



Saving Water Together

# 2017 Partners of the Year and Sustained Excellence Awards

Over the past decade, WaterSense and its nearly 2,000 partners have helped save 2.1 trillion gallons of water and \$46.3 billion in energy and water bills from WaterSense labeled products, homes, and programs. While many partners contributed to this program success, some organizations in particular stand out for their commitment to saving water. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to recognize five Partners of the Year for their outstanding efforts to advance and promote WaterSense and water efficiency in 2016. EPA also recognized seven partners with the Sustained Excellence Award, the highest level of program recognition, for demonstrating an ongoing high level of commitment to WaterSense.

## SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE

### Athens-Clarke County (Georgia) Public Utilities Department



Public Utilities

water. wastewater. conservation.

A previous Excellence in Education and Outreach Award winner and two-time Promotional Partner of the Year, the Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department Water Conservation Office (WCO) earns its first Sustained Excellence Award. The WCO educates customers about saving water through a variety of fun events and outreach geared toward kids and adults alike. Through a total of 126 interactive programs, including school visits, camps, local events, tours, festivals, and workshops, the WCO reached nearly 9,000 children and adults in 2016.

To support Fix a Leak Week, the department partnered with a local hospital and replaced 140 showerheads with WaterSense labeled models. The WCO also invited local filmmakers to submit short films to its Ripple Effect Film Project. During a “blue carpet” premiere for the films, audience members learned about leaks and won WaterSense labeled prizes. The WCO also designed custom popcorn bags and coloring pages featuring WaterSense for local movie theaters and restaurants in its Certified Blue water conservation program.



Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities Department’s Ripple Effect Film Project included a photo booth at its “blue carpet” premiere.

WCO’s Little Lily Pad Hop Project educated Clark County School District students and families about water efficiency. Students could bring Little Lily home along with Froggie Care Packages, which featured WaterSense. Little Lily reached 1,283 families over the course of 2016. An important part of the project was the pre- and post-surveys for parents, which WCO used to measure the effectiveness of its educational efforts and increases in WaterSense brand awareness. Before the Little Lily Project, 8 percent of parents were moderately/extremely aware of the WaterSense program, but that number jumped to 37 percent after Little Lily was in the classroom. The percentage of parents who were familiar with the WaterSense logo increased from 15 to 34 percent.

The WCO also tapped into the 2016 Pokémon Go craze to promote WaterSense. The organization collaborated with 20 organizations to host the Athens Water Festival, which had 800 attendees, where one WCO activity was a scavenger hunt for WaterSense logos. Once participants found three logos, they earned the evolved WaterSense-

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type Pokémon, Squirtle. The hunt raised awareness, with 49 percent of participants who reported not recognizing the WaterSense logo before the festival correctly identifying it after participating.

### Cobb County (Georgia) Water System



#### *Cobb County...Expect the Best!*

Earning its first Sustained Excellence Award, five-time Promotional Partner of the Year Cobb County Water System promoted and adapted WaterSense programs and messages to reach customers through many avenues. The county's new volunteer ambassadors helped educate more than 13,000 residents of all ages about WaterSense and water conservation at community events such as Back to the Chatt River Races and Water Day at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. Cobb County staff gave 23 trade presentations about WaterSense in 2016, reaching 1,269 builders, retailers, plumbers, and irrigation and landscaping professionals.

Cobb County Water System participated in every WaterSense campaign in 2016, using partnerships to enhance their effectiveness. For example, the county built off Sprinkler Spruce-Up in May 2016 with its Inspect, Direct, Connect program that encouraged people to inspect their irrigation system for leaks, place a flag to identify the problem, and connect to resources to fix it. Cobb County distributed more than 500 flags at civic events and irrigation professional training. In addition, the county partnered with the Georgia Urban Agriculture Council, the University of Georgia Extension Service, local irrigation contractors, and WaterSense partners Ewing Irrigation Products, the Georgia Green Industry Association, and the City of Plano (Texas) to create online resources about how to make simple irrigation system repairs.

For Shower Better Month, Cobb County created promotional handouts about the Georgia Sales Tax Holiday for WaterSense labeled products and distributed them with the county's toilet rebate eligibility checklist to more than 20 home improvement stores. The county's water efficiency program mascot, Tappy Turtle, shared WaterSense infographics and videos on Facebook and Twitter to raise awareness of Shower Better Month and let customers know how to get free WaterSense labeled showerheads. All told, the county distributed more than 450 showerheads during the month-long campaign.

