



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING
CASH FOR GRASS PROGRAM TERMS AND
CONDITIONS

LNG-2000
07/05/2023

(Nipomo Mesa Water Conservation Area and Paso Robles Groundwater Basin)

The Cash for Grass Program offers monetary incentives for property owners to remove irrigated turf and replace it with approved low water using plants and groundcover. Incentives are available to qualifying property owners on a first-come, first-served basis while funding is available. The Program generates water savings credits that can be purchased by applicants from within the same groundwater basin who need to meet water neutrality requirements for new construction. Funding availability is subject to change at any time.

Applicability

- The property of where the turf will be removed must overlie and receive water from the Nipomo Mesa Water Conservation Area or the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.
- The proposed project area must have a dedicated irrigation system at the time of application. Brown lawns are eligible if left intact. Conversions that are initiated prior to County inspection and approval are ineligible for a rebate.
- Rebates are offered at \$1 per square foot of turf removed.
- A minimum of 500 square feet of turf area must be converted to qualify for a rebate. The maximum rebate amount per property is \$6,000.

Application:

- Program applicants must submit a completed application to:

waterprograms@co.slo.ca.us

or 976 Osos Street
Room 300
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

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Process (2-Steps)

Step 1:

1. Before you begin your project or remove any turf, you must submit an application and complete a site inspection.
2. To help ensure you submit a complete application attached, please provide the following with your application:
 - a. An existing landscape plan/sketch of proposed project area;
 - b. A landscape plan of the proposed landscaping with replacement plants, groundcover materials, and location of a rain sensor;
 - c. A list of plant types and the number of plants that will replace the turf from the County-approved plant list; and
 - d. A list of groundcover materials that will replace turf.
3. Once your application is received, County staff will provide general project feedback and contact you to schedule a pre-conversion inspection. During the inspection, staff will verify the measurements of the proposed project area, take photos, and confirm feasibility of the replacement landscaping plan.
4. Shortly after your pre-conversion inspection, you will receive a post-inspection letter in the mail that will disclose the total approved rebate amount and project due date. You will have four months (120 days) from the day of the pre-inspection to complete your project.

Step 2:

1. Once you have completed your project, contact staff to set up a final inspection to verify that the program requirements have been met. If you have not contacted the county within 120 days from the day of the pre-inspection to schedule a post-inspection, the staff will contact you to schedule a post-inspection.
2. After the final inspection, a rebate incentive will be issued within 4-5 weeks. If the project area does not meet the program requirements at time of the final inspection, the applicant may be permitted to bring the area into compliance with program requirements within 3 months from the date of the final inspection.

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Replacement Landscaping Standards:

- A minimum of 10% replaced area must be living material. This area can include living groundcovers, shrubs, trees, vines, and bulbs. All plants must be selected from the County-approved plant list.
- All turf replacement materials, including artificial turf and hardscape, must be permeable to air and water.
- Front and back yard landscapes must each include a minimum of one tree. Existing trees may fulfill this requirement.
- Mulch is required on all exposed soil surfaces.
- Plants must be installed no closer than the stated mature width as outlined in the New Sunset Western Garden Book. A minimum of 2 inches of bark mulch shall be placed (and annually maintained) on all bare earth between the plants.
- If artificial turf is used in the replacement landscaping, it must be installed, as per manufacture's specifications, by a licensed landscape contractor. Turf must be securely fastened to the ground, seams must be glued and stapled to minimize tears, and not encroach upon living plants/trees with at least 3 inches from the base of any plant/tree. In addition, the product must have a minimum ten (10) year manufacturer warranty.
- Patio carpet and/or Astroturf are ineligible.
- Watering systems used, if any, must be a low volume drip irrigation system equipped with a pressure regulator, filter, and emitters. The system must be free of leaks and malfunctions. Drip systems on slopes must have inline check valves (one for every 3 feet of elevation change to percent low-headed drainage. Drip lines must be installed parallel to the slope, not perpendicular. Bubbler systems may be permitted if using low flow bubblers individually located at plant bases.
- Rain sensor installation is required for landscapes irrigated with a drip irrigation system
- Each drip emitter must be rated at less than two and one-half (2.5) gallons per hour (gph). Overhead spray systems (including microspray), soaker hoses or emitters with an adjustable flow may not be used. If only partial removal of a turfed area is proposed, the sprinkler system must be properly modified to provide adequate coverage to the remaining turf without spraying the converted area (narrow turf areas often waste water and should be avoided).

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Agreement

I (print name), _____, am the legal owner of the property described above or have obtained written consent from the property owner to participate in the "Cash for Grass" program. I am voluntarily participating in the County of San Luis Obispo's "Cash for Grass" program and will perform the installation of irrigation equipment and landscape materials described above. I independently selected materials, supplies and labor the purpose of performing the installation. I agree that all work performed complies with applicable state and local laws, ordinances and regulations. As long as I maintain ownership of the property, I agree to retain the new irrigation hardware and/or landscape, or replace them in the future with hardware or landscape materials that conform to equal or better standards of water conservation. I understand that the replacement low water use landscaping must remain in place in perpetuity, and that if I sell the property, I must inform the future owners of their obligation to participate in this agreement.

I will allow the County to conduct site visits to my property within five years of the date of this Agreement for purposed of collecting data and photographs of the project site. The County will contact me in advance to arrange times for these visits.

I agree that by virtue of program inspections, the County of San Luis Obispo makes no determination with respect to whether materials and equipment are free of defects, the quality of the workmanship, the suitability of the premises or the materials or equipment for the installation. I also understand that the installation of irrigation equipment and landscape materials described above may not result in lower water costs. I agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the County of San Luis Obispo, its directors, officers, agents and employees against any and all loss, liability, expense, claims, suits and damages, including attorney's fees, arising out of or resulting from the installation of irrigation equipment and landscape materials or from participation in this program.

I am responsible for complying with all applicable laws, regulations, ordinances, or other legal requirements, and nothing in this agreement shall excuse or modify any such requirements.

By signing below, I agree that any water credits attributable to the water savings from the installation of a low water use landscape initiated through the Program, if any, shall be held by the County. I certify that the information on this Application is true and correct and that I have read, understand and agree to the standards, process, terms, and conditions of this rebate program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____