



Media Release
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Councils launch SMART Watering campaign, ahead of hot, dry Canterbury summer

Home gardeners, lifestyle irrigators, small businesses, sports grounds and schools will be the target of a new water-saving campaign by IrrigationNZ, local bodies and industry partners.

The SMART Watering campaign teaches home gardeners and community irrigation projects how to apply water efficiently. Its wider roll-out follows on from the successful SMART Irrigation programme which encourages sustainably managed, accountable, responsible and trusted irrigation practice.

Timaru, Ashburton, Selwyn and Waimakariri District Councils, Environment Canterbury and industry partners Water Supply Products and RX Plastics, have joined forces with IrrigationNZ to help home gardeners and community irrigation projects find ways to make the best use of their water during what is predicted to be another hot, dry summer.

“Selwyn District Council has asked local residents connected to Council water supplies to avoid lawn watering during the peak demand times of 6-9am and 4-9pm daily as a voluntary measure and to avoid water wastage given that strong El Nino conditions are forecast to continue over summer,” says Selwyn District Council Water Asset Manager Murray England.

To date the voluntary measures have helped manage demand for water. Mr England says the Council is carefully monitoring water usage currently and may need to introduce formal water restrictions over summer if demand for water increases.

“Over the last year we have been educating farmers on how to save water with our SMART Irrigation programme,” says Andrew Curtis, IrrigationNZ CEO.

“There are a lot of parallels between home gardeners and farmers. Both need to know how much water their plants and crops require, have efficient systems for application and be monitoring soil moisture levels. The irrigation industry has proven products, technologies and practices that can eke out water supply. We are sharing this knowledge so we can all play our part in conserving supplies this summer,” says Mr Curtis.

As part of the campaign, factsheets with tips on SMART Watering are available on the Facebook page [WateringSMART](#) and website www.smartirrigation.co.nz/smartwatering

Simple things like choosing early mornings or evenings to water your plants, setting a timer on the veggie patch sprinkler, investigating rain tanks on the roof, or selecting less water-hungry plants are examples.

- SMART stands for sustainably managed, accountable, responsible and trusted.
- SMART Irrigation and SMART Watering practice rely on the same principles – checking that your system can apply water efficiently, that your use of water is justified and that you are monitoring and measuring as you go.
- SMART Watering isn't difficult and will save you time and money in the long term.
- SMART Watering is sustainable watering – be part of the solution to conserve supply.

"The east coast of the South Island has been classed in a drought for at least another three months. The recent warning by Government on the importance of planning and preparing for very dry El Nino conditions highlights the need to take water efficiency seriously. All of this background makes SMART Watering a very timely campaign," says Mr Curtis.

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IrrigationNZ

IrrigationNZ is the national body representing irrigators and the irrigation industry. Its mission is to promote excellence in irrigation throughout New Zealand. IrrigationNZ launched the SMART Irrigation Programme last year which stands for Sustainably Managed, Accountable, Responsible and Trusted Irrigation.

Photo attached: Selwyn District Council's Major Property Projects Manager John Reid (left) and Cr Pat McEvedy (right) at Rolleston's Foster Recreation Park at the launch of the SMART Watering campaign. It was a fantastic opportunity to see how smart water use was being integrated into the park's development.