"Being located in a large metropolitan area at the headwaters of two small river basins makes stewardship of these resources essential to the future of Cobb County and the Atlanta region. WaterSense allows us to maximize our investments in water efficiency and magnify our impact."

Steve McCullers, Agency Director,  
Cobb County Water System

### Delta Faucet Company

Delta Faucet Company, a three-time WaterSense Sustained Excellence winner, educated consumers and trade professionals about the WaterSense program and the benefits of WaterSense labeled products through a variety of initiatives, including efforts to help communities in need. To support clean water efforts in Flint, Michigan, Delta donated WaterSense labeled lavatory faucets and showerheads to local plumbers who volunteered to help affected residents.



Delta continued to teach professionals and consumers how to sprinkle water savings into their daily lives, as well as design award-winning products. The company's WaterSense labeled Brizo Rook bath collection won a *Design Journal* ADEX Gold Award for overall design and water-saving properties. In 2016, Delta held five courses providing continuing education units for more than 540 architects, designers, and other trade professionals. The company also created 35 eLearning courses for more than 8,500 Delta employees, customers, and sales representatives, who shared their WaterSense labeled product knowledge at more than 300 trade shows and 700 presentations, reaching more than 3,000 customers and trade professionals each month. Delta's social media promoted the importance of WaterSense and water efficiency on World Water Day and throughout the year, with over 960 placements and more than 109 million impressions.

Delta also partnered with a variety of companies and organizations to promote water efficiency. The company teamed up with two global hotel chains, Marriott and Hyatt, to study hotel guests' showering experience while

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“As a three-time WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award winner, Delta Faucet Company is dedicated to designing and engineering innovative kitchen and bath solutions to help conserve water without sacrificing performance. We are proud to receive this honor and remain committed to educating consumers and trade professionals alike on the benefits of using WaterSense labeled products.”

Jai Shah, President,  
Delta Faucet Company

traveling. Delta hosted more than 500 guests in a hotel to experience WaterSense labeled showerheads firsthand and learn about the products' benefits in sessions. Delta also partnered with Lowe's Home Improvement and The Home Depot for quarterly meetings to determine strategies to promote Delta's water-saving products. Finally, Delta partnered with *Southern Living* to invite five bloggers to serve as Delta correspondents during the “*Southern Living* VIP Test Kitchen and Tasting Tour,” where they received a WaterSense labeled faucet to take home, test, and blog about.

### KB Home



Three-time Sustained Excellence Award winner KB Home built 265 WaterSense labeled homes in 2016, a 5 percent increase from 2015. These homes feature front yards landscaped with native, drought-tolerant plants and WaterSense labeled weather-based irrigation controllers and plumbing products indoors. Homes built by the company that did not earn the WaterSense label still included labeled faucets, showerheads, and toilets. To date, KB Home has installed nearly 400,000 WaterSense labeled fixtures in its homes.

KB Home emphasized the connection between water and energy savings in 2016. The KB Home Cadanera community in West Covina, California, featured all WaterSense labeled new homes. Estimated savings of 1.4 million gallons of water are expected annually from the community, while each home's energy usage should decrease by 74,000 kilowatt hours. To help inform homebuyers about benefits of water-efficient homes, KB Home collaborated with EPA, the Residential Energy Services Network, Natural Resources Defense Council, and a coalition of water efficiency experts, homebuilders, environmental organizations, and home energy professionals to develop the nation's first Water Efficiency Rating (WER) Index in 2016, which is modeled after the Home Energy Rating System Index.

KB Home further promoted the importance of WaterSense and water efficiency through education and outreach to industry professionals and homeowners. In June 2016, KB Home co-presented “Tap into WaterSense! Differentiate Your Home” at PCBC, the largest homebuilding tradeshow representing the West Coast region, which educated homebuilders about WaterSense and its impact on water conservation in new communities. In October, more than 1,000 industry professionals toured the concept Greenbuild KB Home ProjeKt, which featured WaterSense labeled fixtures, at the 2016 Greenbuild Conference and Expo in Los Angeles. To educate homebuyers about the water-saving potential of KB homes, the company's sales counselors are trained to discuss the value of WaterSense labeled fixtures, and its Construction and Customer Service team discusses WaterSense labeled bathroom faucets and toilets with every new homeowner.



KB Home's Cadanera community in West Covina, California, featured all WaterSense labeled new homes and is expected to save 1.4 million gallons of water annually.

