



PRESS RELEASE

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LAGUNA SECURES SIXTH WIN AS “MOST WATERWISE CITY”

Laguna Beach, CA – May 26, 2021 – For the sixth time since the national Wyland Mayor’s Challenge for Water Conservation competition began ten years ago, Laguna Beach has secured the title “Most Waterwise City” in its population category. Residents made 6,171 pledges to cut water use by 24.5 million gallons as part of the annual Challenge. Laguna bested Windsor, Colorado; Garfield Heights, Ohio; Moscow, Idaho; and West Chester, Pennsylvania, respectively.

“We are honored to be one of the five winning cities of this national award,” stated Laguna Beach Mayor Bob Whalen. “Laguna residents pride themselves on being good stewards of our environment. Water conservation is critical for a sustainable future and our city remains dedicated to preserving our water resources for future generations.” In addition to this year, residents have stepped up and secured the title “Most Waterwise City” in 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017, and 2020.

The annual month-long public awareness campaign to promote drought resiliency and water quality ended on April 30 with mayors from 42 states across the nation vying to see whose city would be the nation’s most “water-wise.” The five cities with the highest percentage of residents making pledges during the campaign were Laguna Beach; North Port, Florida; Oceanside, California; Tucson, Arizona; and Dallas, Texas.

Overall, residents around the nation, from Anchorage to the Florida Keys, made 759,000 pledges to change behaviors ranging from fixing home leaks to reducing harmful runoff into local rivers and streams. Residents were encouraged to log onto www.mywaterpledge.com and complete the online Clean Water Pledge, promising to follow a series of efficiency measures for

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their home, yard, and automobile. Cities with the highest percentage of residents who take the challenge in their population category (5,000-29,999 residents, 30,000-99,999 residents, 100,000-299,999 residents, 300,000-599,999 residents, and 600,000-plus residents) win the distinction of “Most Waterwise City in the Nation.”

Residents from winning cities will now be entered into a drawing for thousands of dollars in water-saving or eco-friendly prizes, including \$3,000 toward their annual home utility bill, home irrigation equipment from The Toro Company, gift cards for online shopping at Hobie Surf Shops, and eco-friendly bathroom hand soaps from Petal. A \$500 home improvement store shopping spree will also be chosen from among the entire pool of U.S. participants. Additionally, over 8,000 deserving charities were nominated to receive the Grand Prize Toyota Highlander Hybrid. The top-vote-getting charities for each of the 5 winning cities will now be entered to win the vehicle to serve their community.

In addition to reducing overall water waste, residents from Laguna Beach pledged to reduce their use of single-use plastic water bottles by 54,495 and eliminate 1,544 pounds of hazardous waste from entering watersheds. By altering daily lifestyle choices, residents also pledged to put 658,818 fewer pounds of waste in landfills. Potential savings of 89.8 million pounds of carbon dioxide, 1.6 million kilowatt hours of electricity, and \$181,729 in consumer cost savings rounded out the final pledge results.

The Mayor’s Challenge is sponsored by the Wyland Foundation, a nonprofit environmental education organization founded by Laguna artist known only as Wyland. The challenge raises awareness about water conservation and—by extension—the positive implications these reductions have on our local and global environment from the energy we use to products we make to the food we grow, package, eat, and sell.

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Laguna Beach County Water District provides water service to 20,000 residents within an 8.5 square mile area of Laguna Beach. The District’s mission is to furnish a high quality, reliable water supply in a financially responsible manner, while promoting water-use efficiency.