

# USU Extension Program Partners with EPA to Save Water

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The Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program is well on its way to reducing Utah's water use even further as it partners with the Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program.

The QWEL program is a certification program developed to educate landscape professionals and their customers on the benefits of sound landscape design, management and irrigation practices. It was brought to Utah in 2010 and is a model collaboration between Utah State University Extension, the Utah Nursery and Landscape Association and the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, enabling coverage of the landscape industry, the water industry and education.

This program is extremely important to Utah's water-saving efforts, according to Larry Rupp, USU Extension landscape horticulture specialist.

"The QWEL certification program brings consumers and trained landscape professionals together to create landscapes that are not only functional and attractive, but also water efficient," he said.

QWEL provides approximately 20 hours of education that is focused on water-efficient principles including irrigation system and landscape design, soil management and climate-appropriate plant selection. Landscape professionals then use their training to help reduce landscape water demand throughout the state.

The EPA recently recertified the program for Utah, allowing QWEL graduates to display the EPA WaterSense

logo in their businesses as proof to consumers of water-saving expertise.

According to Rupp, the partnership is significant to the QWEL program.

"The partnership between QWEL and the EPA helps ensure the quality of the program," he said. "Many graduates of the QWEL certification program are employed by cities, counties or public institutions. Having trained professionals in the field helps ensure that the many large public landscapes in the state are being managed in a water-efficient manner."

Further information about the QWEL program and water efficiency can be found at [www.extension.usu.edu/water](http://www.extension.usu.edu/water).

## Related Links

- [Center for Water Efficient Landscaping](#)
- [Qualified Water Efficient Landscapers](#)

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