

# **Sixth Annual Wyland National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation Begins April 1**

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IRVINE, Calif. and BLOOMINGTON, Minn., March 31, 2017 — Mayors across the country will be asking residents to help ensure the sustainability of the nation’s water resources by taking part in the sixth year of a national contest aimed at reducing water waste and pollution.

Presented nationally by the Wyland Foundation and Toyota, the non-profit National Mayor’s Challenge for Water Conservation, April 1-30, is a friendly, community based-competition between cities that encourages residents to make a series of water conservation pledges on behalf of their city online at [mywaterpledge.com](http://mywaterpledge.com). Winning cities are those with the highest percentage of residents who take the challenge.

Participating residents from those cities are entered to win hundreds of eco-friendly and water-saving prizes, including a 2017 Toyota Prius Prime Plug-in Hybrid vehicle, home irrigation makeovers with Toro water-saving products, home cleaning products from ECOS, and home improvement store gift cards.

The community service campaign was created in 2011 to supplement existing municipal programs for water conservation awareness, promote drought resiliency and healthy watersheds, and reduce stress on aging water infrastructure. Last year, residents from 4,100 cities pledged to reduce water consumption by 1.9 billion gallons — or roughly enough water to fill 2,877 Olympic-size swimming pools. Participating cities for 2017 include Denver, Pittsburgh, Dallas, Sacramento, and Tucson.

In association with U.S. EPA, The Toro Company, National League of Cities, Conserva Irrigation, Earth Friendly Products (makers of ECOS), and WonderGroveLearn, the challenge brings communities together to promote the sustainable use of water. Students and teachers can take part in the pledge, too, by visiting [www.mywaterpledge.com/kids](http://www.mywaterpledge.com/kids).

The 2017 national kickoff will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday, April 3, at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota.

### **Rolling Down the Mississippi Tour**

Minnesota will also be the launching pad for the Wyland Foundation’s “Rolling Down the Mississippi Tour,” a month-long educational initiative in support of the challenges faced by cities along the Mississippi River watershed.

The initiative will include a community tour with a water quality expert in a custom-designed Toyota Prius Prime and stops from the Clean Water Mobile Learning Experience – an interactive 1,000-square-foot experience on wheels that has been on a national tour in support of the challenge.

### **Wyland Foundation and Toyota**

Wyland Foundation and Toyota established a relationship in 2010 as part of a series of Wyland Living Green Fairs in West Palm Beach, Fla., and Long Beach, Calif. As part of the Living Green Fairs, the Wyland Foundation created an opportunity for mayors in several local communities to engage in a challenge to see which city’s residents could pledge to save the most water over the course of a month.

“The program seemed to strike such a chord that we talked with Toyota about expanding it to more communities,” said Steve Creech, executive director of the Wyland Foundation.

After growing the program in Southern California, the campaign was added as part of a series of national events in partnership with the U.S. EPA celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Throughout the year, Toyota Social Innovation team members and Wyland Foundation staff work continually to refine and enhance the Mayor’s Challenge as one of the nation’s leading programs for promoting a broader

understanding of the many ways water is used across the United States.

“Toyota employees not only take the challenge, but often volunteer to participate in Wyland Foundation community events,” says Wyland. “It’s a true collaboration in every sense of the word.”