



Item No.

INFORMATION ITEM
November 16, 2020

TO: Public Affairs & Legislation Committee
(Directors Yoo Schneider, McVicker, Vacant)

FROM: Robert Hunter, General Manager

Staff Contact: Tiffany Baca

SUBJECT: #OCisGardenSmart Campaign

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of Directors receive and file the report.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Committee recommends (To be determined at Committee Meeting)

DETAILED REPORT

Across the world, nurseries, garden centers, and seed distributors continue to see a soar in customers amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Budding new gardeners have a variety of reasons for taking up this age-old activity, including relieving stress, connecting with nature, growing food, exercise, creating teachable moments for their children, spending quality time with family, and many more.

While Orange County (OC) residents and businesses alike have adopted a water smart lifestyle, collectively saving over 17 billion gallons of water each year through the Municipal Water District of Orange County’s (MWD OC) [water-saving programs, resources, and rebates](#), this swell of new gardeners has created yet another opportunity to educate, inform, and inspire. And so, MWD OC has partnered with [UCCE Master Gardeners](#), [Orange County Coastkeeper](#), and local OC nurseries to offer quick video garden tips that include three important benefits: water savings, wellbeing, and garden smart know-how. Through these informative clips, OC garden and landscape experts

Budgeted (Y/N):	Budgeted amount:	Core ___	Choice ___
Action item amount:		Line item:	
Fiscal Impact (explain if unbudgeted):			

showcase a variety of water saving plants and irrigation techniques that help OC residents and businesses reduce water use, protect our water ways, and save money.

OC's semi-arid climate supports the diverse landscapes that are enjoyed here, including coastal, canyon, mountainous, and metropolitan areas. Successful gardens and landscapes in these areas require an assortment of water and garden smart know-how, and OC residents and businesses are increasingly up to the challenge. Through robust community and education partnerships like these, OC citizens learn more about their personal impact on the health and reliability of the county's water supply, connect with local resources, and are encouraged to make small changes today that can have a big influence on water reliability for generations to come.

With four completed videos in the [Garden Smart YouTube Playlist](#) today, and dozens more coming soon, MWDOC is excited to continue to work with our new partners to bring OC citizens more water smart information, resources, and tips as they continue to grow their garden smart skills.