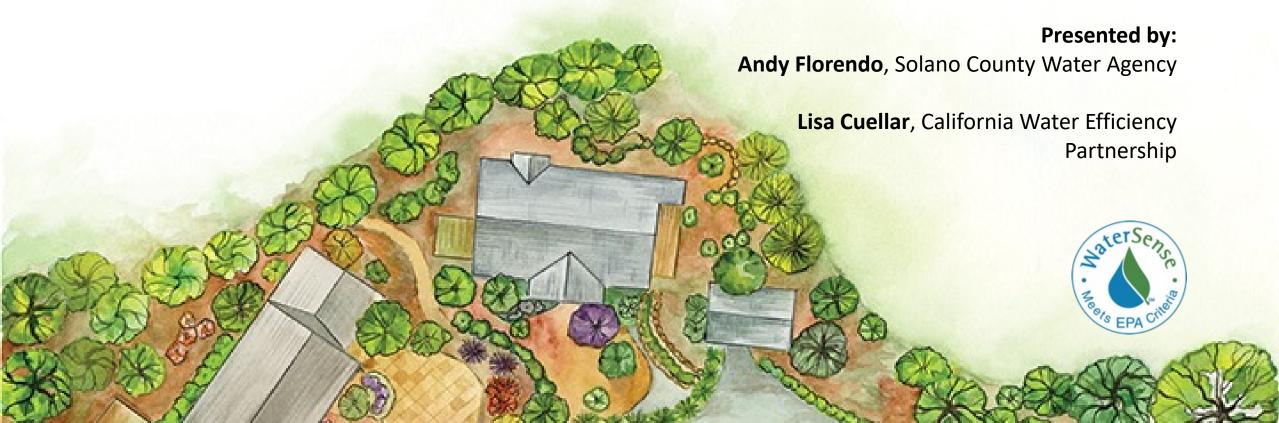
This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com





BAY AREA QWEL BECOMES A MODEL FOR ONLINE WORKFORCE TRAINING



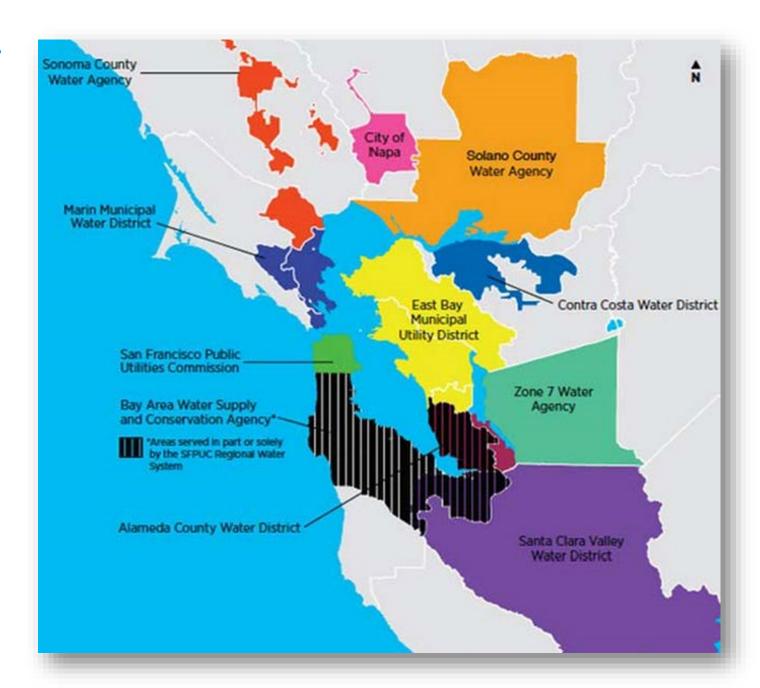
BAY AREA REGIONAL QWEL TRAINING (BAYQWEL)

- 10 sponsoring water suppliers from across the greater Bay Area (subsidize training fee)
- Lead: Solano County Water
 Agency

