

## Cascade Water Efficiency Program 2025 Annual Report

### Introduction

The 2025 Cascade Water Efficiency Program (program) saved 34,152 gallons of water per day or approximately 12.4 million gallons per year. Along with the savings from 2020 to 2024, the program has achieved 46% of Cascade’s 2020 – 2029 Water Use Efficiency Goal. The program benefits thousands of member residents, students, businesses, schools, and parks by providing training, education, support, and conservation hardware. The program provides water savings, promotes the value of water, and extends the useful life of the region’s current water resources further into the future. Cascade employs one full-time employee to manage the program and 2025 expenses were \$902,154.

### Classroom Water Education

The Classroom Water Education program delivers high-quality, locally relevant programming that is aligned with Washington State Learning Standards. Through its vendor, Nature Vision, Cascade provided 536 in-person programs for 12,757 students.



*Nature Vision Program at Woodridge Elementary School*

*Nature Vision Program at Skyline High School*

### Classroom Presentations

Cascade’s vendor provided presentations on diverse topics, such as “Healthy Water, Healthy Ecosystems,” “Water Supply,” “Waterwise Gardening,” “All About Groundwater,” and “Carbon, Climate, and Conservation” for K-12 classrooms. The presentations are supported by materials, activities, videos and knowledge retention surveys developed by the vendor.

### Blue Teams

Nature Vision also provides a Blue Team option, where an educator works with a class to create a customized project over a period of several visits for a more in-depth study of a particular subject.

Example Blue Team Project: Three third grade classes at Tukwila Elementary School spent six weeks with an educator studying their local watershed. They learned about the importance of soil in cleaning water, water quality testing, amphibians and their life cycle, and the importance of conserving water. The classes created projects to teach their community about good stewardship.

## Teacher Testimonials

*“This was one of the best programs and presenters we have had at our school! Mike was so good with the kids – he had a calm, patient demeanor, and had strategies ready for calling on students and managing typical behaviors. We would love these programs in our schools next year! Nature Vision programs have been a key part of my science teaching for the last several years. I had multiple students share with me separately that this was “The best day of school ever!” They loved seeing Luna the salamander, learn about other amphibians, and learn how our water use and care impacts those and other animals. This was a great way for them to gain understanding and appreciation for how other creatures are impacted by human decisions, and the things the students can do to help. We try to talk about using water and other resources wisely, but seeing “Luna” the salamander in class and then talking about how we use and care for our water impacts Luna and other animals makes it so much more real and relevant for students.”*

- Teixeira Clark, Emerson K-12 (Kirkland)

*“Maureen was patient, kind, knowledgeable, organized and engaging. Having the hands-on soil experience was exciting for the students and important for solidifying their understanding. It was a great program, and I appreciate the Cascade Water Alliance supporting it!”*

- Jennifer McCreary, Horace Mann Elementary (Redmond)

*“Matthew did a wonderful time teaching our students about watersheds. He had strong classroom management strategies, incorporated movement into his lessons, and brought in fascinating biofacts that the students were able to touch. I would absolutely like to see this program again in our school next year and encourage Cascade Water Alliance to continue their sponsorship!”*

- Kris Babani, Woodridge Elementary (Bellevue)

*“Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in the Blue Team and Community Science program. My students truly enjoyed the experience and gained a lot from it. The program definitely encouraged my students to think more like scientists. They became more curious and confident in asking questions about the natural world, especially related to local water systems and environmental health. The hands-on activities helped them connect classroom learning with real-world application, which sparked deeper interest and thoughtful inquiry. Many students expressed a desire to stay involved in environmental projects after the program ended. They felt empowered knowing that their actions could make a positive difference in their community. Some even began talking about ways they could lead or support local clean-up efforts or habitat restoration projects. A few students shared small but meaningful changes they or their families have started to make—like reducing plastic use, being more careful about waste disposal, and paying attention to what goes down storm drains. These conversations showed that the program not only impacted the students but also extended into their households. I believe these seeds of change will continue to grow. I felt the program was inclusive and engaging for all of my students. The facilitators were great at drawing everyone in and making each student feel like a valuable part of the team. This was an incredibly positive experience for my class. My students learned a lot, had fun, and came away with a greater appreciation for their local environment. Thank you to the Nature Vision team for the thoughtful planning and energy you brought to this program. It was impactful, inspiring, and very much appreciated!”*

