



2009 WaterSense® Partners of the Year

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), now works with more than 1,500 promotional, manufacturer, retailer/distributor, and irrigation partners to promote water efficiency across the country. Each year, EPA recognizes organizations and individuals in these WaterSense partner categories who have made extraordinary efforts to:

- Advance the WaterSense mission;
- Increase awareness about WaterSense in a measurable way; and
- Demonstrate overall excellence in the water-efficiency arena.



Promotional Partners of the Year

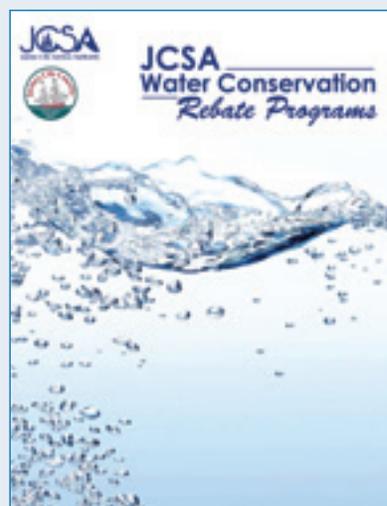
James City Service Authority (Small Utility)

James City Service Authority (JCSA) showed that you don't have to be big to save big. Serving approximately 46,000 people, JCSA is the only water utility in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia to offer a water conservation rebate program. With rebates ranging from WaterSense labeled toilets and rain sensors to rain barrels and "on demand" hot water recirculators, JCSA provides one of the widest varieties of rebates in the Southeast. The utility uses this program and accompanying educational materials to steer consumers toward WaterSense.

Because peak usage for summer outdoor lawn irrigation is the greatest challenge to its ground-water-based water system, JCSA expanded its suite of rebates to include water-efficient landscapes, starting in August 2008. Customers receive a \$500 rebate for hiring a WaterSense irrigation partner to design, install, or audit a water-efficient irrigation system.



To further educate its customers about outdoor water efficiency, JCSA has established its own "Let's Be Water Smart" program. The program is a joint effort by 35 builders, developers, contractors, irrigation specialists, landscape designers, and landscapers working together to rein in outdoor water use. To advance water efficiency inside the home, JCSA partnered with James City County Citizens' Coalition, a local citizens group, to encourage plumbers and retailers to provide discounts on the sale and installation of WaterSense labeled toilets.



James City Service Authority offers a wide array of rebates aimed at conserving water.

Cobb County Water System (Large Utility)

Cobb County Water System has taken a leading role in promoting WaterSense and water efficiency to its 650,000 customers in the Atlanta, Georgia, metro area.



Cobb County...Expect the Best!



Participants in a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor training class, hosted by Cobb County Water System.

Cobb County has been a champion of encouraging Atlanta area consumers to give WaterSense labeled toilets a try, and its efforts have resulted in an increased awareness and demand for WaterSense labeled toilets across the state. To accomplish this goal, Cobb County masterminded a toilet rebate program with the potential to save 13 million gallons of water annually. That's enough water to fill the Georgia Aquarium—the world's largest—1.5 times.

In 2008, Cobb County rebated more than 1,650 WaterSense labeled toilets, at \$100 per toilet. The program's success inspired many of the largest utilities in the 16-county Metro North Georgia Water Planning District to adopt Cobb County's rebate model.

Cobb County also demonstrated that there is strength in numbers, exemplified in its role as an instrumental force in bringing together Lowe's, The Home Depot, Ferguson, Kohler, and other local partners to leverage a statewide sales tax holiday weekend on WaterSense labeled products in October 2008. Coordinating closely with these organizations, Cobb County ensured that rebates were widely promoted and that labeled products

were stocked on retailers' shelves. The results speak for themselves: Cobb County saw a 400 percent increase in WaterSense labeled toilet purchases over any comparable timeframe!

Through these collaborations, as well as extensive media coverage of WaterSense and hundreds of speaking engagements, Cobb County helped persuade consumers to look for the WaterSense label and think twice about water-efficiency, both inside the home and out. Cobb County advised its customers to hire WaterSense irrigation partners and worked with Atlanta and Fulton County to bring all of the GreenPlumbers USA classes to Georgia. As a result, more than 140 plumbers learned about WaterSense and WaterSense labeled products.

Manufacturer Partner of the Year

Kohler Co.

Winning the WaterSense Partner of the Year Award two years running takes a special level of com-

mitment to WaterSense and water efficiency, one demonstrated by plumbing manufacturer Kohler Co. From the tradeshow circuit to reality television to the restrooms in New York City's Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame, Kohler tapped into creative tactics to promote WaterSense and its WaterSense labeled plumbing fixtures across the country.