SOLANO WATER

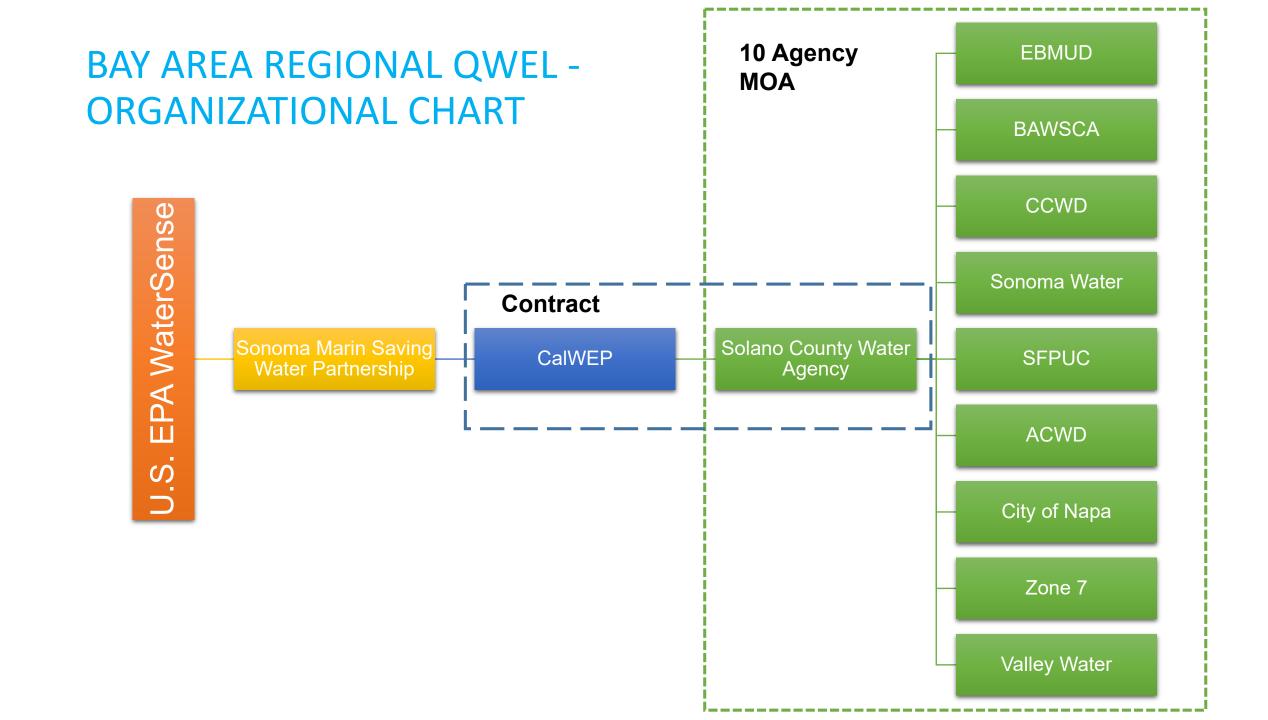
BE GREEN, SAVE BLUE™

 24-month contract period to deliver 20 QWEL trainings



BAYQWEL BACKGROUND

- BayQWEL was formed to implement a regional program to bring QWEL to all nine Bay Area counties
- Advantages include reduced administrative overhead by contracting the vendor through one agency
- Memorandum of Understanding developed between Participating Agencies to set goals and objectives of the program
- RFP was developed with input from Participating Agencies, CalWEP selected as program administrator
- Regional objectives for QWEL include:
 - increasing landscape professionals' awareness and compliance with local water-use restrictions, and
 - reducing long-term landscape water use through adoption of proper management practices for water-efficient landscapes



QWEL PROGRAM

- Developed in 2007 by Sonoma County Water Agency in partnership with a number of stakeholders
- Recognized as an U.S. EPA WaterSense labeled Professional Certification Program for Irrigation System Audits
- Affordable local approach to reducing landscape water demand
- Knowledge in water efficient and sustainable landscape practices including water management and preservation of other valuable resources





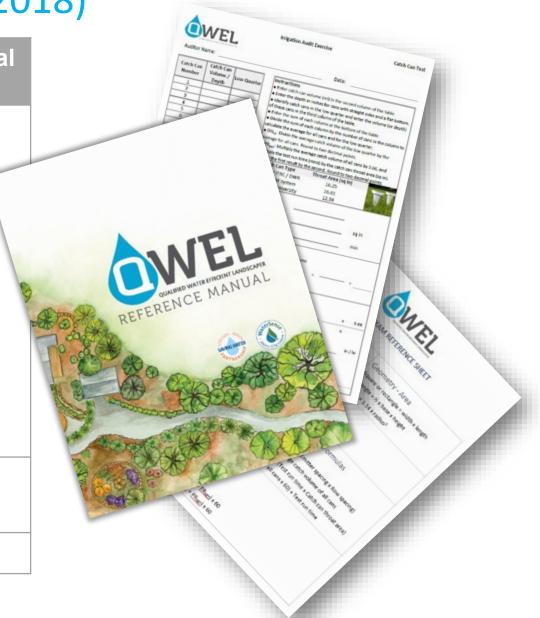
QWEL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