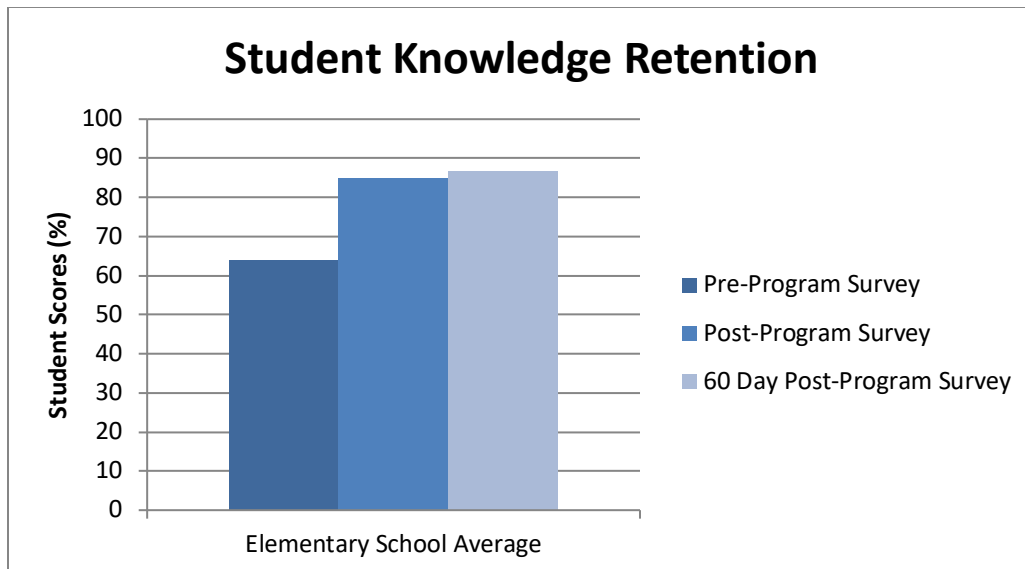
- Hafsa Sathar, Medina Academy (Redmond)

### Student Feedback

<b>What are NEW ways you will save water starting today?</b>
Turn off the faucet while brushing my teeth.
Take shorter showers.
Take only what I need.
Collect rainwater for gardening.
Use drip irrigation.
Use a commercial car wash.
Turn off the faucet while scrubbing the dishes.
Make sure the washing machine is full before running it.
Fill the dishwasher before running it.
Turn off the faucet while washing my hands.
Fix leaks.
Put less water in the bath.
Wash car less.
Use water wisely.
Use energy efficient appliances.
Use all the water I take.
Flush the toilet less.
Water lawn less.
Plant native plants.
Take fewer baths.

### Program Evaluation

In addition to teacher and student surveys, the vendor performs pre- and post-survey work with some classrooms to determine how well students learn and retain the presentation knowledge. The survey quizzes focus on key elements of the presentations and basic concepts of watersheds and water conservation. The average classroom survey results are shown below:



### **Problem-Based Learning for Water Systems**

The Problem-Based Learning for Water Systems (PBL4WS) program, co-created with Sustainability Ambassadors, is for teachers and students who want more in-depth learning about water systems. The program is focused on high school and middle school students, with projects that typically extend over several weeks or months. The program enriched the learning of approximately 1,300 students and dozens of teachers in the following ways:

- A student panel of Ambassadors presented at the Annual Green Infrastructure Summit.
- Produced new, simplified Alignment Tables showing the relationship between Cities' Climate Action Plans, school districts' sustainability plan, and the work of Sustainability Ambassadors.
- Hosted Town Hall at School events in Bellevue and Kirkland.
- A student panel of Ambassadors presented at the Annual Association for Learning Environments Conference.
- Produced an all-youth Livestream event of impact stories.
- Facilitated a spring Green Career Conversation online event.
- Produced a teaching video on how to calculate cistern size for a net zero water building.
- Facilitated a "Water You Thinking" Intergenerational Summer Summit featuring an exchange of learning between students, teachers, staff, and council members.
- Published and shared the following curriculum units with partners:
  - Sustainable Solutions Ranking Cards
  - Current Habits Checklist
  - My Small Actions Influence Very Big Systems
  - Green Jobs Youth Pathways
  - How to Read My Water Bill
  - Personal Timeline of Prototypes and Tipping Points
  - Put An Aerator On It
  - Low Flow Shower Head
  - Drinking Water infographic Analysis
- Facilitated 10 workshops and seminars for teachers and students in Cascade's Member Service Area.
- Created and posted 33 impact stories.

