



## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER MAY 2024 . ISSUE 234



# Regional CropSWAP Program Expands to San Diego County Now Open to Rainbow Water Customers

The Regional CropSWAP Program is designed to address significant challenges in agricultural sustainability for agricultural water users in western Riverside and northern San Diego Counties. Funded through various sources, including a \$5 million state grant, the Regional CropSWAP Program provides financial assistance for growers to convert to water-efficient crop varieties, implement irrigation efficiency upgrades, upgrade avocado rootstocks for improved tree health, or rejuvenate avocado trees through stumping.



A Regional Program by Rancho Water

The Regional Program is a collaborative effort among Regional Partners, including Rancho Water, Fallbrook Public Utilities District, Rainbow Municipal Water District, Valley Center Municipal Water District, and the City of Oceanside, and offers financial assistance for transitioning away from high-water-use crops and adopting agricultural best management practices. Completion of a comprehensive crop upgrade will optimize

water use, boost crop productivity, and support sustainable water rates for all customers.

### Requirements for Financial Assistance Eligibility

- Each project type requires a minimum of one acre and crop replacement conversion, or stumping within the project area for financial assistance eligibility.
- Participants can combine comprehensive crop upgrade project types (e.g., crop conversion, stumping, and rootstock upgrade).
- The existing crop must be present, and the irrigation system must be operational to qualify for the program.
- Irrigation efficiency upgrades and other best management practices are eligible for reimbursement.
- Participants are limited to one application per calendar year and projects must be completed within 240 days from the contract execution.
- Incentive disbursement occurs after project verification and submission of required documentation, with incentive amounts not exceeding actual project costs.

Invest in your farm's future today and join us in creating a more sustainable agricultural community.

### Ready to Apply?

Visit [regionalcropswap.com](https://regionalcropswap.com) to learn more and submit your application today.

The CropSWAP program is facilitated by Rancho Water, and their team can assist with questions regarding the regional program expansion and applications. Please contact the program administrator at [apply@regionalcropswap.com](mailto:apply@regionalcropswap.com) or (951)296-6895.



Scan to  
Apply Online





## Bonsall High School Students Tour Rainbow Water

Bonsall High School students and staff took a guided tour through Rainbow Water headquarters on April 25 to learn about STEM careers in the water industry. Over a dozen students were immersed in a behind the scenes look at the day-to-day operations of engineering, finance, information technology, meter services, and water quality.

The field trip was the third hosted by Rainbow Water since 2023 and began with an introduction to the many STEM careers available at the agency, followed by a presentation from the engineering department. Students learned about the planning and design aspects of water infrastructure. Students were given full-size blueprints of an existing shopping center development to practice identifying water and utility lines with colored highlighters and a scale ruler. After seeing plans on paper, students were guided to a small trench with a visible pipeline, where the field operations and construction teams demonstrated how they work with the engineering department to survey jobsites.

“We use technology as part of our jobs to document work on our devices, monitor water pumping from tanks to lift stations, and collaborate with teams in the field,” said Chad Williams, Engineering and Capital Improvement Project Program Manager. “Science and math play a vital role in gathering information to facilitate contracting with construction and engineering firms that initiate the build-out of our capital improvement projects.”

Students visited with the Rainbow Water meters team to explore how they capture water usage across 344 miles of pipelines and 9,000 metered connections to ensure the delivery of safe and clean water to the community. Hands-on learning opportunities were the highlight of the field trip, as students viewed demonstrations of water pressure followed by their own opportunity to test water flow through a meter.

The field trip was made possible through a Community Programs Grant awarded to Rainbow Water from the Metropolitan Water District last December. The grant funding provided students with construction hats, safety gear, engineering plans with scale rulers, and a STEM electronics project kit to practice skills displayed for programming microcontrollers.



*Pictured Above: Tanner Buendel, Bonsall High School senior, learns how to test water flow from a meter from Kenny Diaz, Rainbow Water Utility Worker.*

## Garden Like a Pro

### Five Tips to Save Water and Create Your Own Sustainable Garden

- 1 Select:** Choose WaterSmart plants and flowers that provide food for birds, butterflies, and bees. Prioritize native plants that thrive in the Southern California climate and are less susceptible to drought, pests and disease.
- 2 Research:** Plant with the full-grown plant in mind. Remember a gallon plant can grow into a tree.
- 3 Water Before Sunrise:** Soil absorbs water best when the temperature, evaporation rate, and wind are lower. Keep leaves dry overnight to minimize pests and diseases.
- 4 Water Deeply:** To establish deep roots and happy plants, water deeply once a week or less than frequent shallow watering.
- 5 Cycle and Soak:** Set your times to water in short bursts (30-60 minutes apart) for clay and soil slopes. This allows time for water to soak in the soil instead of running off.

Visit the Rainbow Water office to receive your complimentary spring planting guide for the top 50 native plants.

For more information on sustainable landscaping, free landscape classes, rebates and other programs visit [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) or scan the QR code.



## Take the Survey

Thank you to the community for stopping by the Rainbow Water booth at the Avocado Festival to spin the wheel for prizes and take the customer service survey. The team enjoyed meeting everyone and sharing more information about programs available to our customers.

If you missed your chance to take the survey, scan the QR code to share your Rainbow Water experience.



## Stay Connected

3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028  
Customer Care & After Hours: 760.728.1178  
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
[RAINBOWMWD.CA.GOV](http://RAINBOWMWD.CA.GOV)