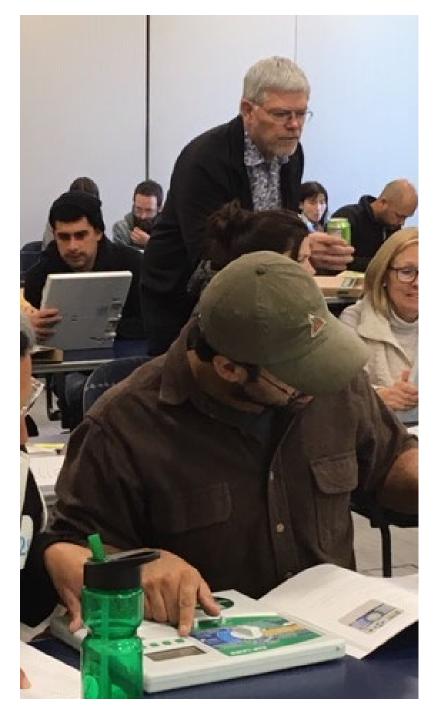
- Peter Estournes, Gardenworks, Inc.
- Carrie Pollard, Marin Municipal Water District
- Deb Lane, City of Santa Rosa
- Chris McNairy, Hunter Industries
- Megan Alliston, MiraCosta College, Oceanside
- Raul Gonzalez, Ewing Irrigation



QWEL CURRICULUM (REVAMPED IN 2018)

Section	Instructional Hours
Where Our Water Comes From	1.0
2. Sustainable Landscaping	2.0
3. Soils	1.5
4. Landscape Water	1.5
5. Irrigation Systems	2.0
6. Irrigation Maintenance & Troubleshooting	1.0
7. Irrigation System Auditing	1.5
8. Irrigation Scheduling	1.5
9. Irrigation Controllers	1.5
10. Bringing It All Together	1.5
Irrigation System Audit	2.0
Final Exam	3.0
	20 Hrs



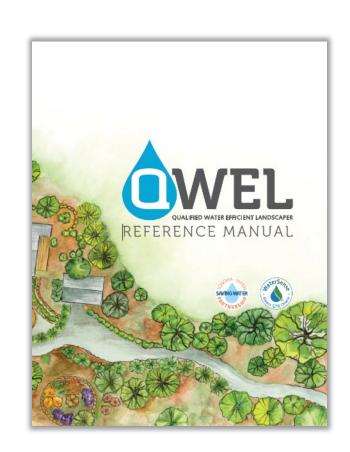






BENEFITS OF QWEL PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

- FREE or low cost 20-hour training and certification
- FREE online listing on the QWEL Pro directory and WaterSense websites
- FREE annual renewal
- Use of the QWEL logo and other marketing materials
- Certificate to demonstrate your knowledge of water efficient and sustainable landscaping practices
- Offered in English and Spanish



QWEL & SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING MARKET TRANSFORMATION

- Increasingly required by regulation
 - Model Water Efficient Landscape
 Ordinance in California
- Opportunity to generate revenue
 - Landscape conversion
 - Water management
 - Skilled maintenance
- An aesthetic and functional upgrade



Photo by Peter Veilleux, East Bay Wilds

QWEL ADDRESSES CHANGING CONSUMER PREFERENCES . . .

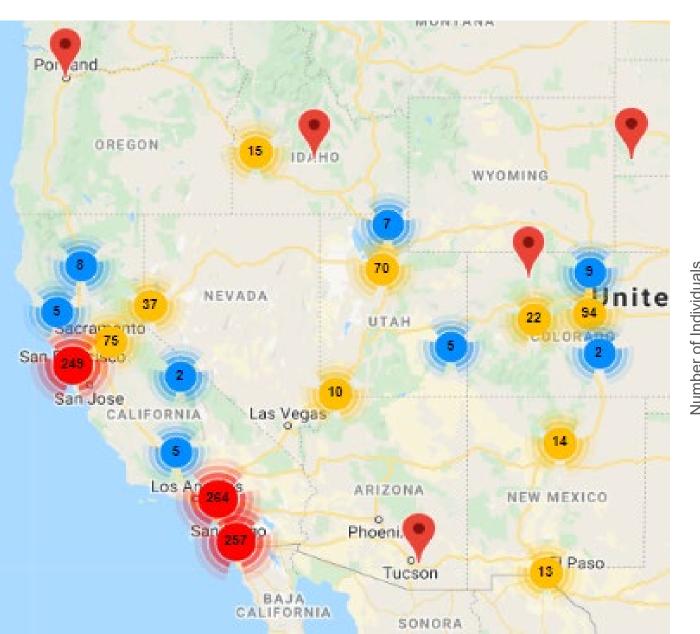
Preferences are changing!