### **Home Water Audits**

Cascade offered materials for teachers who wished to have their students conduct a water audit to better understand how much and how water is used in their homes. The program includes digital materials to guide students through the process, measuring devices, and spreadsheets where they can record their findings. The spreadsheets calculate not only the potential water savings, but also the energy savings and avoided greenhouse gas emissions. When a classroom or entire grade sums the collective savings, the potential impacts are significant. Cascade also provides showerheads and aerators for students who find high-flow fixtures in their homes. In 2025, 193 students participated in the program.

### **Water Bottle Filling Station Project**

Cascade worked with Skyline High School in Sammamish to achieve the installation of a water bottle refilling station at the school. The project was initiated by two students who wanted to encourage others to switch from single-use plastic bottles to reusable. Cascade provided partial funding for the cost of the new station. As part of this project, the students ran a toilet leak detection campaign and got over 500 students to test their toilets at home for leaks.



*Students at Skyline High School With Their New Water Bottle Filling Station*

### **Cascade Gardener**

Cascade provides classes and other learning opportunities for residents to learn about sustainable landscaping and water efficiency. Most classes are held through ZOOM, but there are also classes at nurseries and educational garden tours. All classes incorporate water efficiency into the presentation.



*A Cascade Gardener Walking Tour at Bellevue Botanical Garden*

### Remote Learning

Cascade continued its remote gardening classes with a winter, spring, and fall series. There were 31 ZOOM classes with 897 total attendees from Cascade’s member service area.

### In-Person Garden Walking Tours and Nursery Classes

Cascade holds in-person garden walking tours and nursery classes with expert presenters to help residents see healthy watersheds and native plants options for their home landscapes. In 2025, there were 25 in-person tours and classes with 205 attendees from Cascade’s member service area.

### Training

Cascade provides landscape and irrigation training as requested to teach irrigation managers how to maintain beautiful landscapes without using excessive water. In 2025, Cascade provided two training courses for King County Housing Authority property managers and landscapers.

### Garden Hotline

Cascade supports the regional Garden Hotline, which is a resource for residents to have their gardening and landscaping questions answered by gardening professionals from Tilth Alliance with an emphasis on water efficiency and sustainability. In 2025, the Garden Hotline received 592 calls from residents in Cascade’s member service area.

### Irrigation Assessments

Cascade offers free irrigation assessments for commercial, multi-family, and public properties. Cascade provides a detailed report of the assessment with specific strategies for achieving greater water efficiency and sustainability. In 2025, Cascade initiated or completed six irrigation assessment projects. Cascade maintains contact with staff at these properties and will assist in the implementation of Cascade’s recommended measures over time.



*Overspray Discovered During an Irrigation Assessment*

### Leak Detection Dye Distribution

Cascade contacted 852 multi-family properties, HOAs, motels, and large employers with offers of free toilet leak detection dye during the annual Fix a Leak Week. Cascade provided dye to all accounts that were interested.

### **Online Orders**

Cascade provided approximately 10,500 shower timers, rain gauges, leak detection dye packets, and other conservation items through Cascade’s website or direct orders. The conservation items are provided free of charge to residents, schools, businesses, and homeowner associations in Cascade’s member service area who pay the postage to ship the items. Cascade also provides members with conservation items for distribution to customers at utility offices, community meetings, and events.

### **Soil and Water Stewardship**

Cascade co-created and partnered with Tilth Alliance to deliver the Soil and Water Stewardship program, which provides free training for residents on sustainable landscaping practices, rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, and other water-related topics. Cascade assists in promoting the program to recruit residents from Cascade’s member service area.

In 2025, there were eight Soil and Water Stewardship training events, 20 community projects, and 12 school projects completed in Cascade’s member service area with 774 volunteers.



