

Irrigation Rebate Program FAQs

Updated September 26, 2017

1. What is the irrigation rebate program?

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is launching a rebate program for smart irrigation control systems. Smart control helps residents irrigate landscapes more efficiently by pairing a compatible controller with a climate sensor. Commercial and residential property owners connected to the Comox Valley Water System are eligible for up to a \$300 rebate on the purchase of a qualifying smart irrigation control system. These systems provide irrigation only when required according to the weather and other environmental conditions, thereby reducing water use.

2. What is the purpose of the irrigation rebate program?

The CVRD water efficiency plan identified that there is a two-to-threefold increase in water use during summer months. This increase is primarily driven by outdoor water consumption. Typical irrigation systems have significant room for improvement in terms of how they control water use and the goal of this rebate program is to reduce summertime peak water demand by improving irrigation efficiency.

3. What is “smart control”?

Unlike traditional controllers, which are really just timers, “smart” controllers include a climate sensor and work by monitoring and using information about site conditions (such as temperature, rain, wind, cloud cover, soil, plant type, and more), and applying the right amount of water based on those factors—not too much and not too little—to maintain healthy growing conditions. Field testing has shown that they can successfully reduce outdoor water use—by as much as 20 to 40 per cent annually—while maintaining, and often enhancing, the health and beauty of the landscape.

4. Who is eligible to participate in the rebate program?

- Applicants must be registered owners of commercial or residential properties **connected to the Comox Valley Water System** which includes most homes within the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, and CVRD Water Local Service Areas of Arden, Comox Valley, England Road, Marsden/Camco, Greaves Crescent and Sandwick.
- **NOTE:** Properties serviced by private wells or utilities, improvement districts (e.g. Union Bay), the Village of Cumberland as well as the Royston and Black Creek/Oyster Bay Water Local Service Areas **DO NOT QUALIFY** as they are not supplied water from the Comox Valley Water System. The program is funded only by those connected to the Comox Valley Water System.
- Must have purchased and installed a SWAT (smart water application technologies) approved smart irrigation controller (see attached list). The list is meant to be an outline and may be missing new products that now qualify. Please research your requirements or discuss with an irrigation specialist. Ensure that the model name and information is included on the application.
- There is a maximum of one (1) rebate per installation address.
- **Must have a sales receipt** dated January 1, 2017 or later.
- **Must have an inspection receipt.** An onsite inspection by the CVRD is required after installation. Call 250-334-6056 to schedule an appointment. Applicants will be issued an inspection receipt if the unit has been installed correctly and meets eligibility requirements.

- Rebate cheques will be issued to registered owners only.

5. How many rebates are available?

The program has an annual budget for funding water efficiency rebates which will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

6. Are commercial properties eligible for the irrigation rebate program?

Yes.

7. I'm a renter. Am I eligible?

No. The program is open to property owners only. But you can inform your landlord about the program, since it may be advantageous for them to participate in the program.

8. Is there a maximum number of rebates that I can apply for?

Yes. Registered property owners may only receive one rebate per property.

9. What is the inspection for and when do I schedule it?

An onsite inspection is required to confirm that the smart controller has been installed as per the manufacturer's guidelines. **You will need to call the CVRD at 250-334-6056 to schedule an inspection after your smart controller is installed, but before submitting your application.** Following the inspection, you will receive an inspection receipt. This receipt must be submitted with your rebate application.

10. What is a backflow preventer and why do I need one?

A backflow preventer is like a one-way gate for water. Most backflow preventers are used to keep unsafe water from reversing flow and entering the clean water supply. The valves that turn on and off your water are not sufficient to stop backflow. As such, backflow preventers are required to prevent contamination of the public water system.

11. When I bought my property the irrigation system was already installed. How do I know if there was a plumbing permit for it?

Call the applicable authority (CVRD, City of Courtenay, or Town of Comox) to determine if there is a plumbing permit on record for your irrigation system.

12. Are installation/contractor costs or other associated parts/equipment costs eligible for the rebate?

No. Only the smart controller and sensor are eligible for the rebate. Both the controller and sensor must be installed and in functioning condition in order to obtain the rebate.

13. How can I submit my application?

To avoid delays in processing your application, completed forms and all corresponding receipts should be mailed or submitted in person directly to:

**Rebate Program
Comox Valley Regional District
600 Comox Road
Courtenay, BC V9N 3P6**

14. How long does it take to get a rebate once an application has been submitted?

It could take approximately six to eight weeks to process eligible applications and mail the registered owner a rebate cheque.