receiving the 2025 EPIC Award from the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO) for Graphic Design in the print category. The award recognized the District's innovative Waterwise Lotería game deck, a creative outreach tool that blends water conservation education with cultural celebration.

Inspired by the traditional Mexican bingo game, Waterwise Lotería reimagines familiar imagery to tell a local water story. Each card features vibrant illustrations of waterwise plants from the District's gardens, pollinators and wildlife found on the grounds, and essential water infrastructure such as aquifers and recharge basins. Together, the deck highlights key conservation concepts promoted by CBWCD in a format that is both engaging and accessible to all ages.

The project has proven to be a powerful engagement tool, increasing visitor interaction at the Waterwise Community Center and creating meaningful opportunities for learning through play. Throughout the year, CBWCD hosted multiple Waterwise Lotería Nights, welcoming community members to play the game, connect with District staff, and take home limited-edition Waterwise Lotería giveaways.

The EPIC Award underscores CBWCD's ongoing commitment to innovative outreach and demonstrates how thoughtful design can strengthen community connection while advancing water conservation awareness.





Serving the Public:
The Chino Basin Water Conservation District Board of Directors

DIVISION 1

Katherine "Kati" Parker represents Division 1 and previously served on the CBWCD Board from 1999–2016 before being re-elected in 2022. With degrees in environmental resources and civil engineering, she has nearly 30 years of water industry experience, including engineering roles and extensive leadership on regional water agencies and committees. A long-time Upland resident, she is also deeply involved in community service, historic preservation, and policy development. She manages several historic properties and is committed to protecting water quality and supply reliability.

DIVISION 2

Theresa "Teri" Layton, a lifelong Californian mostly residing in Rancho Cucamonga, has over 30 years of experience in the water utility industry and currently serves as Assistant General Manager at San Antonio Water Company. She has held leadership roles in the Chino, Six Basins, and Cucamonga water basins and holds a bachelor's degree in business and a Water Distribution Grade 2 certification. A dedicated family- and faith-oriented individual, she enjoys traveling and spending time with her two granddaughters.

DIVISION 3

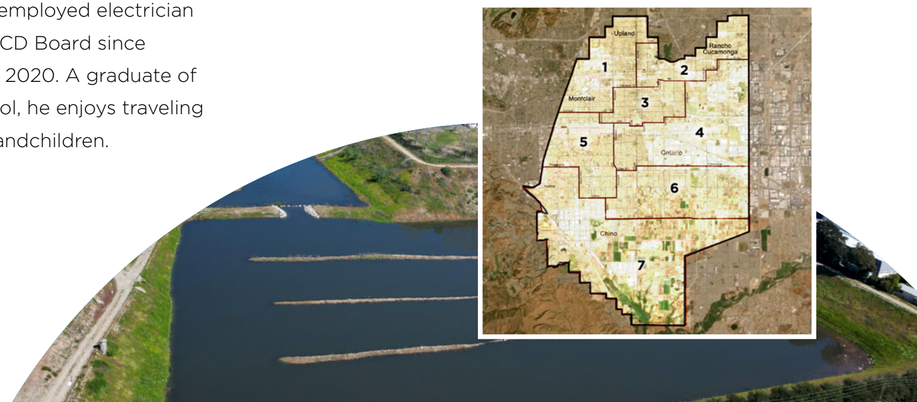
Amanda Coker lives in Ontario with her family and works as a water resources engineer with a decade of experience, including eight years in public agencies within the Chino Basin. She holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Cal Poly Pomona, an MS in Environmental Engineering from Cal State Fullerton, and is a licensed Professional Engineer with a Water Treatment Grade 2 certification.

DIVISION 4

Mark Ligtenberg, born in Pasadena and raised in Chino and Ontario, is a self-employed electrician and has served on the CBWCD Board since 2016, with reappointment in 2020. A graduate of Ontario Christian High School, he enjoys traveling and quality time with his grandchildren.