Kohler gave WaterSense a national spotlight through Save Water America (www.savewateramerica.com), a Web site dedicated to educating homeowners about water efficiency and supporting Habitat for Humanity with a \$1 million product donation. Kohler also showcased its WaterSense



Kohler Co. hits the tradeshow circuit with its WaterSense labeled toilets.

labeled products at more than 30 screenings of the IMAX film *Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk* as it toured the country.

Kohler has also collaborated with WaterSense partners on regional campaigns of all shapes and sizes. In Denver, Kohler delivered “mobile restrooms” to a consumer education event so that participants could flush WaterSense labeled toilets first-hand. Kohler’s mobile restrooms made another appearance in Atlanta to help promote Georgia’s sales tax-free weekend. And moving on to Bozeman, Montana, Kohler and distributor Ferguson helped to turn a local citizen’s concept for a rebate program into reality: the Greater Gallatin Toilet Tradeout.

By the end of 2008, more than 40 percent of all bathroom faucet models and 175 combinations of toilets for sale under the KOHLER brand had earned the WaterSense label. In addition, while showerheads, urinals, and flushometer toilets are not currently part of the WaterSense program, Kohler continues to invest in development of more water-efficient versions of these products, several of which have won individual awards for their design and eco-friendliness.

Retail/Distributor Partner of the Year

Lowe’s Companies, Inc.

As a Fortune 50 company and major retailer of residential plumbing fixtures, Lowe’s serves approximately 14 million customers each week at more than 1,650 home improvement stores in North America. After becoming a WaterSense partner in 2008, Lowe’s shifted its marketing strategy from focusing on energy efficiency to the broader “efficient home,” emphasizing the nexus between saving water and saving energy.

From the Lowe’s Efficient Home Web site to a bilingual *Efficient Home Guide*, Lowe’s has highlighted WaterSense inside its stores and in its stores’ communities. Likewise, Lowe’s has placed continued emphasis on educating its 215,000-plus employees about the benefits of WaterSense, capitalizing on training tools such as Lowe’s internal video channel and companywide marketing meetings.



Lowe’s capitalized on a tax free holiday weekend in Georgia with advertisements for labeled products.

During sales tax-free events for WaterSense labeled products in Georgia and Virginia, Lowe’s joined forces with EPA and other key partners and provided important promotional support. Sales staff learned how to help customers identify WaterSense labeled products covered by the tax-free events and explain their benefits. Shoppers at these events learned about water and energy saving tips and enjoyed a promotion on WaterSense labeled products from manufactures including Kohler, American Standard, and Jacuzzi.

Lowe’s continues to make increasing its inventory of WaterSense labeled products and raising customer awareness a priority. John Kasberger, senior vice president and general merchandising manager for kitchen and bath, firmly communicated Lowe’s commitment to work with vendors to increase the WaterSense presence in Lowe’s stores. During his keynote speech at the Annual Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers meeting in April 2008, he put it this way: “We want to be the leader when it comes to helping customers save water.”

Irrigation Partner of the Year

Brian Vinchesi

As president of Irrigation Consulting, Inc., in Pepperell, Massachusetts, Brian Vinchesi has made WaterSense a vital part of his company’s staff development. In addition to requiring his employees to complete at least one WaterSense labeled certification program, Mr. Vinchesi, a WaterSense partner since 2007, leads by example, maintaining four certifications through the Irrigation Association that have earned the WaterSense label. Seven of his staff

are also WaterSense partners, and his firm strives for designs that achieve a minimum of 80 percent efficiency and follow national green building program principles.

Beyond his consulting business, Mr. Vinchesi has 25 years of experience sharing his irrigation expertise through education and is currently chairman of the Irrigation Association Education Foundation. In 2008, while lecturing at six conferences and symposia and teaching nearly a dozen classes, Mr. Vinchesi focused on water efficiency and sustainable irrigation systems, helping to spread the word about WaterSense from coast to coast. Mr. Vinchesi also contributed to articles and columns on water-efficient irrigation systems and practices for *Mountain West Turf* and *Irrigation & Green Industry*.



Mr. Vinchesi is a WaterSense partner, LEED Accredited Professional, and an agricultural engineer.

Working to coordinate efforts among a coalition of water purveyors, equipment manufacturers, and irrigation professionals, Mr. Vinchesi has headed up the Irrigation Association's Smart Water Application Technologies (SWAT) initiative since its inception in 2001. As part of the SWAT initiative, in 2008 he met with Massachusetts legislators and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to promote WaterSense. Under Mr. Vinchesi's leadership and in coordination with EPA, the SWAT committee has been developing testing protocols to measure the performance of weather-based irrigation controllers and soil moisture sensors, which continue to be a crucial part of WaterSense specification for irrigation controllers.

For More Information

To learn more about WaterSense and the Partner of the Year awards program, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.