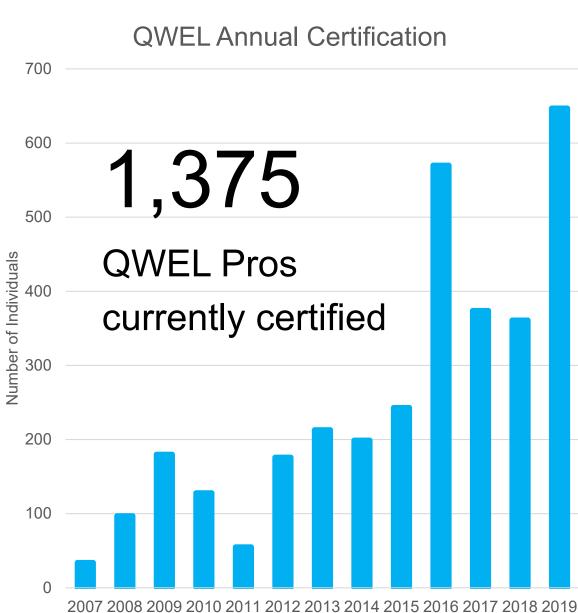
- National Association of Home Builders, 2019 Survey: What Home Buyers Really Want
- Issued to 4,000 recent home buyers or those looking to own a home within the next three years
- Buyers significantly favored green features over non-green features
- 65% preferred "Low-maintenance landscaping" vs. 35% who preferred "Conventional landscaping"

GREEN CHOICE	% IN FAVOR	NON-GREEN CHOICE	% IN FAVO
Features and finishes made of more expensive materials that last longer.	74	Features and finishes made of materials that cost less but need to be replaced more often.	26
Low-maintenance landscaping, with plants that grow in the local climate with minimal watering, weeding, or mowing.	65	Conventional landscaping, with a traditional lawn, tree shrubs, etc.	35
Home oriented to make efficient use of the sun's energy for heating and cooling.	63	Home oriented to optimize the attractiveness of the home as viewed from the street.	37

Source: https://magazine.realtor/daily-news/2019/02/25/how-much-do-buyers-want-green-vs-non-green-features

QWEL PROFESSIONALS (2019 SNAPSHOT)





QWEL FACILITATION: PROFESSIONAL CERTIFYING ORGANIZATION



A Chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency

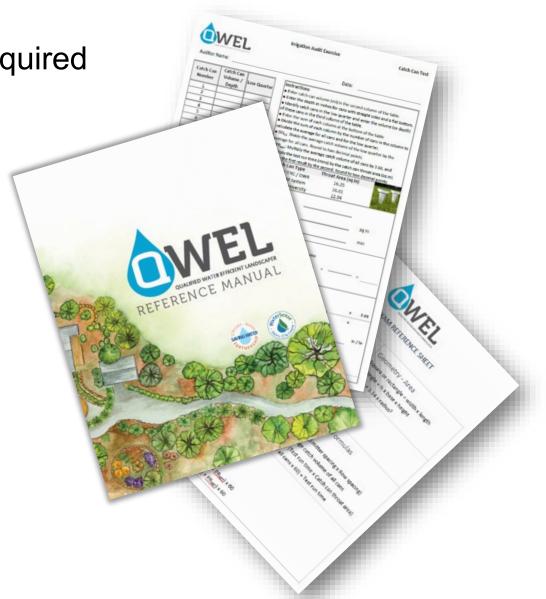
- ✓ Local customization
- ✓ Certification workshops
- √ Hire instructors
- ✓ Certify individuals

PROGRAM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR A REGIONAL APPROACH

 Limited or overburdened agency staff required a turn-key approach

Logistics, Training Admin., CEU Admin.,
 Marketing & Outreach, Reporting

- 2. Robust marketing effort to grow brand awareness
 - Leverage existing agency networks and relationships
 - Promote through trade organizations
 - Outreach by phone (critical)

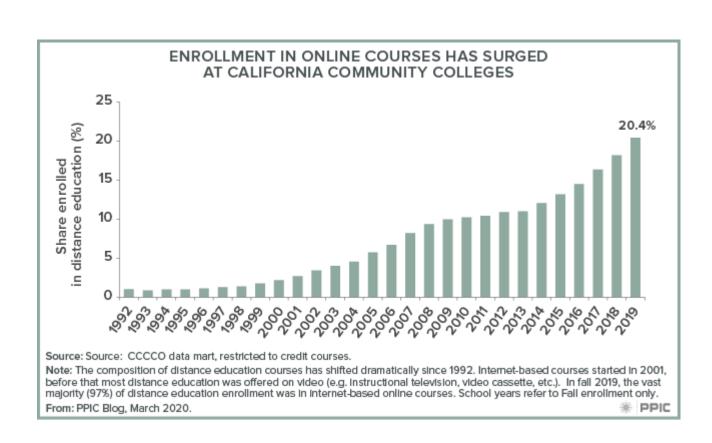


PROGRAM SCHEDULING: IN-PERSON QWEL TRAINING

Time	Milestone
Kickoff	Establish communication channels and establish timeline
1 month	Instructor recruitment (Train the Trainer)
1 month	Develop regional branding and marketing and outreach collateral
2 months	Develop a marketing and outreach plan
2-3 months	Targeted marketing and outreach
1 month	Deliver QWEL training
½ month	Processing/Evaluation/Follow-up