### Kohler Co.

Kohler Co. earned its fifth Sustained Excellence Award by marketing WaterSense nationwide, donating its WaterSense labeled products to various events and charitable causes, and releasing a new, cutting-edge, water-efficient toilet. Kohler introduced the 1.0-gallon, WaterSense labeled Highline toilet in 2016, which combines gravity with a precision-engineered design that creates a stronger flush with less water. The Highline toilet was featured prominently in Kohler's Sustainability Campaign, which ran from April to August 2016 and produced 4.8 million impressions. The campaign used Instagram and Facebook to target customers in states plagued by droughts that year,

**KOHLER®**

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including California, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona. On Kohler's website, 1,200 unique visitors searched for WaterSense 1,849 times in 2016 alone.

Kohler also sponsors a mobile marketing campaign that drives semi-trailer trucks in key states to showcase working models of WaterSense labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads. In 2016, the company added a new semi-trailer unit to its water-saving fleet and visited 175 home shows, conferences, and professional plumbing supply stores to tout the performance and benefits of WaterSense labeled plumbing fixtures. Overall, more than 36,000 plumbing professionals and other visitors toured the trailers, a 90 percent increase from the previous year.

Kohler exhibited its WaterSense labeled products at major trade shows in 2016 such as Design & Construction Week in Las Vegas and Dwell on Design and Greenbuild in Los Angeles. Kohler also donated WaterSense labeled products to 30 homes for disabled veterans through the Homes for Our Troops organization. These homes were visited by about 22,000 people nationwide. Kohler again provided showering stations for the Bonnaroo Music Festival, where it shared the #CommitToSix water conservation message encouraging attendees to commit to take a six-minute shower. The company also continued its partnership with the Lavamae mobile showering project for homeless residents in California by donating WaterSense labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads.

### Sonoma-Marin (California) Saving Water Partnership

Three-time WaterSense Partner of the Year award winner Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership (SMSWP) earned its first Sustained Excellence Award. SMSWP is the parent organization for the WaterSense labeled Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) professional certification program, which has helped certify more than 2,000 individuals to date through 16 organizations that offer the QWEL program.



“This collaborative effort between the private sector, academia, professional associations and public utilities is a textbook case in how to work across various sectors and jurisdictions to achieve the worthy goal of protecting our water and our future.”

James Gore, Director,  
Sonoma County Water Agency

SMSWP supported the expansion of training opportunities for irrigation professionals to students attending community colleges by conducting a train-the-trainer class for horticulture and irrigation instructors within the California Community College System in winter 2016. In the future, the system's Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technology sector will adopt QWEL as a professional certifying organization to facilitate community college instructors throughout California in offering the program to students.

In 2016, SMSWP also worked with other WaterSense partners and community groups to educate residents about improving outdoor water efficiency. Sonoma-Marin participated in The Home Depot Water Wise Plant Sale, and talked to customers about

WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers, rebates, and low-water-use plants. SMSWP continued to promote QWEL and WaterSense at the Master Gardeners of Sonoma County Bloomin' Backyards Tour. In combination with WaterSense partner and professional certifying organization G3, Green Gardens Group and the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, the Partnership hosted “The Watershed Approach to Landscaping” event, which reached 100 landscape professionals and home gardeners.

### The Home Depot

Three-time Sustained Excellence Award winner The Home Depot implemented efforts both in its stores and online to educate residential and commercial customers. The retailer's Eco Options website, which generated 33 million impressions in 2016, promotes WaterSense labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads. One feature on the website, an interactive Home Efficiency Audit tool, calculates potential water and money savings for homes replacing old fixtures with WaterSense labeled models. Another website feature lists the number of WaterSense labeled products the company has sold since the program was started. To help drive these sales, The Home Depot offered more than \$59 million in WaterSense labeled product markdowns in 2016.



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The Home Depot's In-Store Environment Teams ensured the WaterSense logo was featured on signage, whether alerting customers to rebates for WaterSense labeled products or improving general knowledge about the WaterSense program. In 2016, the company's associates viewed e-learning courses about the benefits of WaterSense and WaterSense labeled products more than 30,000 times. Home Depot Pro Account Representatives also created a brochure to educate professional plumbing and contractor accounts on WaterSense labeled products and their water-saving benefits, in addition to attending trade shows, which resulted in 4.3 million WaterSense impressions with commercial customers.

The Home Depot used various forms of media to increase awareness of WaterSense in 2016. For example, the company ran radio advertisements featuring WaterSense labeled toilets over the summer. All told, the company invested more than \$3 million to promote WaterSense labeled products on its website, and garnered more than 60 million impressions using search engine marketing and WaterSense labeled product placements. It also distributed more than 259 million print advertisements in national and regional newspapers and sent mailing inserts to its residential and commercial credit card customers that featured WaterSense labeled products.

### PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS OF THE YEAR

#### Citrus County (Florida) Utilities



Two-time Promotional Partner of the Year Citrus County Utilities worked with its existing partners and created new events to promote WaterSense and outdoor water conservation. To celebrate Fix a Leak Week 2016, Citrus County hosted its Water Conservation Expo for more than 100 residents with the Sugarmill Woods Civic Association and WaterSense partner Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Attendees completed a quiz for a chance to win native plants, and the county distributed 66 showerheads and 167 faucet aerators, all of which were WaterSense labeled. After Fix a Leak Week, 32 residents participated in the county's Schedule a Specialist program, which became so popular that the county now offers it year-round. To teach kids about fixing leaks, Citrus

County held its second Toilet Leak Detection Classroom Challenge. Seventeen classrooms from seven schools participated; 23 percent of the 283 participants who completed the toilet leak detection and worksheet found a leaky toilet. In total, students tested 495 toilets and identified 80 leaks for a potential water savings of 16,000 gallons per day; 151 families said they would replace toilets with WaterSense labeled models when needed.

In September 2016, the utility partnered with Lowe's Home Improvement at the *Citrus County Chronicle* Home and Garden Show to promote the benefits of installing WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers to the event's 346 attendees. Citrus County issued a total of 37 rebates for WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers in 2016, which was nearly a 50 percent increase from the previous year. Citrus County also staffed a table at Lowe's and at The Home Depot and other events to promote WaterSense labeled products; 47 people entered a raffle to win a WaterSense labeled irrigation controller.

In November 2016, Citrus County and SWFWMD worked with the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority on a free irrigation evaluation program, which directly targeted the utility's top 600 water users with a mailing detailing each customer's water use and potential water and financial savings. Contractors installed WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers at sites with outdated push-pin controllers, replaced sprinkler heads when necessary, and installed rain sensors at interested properties. To quantify the success of the program, a year's worth of pre- and post-usage data will be collected on each participant; a survey was sent six months following the inspection to learn if the customers changed behaviors; and 10 percent of participants will have a 12-month follow-up inspection. The utility also worked with SWFWMD to offer local homebuilders a \$1,000 rebate for building a Florida Water Star certified home, which has WaterSense labeled indoor fixtures. To promote the program, Citrus County and SWFWMD gave presentations to multiple homeowners associations and builders.



Seventeen classrooms from seven schools participated in Citrus County Utilities' second annual Toilet Leak Detection Classroom Challenge.

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### City of Charlottesville (Virginia)



The City of Charlottesville, a three-time WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year, used new platforms to spread the word about WaterSense and water conservation in 2016. While few residents have lawn irrigation systems, many have small gardens or plants that they water regularly. To reach this audience, the City participated in a local gardening store's Fifth Season Spring Expo to promote outdoor water savings, water conservation kits, its WaterSense labeled toilet rebate, and tips for finding and fixing leaks. In summer 2016, the City formed a partnership with weather.com to advertise how much and when to water lawns and which type of hoses to use to save water and promote their rain barrel rebate; the weather forecast for the day determined which ad/messaging would run. Visitors to the weather website or app who clicked on the ads would go to the main Charlottesville Water Conservation page for more information on how to save water outside.

In fall 2016, the City hosted an Imagine a Day Without Water art contest for first through eighth grade students with the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority and WaterSense partner Albemarle County Service Authority. A total of 445 entries were submitted from all of Charlottesville's public schools, and more than 530 online votes were received. Students who submitted artwork and their teachers were eligible for cash prizes, and winners were displayed in City Hall and other local offices.

Charlottesville promoted the "Check, Twist, Replace" message and its WaterSense labeled product rebates in print, television, radio, social media, and online to reach the widest possible audience. In 2016, Charlottesville issued rebates for 254 WaterSense labeled toilets, and distributed 1,492 WaterSense labeled faucet aerators and 1,100 labeled showerheads, plus more than 540 water conservation kits featuring WaterSense labeled fixtures.

### Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

Two-time Promotional Partner of the Year Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District continued to show its support for WaterSense by promoting both the program and water conservation to its 55 member utilities. The Metro Water District has helped promote WaterSense regularly and consistently highlighted the various WaterSense tools and promotional materials available for use. As part of the district's Water Resource Management Plan, member utilities are required to promote the WaterSense label in fixture replacement programs, water audits to commercial entities, and WaterSense labeled homes to developers.