*The 2025 Soil and Water Stewards*

## Events

Cascade supports its members through events, such as fairs and festivals, to promote water efficiency. Cascade made thousands of customer impacts at the following events in 2025 and provided approximately 5,882 conservation items, such as shower timers, rain gauges, and toilet leak detection dye:

- World Wetlands Day
- Northwest Flower and Garden Festival
- Issaquah Sustainability Fair
- Redmond Sustainability Fair
- Bellevue Family Fourth
- Redmond Derby Days
- Sammamish Farmer’s Market
- Kirkland Farmer’s Market
- Skyway Health and Safety Fair
- Tukwila Farmer’s Market Weekend Concert Series
- Issaquah Salmon Days



*Redmond Sustainability Fair*



*Bellevue Family Fourth*

### **We Need Water**

In 2025, Cascade continued to expand the reach of the We Need Water social media campaign. Major accomplishments included:

- Reached 984,500 people
- Provided 463 posts on Instagram and Facebook
- Published twelve Cascade Gardener newsletters
- Grew by 329 new followers

### **Shared Rebate Programs**

Cascade cost shares with Puget Sound Energy on selected Energy Star and WaterSense rebate programs, such as clothes washers, showerheads, and faucets. In 2025, Cascade shared in:

- 1,646 rebates for EnergyStar-labeled clothes washers
- 807 rebates for EnergyStar-labeled dishwashers
- 108 rebates for WaterSense-labeled faucet aerators

### **Lawn Be Gone: Grass Removal Program**

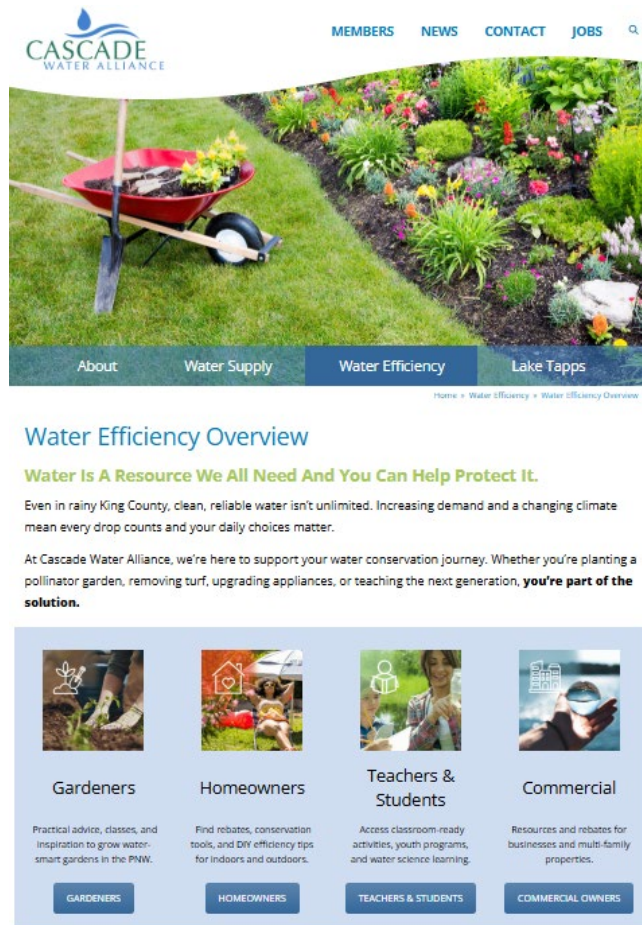
In 2025, Cascade launched the Lawn Be Gone: Grass Removal Program (previously the Turf Out program) to encourage residents to remove a portion of their grass lawns and replace them with native or drought tolerant plants. Two applications have been received.



*Lawn Be Gone: Grass Removal Guide*

## Website Redesign

Cascade completed a redesign of the Water Efficiency section of its website. The new site is easier for visitors to navigate and find what they are looking for.



*Resigned Water Efficiency Section of the Cascade Website*

## AMI Workshop

Cascade hosted an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) workshop to provide information to Members considering implementing AMI. The workshop included presentations, a panel discussion, and a Question & Answer session with Sammamish Plateau Water, the City of Bellevue Utilities Department, and Tacoma Water, all of which have implemented AMI. Feedback received from the workshop was positive.

## Water Supply Forum

At Cascade's recommendation, water efficiency was a recurring topic at the 2025 Water Supply Forum meetings. Topics included unique water efficiency programs and AMI.

## SPLASH

Cascade staff created a water conservation information sharing group with water conservation managers from Tacoma, Seattle, and Everett. The group, SPLASH (Sharing Practices for Local Action in Sustainable Hydrology) meets quarterly to share information and provide support to each other.