THE CASE FOR SHIFTING TO A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

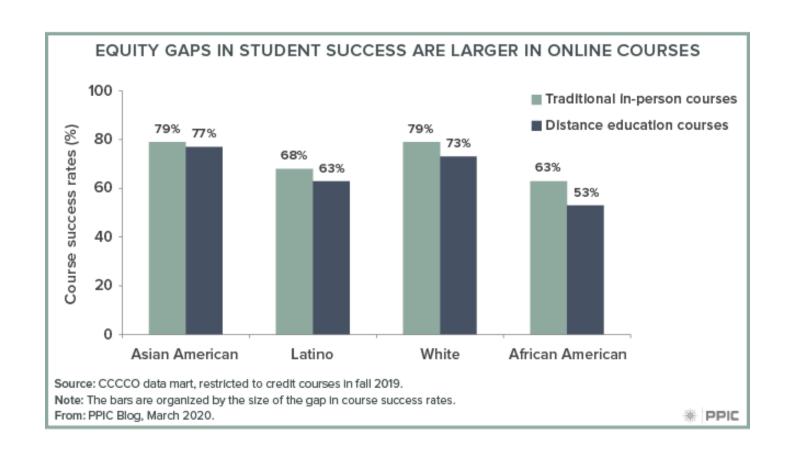
- A global pandemic!
- Increasing comfort level with online learning
- Accommodate more students
- Accessibility and scheduling flexibility
 - ✓ No more long commutes!
 - ✓ Don't have to give up an entire workday!



ONLINE LEARNING CONSIDERATIONS

Accessibility:

- Limited to those with WiFi and computer access
- Demographic considerations



ONLINE QWEL APPROACH

Utilize Zoom platform

- Instructor + support staff (to assist with time management, technical troubleshooting, and management of chat log, etc.)
- o Increase training quotas to 60 registrants, added tutoring sessions

Tested various schedules

- o Four consecutive, 2-hour sessions vs. Two, 4-hour sessions (2 weeks)
- Morning, afternoon and evening tracks
- No classes in summer

Marketing

- MailChimp e-blasts to industry contacts (500)
- Phone calls to those who click on promotional email
- Announcements in e-newsletters (Internal, Master Gardeners, Trade organizations, Industry leaders)