DIVISION 5

Gilbert Aldaco has served on the CBWCD Board from 2002–2012 and 2016–2020. A longtime Chino resident and Chino High School graduate, he holds an Associate of Science in Water Treatment Technology along with multiple state certifications in water production, treatment, and conservation. With 45 years of experience in water utilities management, he is a life member of the American Water Works Association and has extensive expertise in water supply, wastewater, stormwater, and recycled water operations.



DIVISION 6

Dr. Hanif Gulmahamad is an accomplished entomologist with degrees from Cal Poly Pomona and UC Riverside, where he graduated with honors and received multiple academic awards. His career spans teaching, technical work at Terminix, and training roles with the Los Angeles Unified School District. Now a consultant in urban and structural entomology, he is a Board-Certified Entomologist and has published 76 technical papers and several books. He is recognized in Marquis Who's Who and is also an active poet.

DIVISION 7

Ryan Sonnenberg is a lifelong Chino resident and a water treatment plant operator for Three Valleys MWD, operating a 25-million-gallon-per-day facility. His background includes seven years with the City of Chino Hills across several water and public works divisions. He holds multiple high-level certifications in water treatment and distribution. A graduate of Don Lugo High School, Mt. SAC, and various vocational programs, he brings strong operational expertise to the field.



Employee Spotlight:
George Jimenez

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR



George Jimenez, Conservation Specialist II at CBWCD, was named 2025 Employee of the Year by his peers. With 20 years of experience in the landscape industry, George brings a wide range of skills and certifications developed across diverse settings, from high-end golf courses to residential water-wise landscape installations. He joined the CBWCD team five years ago, contributing his keen eye for detail to the maintenance and operations of the District's Demonstration Garden.

In his current role, George leads both regular maintenance and special projects in the Demonstration Garden and the Waterwise Community Center's public park plantings. He trains and mentors staff, interns, and volunteers in the specialized care of the garden's California native and waterwise landscapes. George also teaches public workshops, supports the California Native Landscaper Certificate program, and leads the District's monthly garden volunteer program.

Colleagues recognize George for his strong work ethic, technical expertise, and willingness to help across the organization wherever needed. His dedication ensures the Demonstration Garden remains an inspiring example of water-conserving beauty and is always safe and ready for field trips, tours, workshops, and special events.

When asked what he enjoys most about his job, George says, "The environment and the sense of teamwork. Every day is different—whether I'm leading maintenance in the garden, installing new projects, teaching, or training others."

Save Water with Us

Being “waterwise” in our everyday lives is more important than ever as we recognize that drought conditions are the new normal. At the Waterwise Community Center, we have lots of resources to help you save water inside and outside your home and your business or organization. Here are just a few highlights:

YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CBWCD offers a variety of programs for students from Pre K-12th grade to inspire, inform, and empower the next generation of water stewards.

SPRINKLER CHECKUPS

CBWCD offers qualifying properties a free and complete evaluation of their landscape and irrigation system and recommendations on how to improve overall water use efficiency.



HOMEOWNERS’ WORKSHOPS

A variety of online and in-person workshops scheduled throughout the year educate residents on how to water their lawns and gardens, landscape with native and drought-tolerant plants, take advantage of rebate programs, maintain irrigation systems, and more.

LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

In addition to our online and in-person workshops, we offer several resources to assist with using less water outdoors, such as the Waterwise Garden Planner website which helps people learn about and choose the best plants for inland Southern California landscapes.

WATERWISE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

A stroll through our 1.75-acre Demonstration Garden inspires many visitors to try waterwise plants in their landscapes. This Certified Wildlife Habitat includes garden sections in styles including Southwest, Mediterranean, and Woodland, each designed to thrive in our sunny, inland climate without using too much water. You can also view our turf demonstration area to learn more about how much water your lawn needs, discover how bioswales help collect runoff water when it rains, and why permeable surfaces help our groundwater basin.









CHINO BASIN

Water Conservation District