



Austin Water Alternative Compliance Pilot Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. How are properties selected?

Applications will be numbered in order of their receipt by Austin Water. A random numbers list will be generated to determine which applications are selected for participation. Selected applications determined to be incomplete or ineligible will be removed from the participation list and the next application on the list will be selected for review until all participation slots are filled. If any of the selected properties fail a site inspection (see below), the next property of that size will be chosen from the randomized list until all slots are filled or until the inspection period has expired.

2. Does the property need to have an irrigation-only meter?

Yes. The irrigation system must be supplied by one or more irrigation only meters and the meter(s) has to have been installed and in use for at least three years. Three years of prior water use history allows for data comparison.

3. Does the property have to use an ET controller?

No. Properties are allowed to use any appropriate technology from standard programmable controllers to ET controllers.

4. I manage multiple properties in close proximity to one another. Can I submit one application and count them all as one property?

A property will be defined as a contiguous tract of irrigated land that is supplied by water accounts held in the same person/company's name. For example, two adjacent office buildings share a parking lot and common area. There are two separate irrigation-only meters on site supplying two separate irrigation systems. Since both water accounts are in the property owner's name and the irrigation systems water adjacent landscaping, this could be submitted as one property. If the water accounts showed different account holder names, despite being managed by the same property management or irrigation company, the property would be considered as two separate properties. Homeowner's Associations will be considered on a case by case basis.

5. What does the site inspection entail?

Much like the large property variance, the site inspection is conducted to ensure that the irrigation system is in compliance with the permanent water use restrictions defined in Austin City Code Chapter 6-4-63 (D). The property will

fail due to excessive operating pressure/misting, excessive overspray, excessive runoff during the inspection, and/or if there is more than one (1) broken head per ten (10) stations.

6. How is the square footage I submitted verified?

Upon acceptance to the program, staff will use aerial images and GIS to verify square footage. Site inspections will be used not only to determine if the system is in compliance, but also to identify discrepancies between the submitted site plan and the actual irrigated area. Staff determination of irrigated area is final. The property's official water budget will be sent to the applicant within 5 business days of the site inspection.

7. How many properties can I submit per quarter?

You may submit as many properties as you would like, but keep in mind those systems must be able to pass a site inspection on the first attempt. A high failure rate will delay approval for other participants in the pilot study. All applications that are not accepted will have to be resubmitted each quarter.

8. The first round will begin one month into the quarter. How will the water budget be calculated for the first quarter?

Water conservation staff will use monthly ET data to prorate the first quarter's water budget and will notify the property of their prorated water budget within 5 days of the site inspection.

9. How will stage II affect the beginning of this pilot program?

Austin's drought contingency plan requires a 15% reduction in water use in our current situation. Water budgets will adhere to what is required by the drought contingency plan, with a 15% reduction from typical quarterly budgets. Amended water budgets will be recalculated and distributed as changes occur to drought restrictions.

10. When do I need to submit my application?

Budgets are set on a quarterly basis.

Quarter 1: January –March,

Quarter 3: July- September

Quarter 2: April - June

Quarter 4: October- December

Applications will be received during a week preceding the quarter. The 2012 application submittal schedule is:

- Quarter 2 - from April 9 through April 13;
- Quarter 4 - from September 10 through September 14;
- Applications will not be accepted for Quarter 3.