

## Help to Make Your Landscape a Smartscape

A well-designed, desert-adapted landscape is more than just picturesque—it can help lower your water bill, reduce the time and money you spend on maintenance, and add value to your home or business. Your landscape is an investment, something you plan to enjoy for years to come, so it's also important to make sure you hire the right person to help you design, install, and maintain that investment.

Landscape and irrigation professionals influence water use by creating and maintaining our landscapes, which is precisely why the [Smartscape Program](#) was created almost 30 years ago.

Smartscape is a comprehensive, research-based training program that instructs landscape and irrigation professionals on the fundamentals of designing, installing, and maintaining sustainable, desert-adapted landscapes and irrigation systems.

Since its inception in 1994, it has grown to be a collaborative partnership between [AMWUA](#), [Tucson Water](#), the [University of Arizona Cooperative Extension](#), and the [Department of Water Resources](#), with regional support from the [Arizona Nursery Association](#), the [Arizona Landscape Contractors Association](#), and industry representatives. The program educates industry professionals through the various courses which are taught by local industry experts, academics, and practitioners.

The [benefits of the Smartscape Program](#) can be seen on all sides. Participating in the program empowers landscape and irrigation professionals to build skills that will increase landscape water use efficiency, allowing them to distinguish themselves from their competition, provide their customers with quality service, and take personal responsibility for a resource critical to the industry. It also helps landscape and irrigation professionals stay up to date on the latest industry trends, research, and practices while networking and learning about marketing opportunities.

In addition to the benefits to the professionals, residents and business owners are not only better educated on the positive impact a low water use yard can have. It also helps residents understand how important it is to [hire the right person](#) to help you design, install, and maintain your landscape and ensure your irrigation system is running as efficiently as possible. As in any profession, not all landscape service providers are equal. The landscape professionals you select to assist you should be trusted partners who provide expert advice, guidance, and services to help bring your outdoor living space to life.



The [Smartscape website](#) is a critical component of the program. For landscape professionals, it provides information on [upcoming Smartscape training](#) in both Maricopa and Pima Counties and promotes the value of training and certification. [For residents and businesses](#), the website details the value of hiring trained and certified landscape and irrigation professionals while highlighting Smartscape graduates by enabling consumers to [search for and contact](#) those trained professionals available for hire. The updated website, which just recently launched, is efficient, user-friendly and mobile-adapted.

Water is a precious resource, especially for us here in the desert. [Proper plant selection](#) and [appropriate irrigation](#) can significantly reduce water consumption while maintaining the landscapes that are critical to cool the urban environment and enhance our communities. Ultimately, we know that these professionals influence commercial and residential outdoor water use through their practices and the information they transmit daily to their colleagues and customers. Their role is vital to achieving overall conservation goals while further educating customers on the importance of low-water-use landscapes.

The Smartscape program has remained a high priority for AMWUA's Conservation and Efficiency Advisory Group as it supports AMWUA members in increasing water use efficiency, extending existing supplies, reducing future water demand, and preparing for potential shortage restrictions.

We are proud that Smartscape is an affordable way for professionals to strengthen their skills and innovate their businesses while providing residents and business owners with a wide range of resources to create and maintain beautiful, sustainable landscapes.

*For more than 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has worked to protect our member cities' ability to provide assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies to their communities. For more water information, visit [www.amwua.org](http://www.amwua.org).*