Online 3rd-party Exam Proctoring

o Exam fee (\$30) to ensure turnout



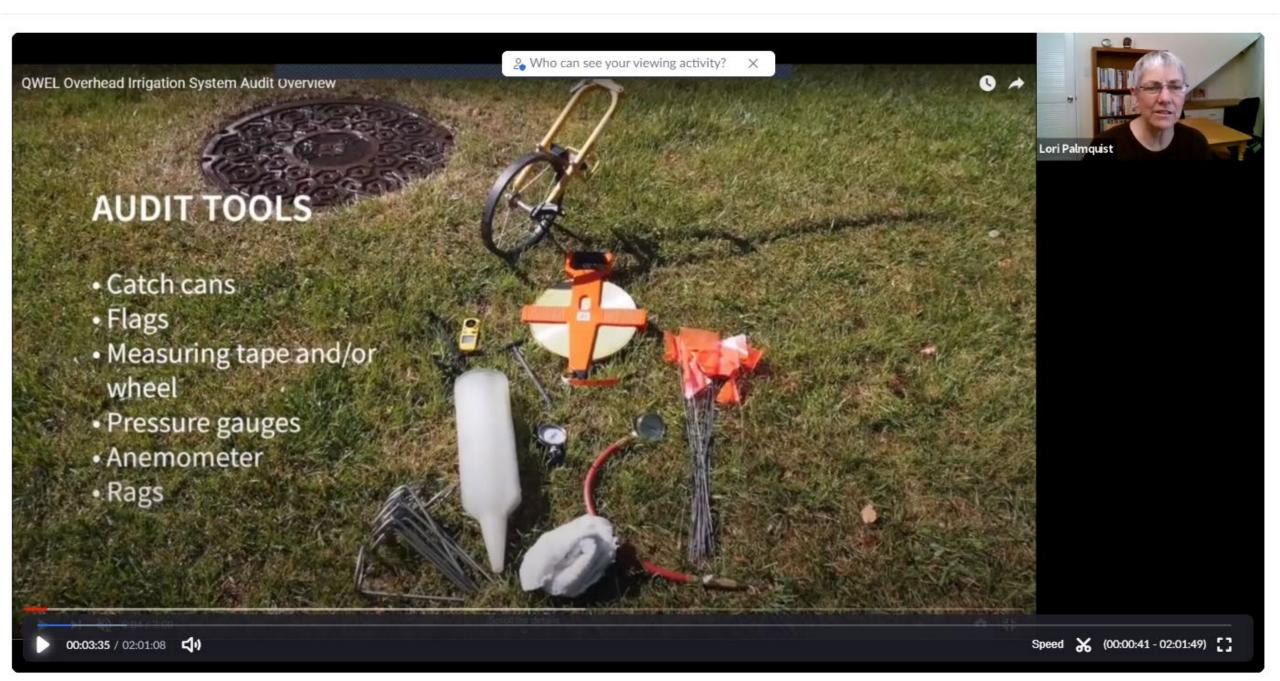
TRAINING SCHEDULE

February	2021			February 2021 Su Mo Tu We Ti 1 2 3 4 7 8 9 10 1 14 15 16 17 1 21 22 23 24 2	n Fr Sa Su Mo	March 2021 Tu We Th Fr Sa 2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 12 13 16 17 18 19 20 23 24 25 26 27 30 31
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jan 31	Feb 1 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	2 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	3 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	4 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning	8:00am QWEL Tutoring #1
7	7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	9 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	11 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning 7:00pm QWEL #519 - Evening	12 8:00am QWEL #520 - Morning	8:00am QWEL Tutoring #1
14	15 Washington's B-day	16	17	18	19	20

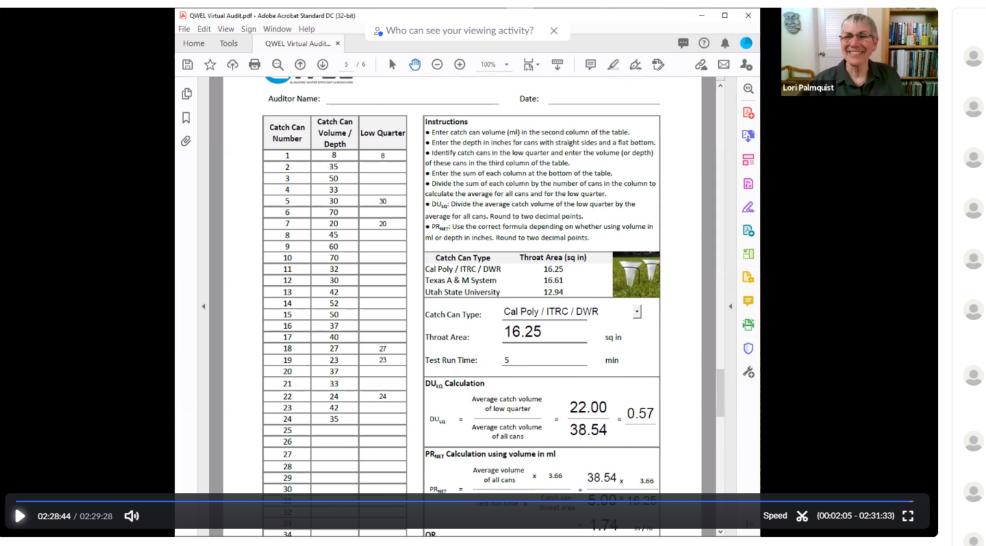












Chat Mess	ages
Anthony Glass	38:03
How does high DU effect to	urf grass?
Hunter Preston	45:58
is anyone else having video	or sound issues?
Stephanie Nunimaker	46:20
good here Hunter	
Nancy Munoz	46:34
No, I haven't	
Hunter Preston	47:02
must be my internet here the	nen. thank you
Anthony Glass	01:12:20
It's amazing how not keepir mess up the math	ng units consistent can
Anthony Glass	01:18:39
A water meter can't help de an irrigation system?	etermine a possible leak in
Hunter Preston	01:22:01
the meter can, but it depen	ds on the flow rate
Anthony Glass	01:23:39
Got it	
Larry Layton	01:28:29





Completed Classes:

Zone 7 City of Napa EBMUD

* 3 months



Stats:

No. Registered: 110 No. Exam Takers: 79 Ave. Pass Rate: 83%



Completed Classes:

Morning Series Evening Series

* 1 month



Stats:

No. Registered: 105 No. Exam Takers: 70 Ave. Pass Rate: **97%**



Table 8: October training (evening) occupational breakdown

Occupation	No.
Academic	0
Landscape Architect	3
Landscape Company	<mark>14</mark>
Landscape Designer	3
Master Gardener	4
Non-Profit	4
Other	6
Property Management	1
Public Agency	5
Self-employed	<mark>12</mark>
Student	1
Water Utility	2
Total	55

Table 9: October Training (morning) occupational breakdown

Occupation	No.
Academic	4
Landscape Architect	0
Landscape Company	5
Landscape Designer	0
Master Gardener	3
Non-Profit	1
Other	1
Property Management	0
Public Agency	<mark>26</mark>
Self-employed	2
Student	1
Water Utility	<mark>9</mark>
Total	52

Performance Metrics: In-Person vs. Online Training (English)

Class Type	Quota	Day 1 Attendance	Certified/ Training	Ave. Exam Pass Rate
In-Person QWEL	40	33	21	83%
Online QWEL	60	45	30	97%

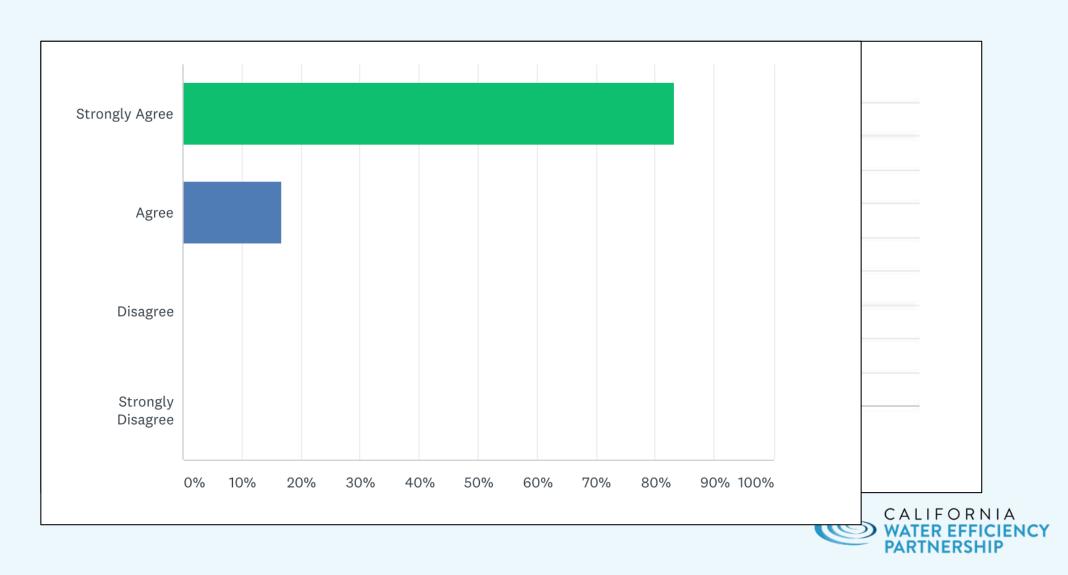
*Note: Online Spanish QWEL resulted in a 22% pass rate (2 out of 9 exam takers)



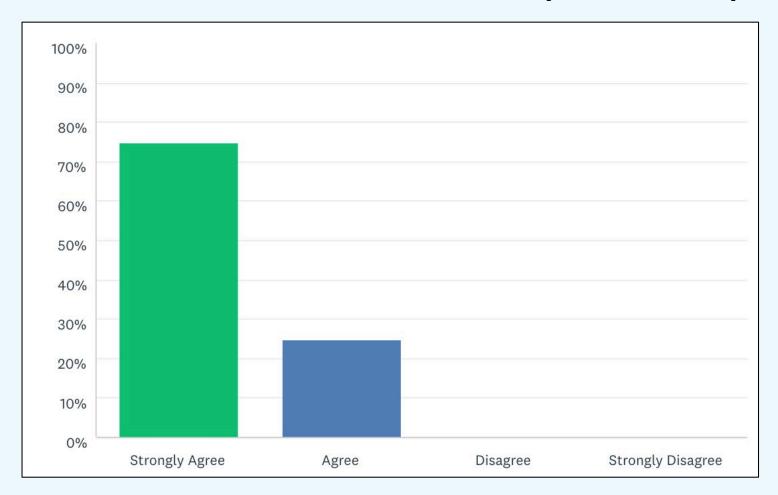
STUDENT FEEDBACK – ONLINE CLASSES



THE INSTRUCTOR DEMONSTRATED KNOWLEDGE OF THE TOPIC AND PRESENTED IT IN AN INFORMATIVE MANNER (OCT VS APRIL):