The district supported numerous WaterSense campaigns in 2016, creating three social media videos featuring its mascot Dash and WaterSense's spokesgallon Flo promoting Fix a Leak Week, Sprinkler Spruce-Up, and Shower Better Month. For Fix a Leak Week, the Metro Water District, in coordination with 15 member utilities and other WaterSense partners, hosted the Water Drop Dash 5k and Water Festival for more than 700 runners. The Metro Water District also distributed tool kits to its member utilities to promote other WaterSense campaigns, such as Sprinkler Spruce-Up and Shower Better, as well as the Georgia Sales Tax Holiday, which waives the tax on WaterSense labeled products for a weekend. To advertise the sales tax holiday, the district distributed a new toilet rebate postcard to 40 home improvement stores in October.

In 2016, the district distributed more than 11,000 materials highlighting water conservation and WaterSense, including brochures, fliers, tip sheets, and indoor and outdoor water conservation kits. Finally, the Metro Water District's region-wide toilet rebate program has helped replace 120,000 inefficient toilets with WaterSense labeled models since 2008.

## PROFESSIONAL CERTIFYING ORGANIZATION PARTNER OF THE YEAR

### G3, Green Gardens Group

G3, Green Gardens Group incorporated WaterSense in many ways through its training and outreach to California residents. WaterSense's newest labeled professional certification program, G3's Watershed Wise Landscape Professional program teaches how to audit irrigation systems and meet water budgets through best management practices while communicating the benefits of efficient irrigation



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and WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers to customers. Overall training attendance and certification follow-through increased dramatically in G3's program in 2016, its first full year as a WaterSense labeled program. In 2016, G3 provided eight professional training classes with 306 attendees, 160 of whom passed the exam, and 83 became certified professionals.

The welcome package G3 sends to its certified professionals includes extensive information about how to maximize their certification, including ways to use the WaterSense website and infographics. Certified professionals are encouraged to send their clients links to the WaterSense and G3 databases of professionals and add the WaterSense "look for" promotional label to their email signature.

While still growing, G3 made an effort to reach a larger audience. In addition to its certification program, G3 conducted more than 90 classes and workshops for property owners in 2016 in collaboration with other WaterSense partners such as the City of Santa Barbara (California) and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, reaching more than 2,600 attendees. Each presentation encouraged people to look for WaterSense when selecting irrigation professionals and irrigation equipment such as controllers.

"The WaterSense program gives professional certifying organizations like ours the framework and tools to put our trained and certified professionals on the cutting edge of landscape system auditing."

Pamela Berstler, CEO, G3,  
Green Gardens Group

### MANUFACTURER PARTNER OF THE YEAR

#### American Standard

Two-time Manufacturer Partner of the Year Award winner American Standard, part of the global LIXIL Corporation, promoted its existing WaterSense labeled products through partnerships and outreach, but also looked toward the future with new water-efficient technology and research. To raise awareness for Fix a Leak Week 2016, it held a Facebook contest and gave away 49 WaterSense labeled Portsmouth Widespread faucets. In May, American Standard was a key part of the Beauty in Motion nationwide tour launched by LIXIL to celebrate its newly designed WaterSense labeled showerheads, faucets, and ultra-high efficiency toilets. The trucks toured the country and made a total of 136 stops during 2016, reaching more than 6,000 professionals and consumers with their mobile exhibit.



American Standard initiated efforts in 2016 to dramatically increase coverage for the WaterSense program and succeeded in generating 273 million media impressions, for a 50 percent increase compared to 2015. On its website, the brand highlights water efficiency and has a special WaterSense page, which garnered 4,378 unique visitors and 5,723 page views in 2016, increases of 31 and 21 percent, respectively. American Standard also increased its promotion of WaterSense on its primary social media accounts in 2016. The brand's Twitter account increased tweets that mentioned WaterSense by 57 percent from 2015, and it tripled its posts on Facebook. Overall, WaterSense messaging across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram platforms achieved 1.7 million impressions, 37 times more than the previous year.

In partnership with the Plumbing Efficiency Research Coalition, American Standard completed a joint study about the effect of slope, size, toilet paper choice, and flushing characteristics on drain line carry in plumbing systems. It also continued to support Plumbers Without Borders in 2016, creating exhibit materials for trade shows and global sanitation summits to promote the group's mission to increase access to safe water and sanitation worldwide by connecting volunteer plumbers with international aid organizations.

### Learn More

WaterSense congratulates all of the 2017 Partners of the Year and Sustained Excellence Award winners. For more information about the WaterSense Partner of the Year awards and to learn about all the benefits of partnership, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).