Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization and City of Lakeville
Irrigation System Improvement Financial Assistance Program

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Power Organization (VRWJPO), in partnership with the City of Lakeville, is providing financial assistance for irrigation system improvements that improve the efficiency of the systems and reduce municipal water use. The goals of the program are: 1) reduce municipal water use and peak water demand, 2) incentivize use of water-efficient irrigation systems and system components, and 3) educate the public on ways to use irrigation efficiently and preserve the local groundwater supply.

Criteria

- Only associations (townhome association, homeowner association, condominium association) who irrigate greenspace with systems that are controlled in a centralized manner (i.e. irrigation controllers serve irrigation needs for multiple residences or greenspaces) are eligible.
- New construction/developments are not eligible. Only construction/developments that are at least two years old are eligible.
- Irrigation water must be sourced from the municipal water supply, not from private wells.
- An irrigation audit must be completed by a VRWJPO/City-selected certified irrigation auditor before improvements to the irrigation system are made. The audit will be subsidized by the VRWJPO/City and will result in a total out-of-pocket cost of $50 per association.
- The program will provide financial assistance to each association up to 75% of the cost of EPA WaterSense products, up to a maximum of $1,500, and non-EPA WaterSense products, up to a maximum of $500.
- It is preferred that any irrigation system improvements performed as a result of findings from an irrigation audit are performed by a contractor who is Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense certified for irrigation system installation and maintenance. EPA WaterSense certified irrigation contractors can be found at https://lookforwatersense.epa.gov/pros/.
- If financial assistance is provided to an association, the association is required to implement a proactive irrigation system maintenance program into their future irrigation system contracts. To aid in this effort, the VRWJPO and City have created a request for proposal (RFP) template that associations can use for obtaining an irrigation contractor that incorporates proactive maintenance into the services requested.

Eligible Improvements

EPA WaterSense Improvements

- Irrigation controller replacement with an EPA WaterSense labeled controller: (https://www.epa.gov/watersense/product-search)
- Irrigation spray sprinkler body replacement with an EPA WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler body: (https://www.epa.gov/watersense/product-search)

Non-EPA WaterSense Improvements

- Replacement of broken sprinkler heads, bodies, or nozzles
- Fixing sunken or tilted sprinkler heads
- Capping unneeded sprinklers
- Adding additional zones or lines of sprinklers to better water areas where inadequate system design is resulting in over-watering or water waste
- Installation of rain sensors

Ineligible Improvements

- Irrigation controller replacement with a non-EPA WaterSense labeled controller
- Irrigation spray sprinkler body replacement with a non-US EPA WaterSense labeled spray sprinkler body
- Irrigation system audit by irrigation professionals not certified by a US EPA WaterSense program
- Repairs of leaks associated with broken irrigation lines
- Programming of irrigation controllers, unless the programming is performed to set up a new EPA WaterSense labeled controller
- Irrigation start up and shut down
- Irrigation meter and reduced pressure zone (RPZ) connection or disconnection

To participate in the program

- An Irrigation System Improvement application must be completed and submitted to the VRWJPO at travis.thiel@co.dakota.mn.us. VRWJPO staff will provide an application to applicants upon request.
- All invoices and associated backup financial paperwork for eligible improvements must be scanned and provided to travis.thiel@co.dakota.mn.us. Labor charges associated with eligible improvements must be either:
    1. Built into the fee for each improvement made; or
    2. Billed separately, with a breakdown of costs for only the labor associated with eligible improvements.
- To verify that improvements were completed, a picture associated with each individual improvement must be provided to the VRWJPO (i.e. five sprinkler bodies installed = five improvement pictures). In the interest of email file size limits, contact travis.thiel@co.dakota.mn.us and a file sharing link will be provided to you where photos can be uploaded. By participating in the program, the association understands and agrees that pictures associated with the improvement(s) may be used in promotional materials or other publications.

Questions

All questions related to this program can be directed to Travis Thiel, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist, at travis.thiel@co.dakota.mn.us or via phone at (952) 891-7546.