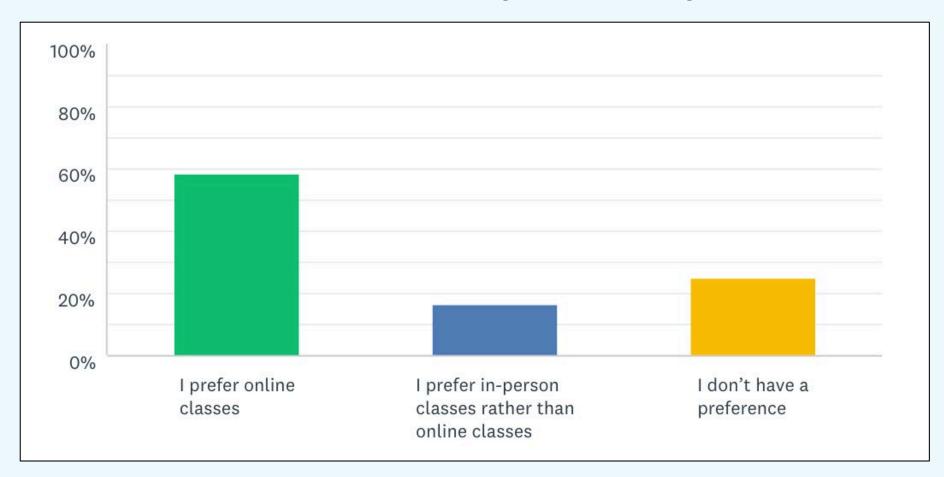


THE INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL HELP YOU BETTER MANAGE LANDSCAPE WATER EFFICIENCY (APRIL 2021):



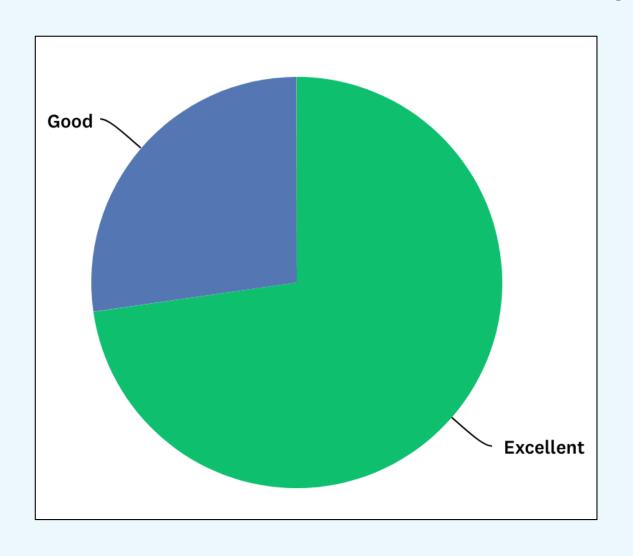


HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT TAKING THE CLASS ONLINE VERSUS IN THE CLASSROOM (APRIL 2021)?





YOUR OVERALL RATING OF THIS CLASS IS (OCT 2020)?





Is there any other feedback you would like to provide on your online learning experience?

"On line was great because I didn't have to drive anywhere, I enjoyed the privacy and quiet of my own space and I could participate in my PJ's!"

"Lori and the QWEL team did a really exceptional job of presenting online."

"Lori, Linda and Lisa did a great job in being prepared and using the zoom platform effectively. Lori especially would make eye contact with the camera so it seemed she was talking to us directly."

"I miss the in person classes. Maybe breakout sessions strategically placed to force us to think about problems and share our experiences."



REFLECTIONS / LESSONS LEARNED

- 1. Virtual trainings can help meet or exceed performance objectives for certain demographics on a regional-scale.
- 2. Discovered the advantages of online classes:
 - Less commuting for people and more flexibility for scheduling = Increased enrollment
 - Other: tutoring options; easily accessible class recordings
- 3. Plan for hand-holding
 - Dedicated customer support (email and phone)
 - o FAQs, instructional handouts, live demonstrations
 - Support staff during lectures and on exam day



REFLECTIONS / LESSONS LEARNED

4. Take advantage of data mining

- o For a mobile workforce where are the conducting most of their work?
- Demographic assessments who's attending morning classes vs. evening?
- Exam performance (range of scores, incorrect questions)
- Submit electronic surveys to collect feedback and improve training



QUESTIONS?

Andrew Florendo

Water Conservation Coordinator

aflorendo@scwa2.com



Lisa Cuellar

Senior Program Manager

lisa@calwep.org

(916) 287-9837



