

# SPLASH

Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts' Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2004

## Smart Gardening Workshop

In April, the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts hosted two "Smart Gardening" workshops in Malibu. These workshops were offered free of charge to provide practical and simple ways for homeowners to conserve water and protect the environment. Those who attended were provided valuable information about water conservation, water-wise and fire-wise gardening, worm composting, backyard composting, and grass recycling.

Although these workshops were only offered in Malibu, the information shared was applicable to all our customers. Here are some of the highlights from the workshop:

- ◆ Water your lawn in the early morning to allow water to soak into the soil and minimize evaporation.
- ◆ Check your irrigation system regularly for leaks and adjust sprinklers to minimize runoff.
- ◆ Avoid over-watering your grass by recognizing signs such as weak roots,



Workshop attendees get great tips on smart gardening and water conservation.

## Water Conservation Tips:

- Make sure your sprinkler system is only watering vegetation and not the driveway or sidewalks.
- Shorten showers. Flush less.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Turn the faucet off when you do not need the water.

disease, fungal infections, and pests.

- ◆ Add plenty of compost to your soil each spring to improve the organic content and soil structure, reduce water use, and help hold fertilizer.
- ◆ Use a mixture of 50% brown material and 50% green material to make compost.
- ◆ Use garden trimmings, green leaves and plants, grass clippings, coffee grounds, tea bags, and fruit and vegetable scraps without seeds for green material.
- ◆ Use dry plants, twigs, branches, limbs, brush, shredded junk mail, newspaper, dry leaves, dry grass, saw dust, and wood chips for brown material.

- ◆ Do not cut more than 1/3 the height of the grass at one time.
- ◆ Place two to four inches of mulch around plants, along walkways, and on landscape to reduce soil moisture loss and the growth of weeds.
- ◆ Spread fertilizer evenly on your lawn in small amounts on a regular basis instead of large amounts all at once.

For more information, please visit:  
<http://ladpw.org/epd/sg/>  
and watch for the annual Smart Gardening workshops next spring in your area.

## Something New

In an effort to provide our customers with regular information and updates, LACWWD is pleased to re-introduce our quarterly newsletter, *Splash*. In future issues, look for information on installing water conserving appliances and devices in your home, suggestions for conserving water, and details of how our water systems are operated and maintained. It is our goal to use this publication as a means of sharing interesting and useful information in hopes that our customers will become active stewards of water and conservation will become a way of life throughout our Districts.



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*Mission: - To enrich lives through effective and caring service.*

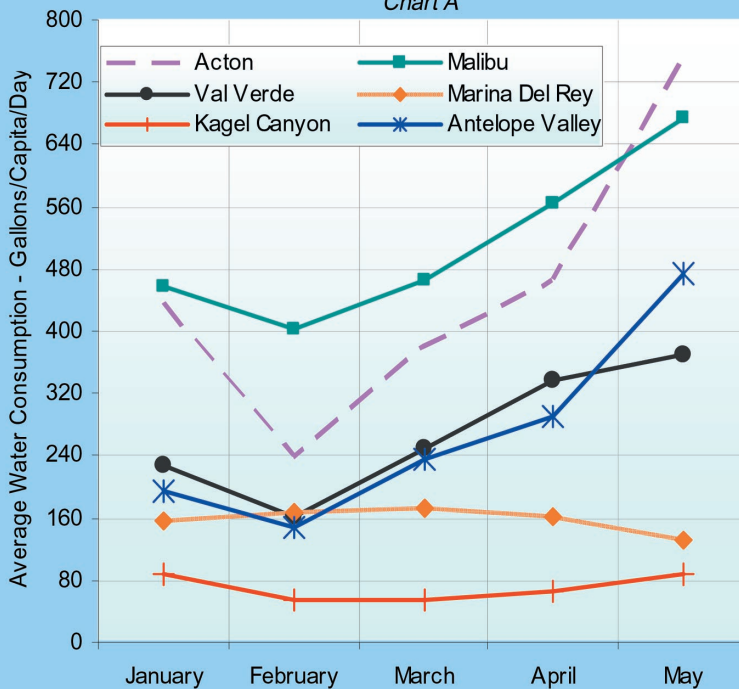
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## Average daily water use per person in 2004

Chart A



## Q & A

### Q) How can I tell if I have a leak in my plumbing?

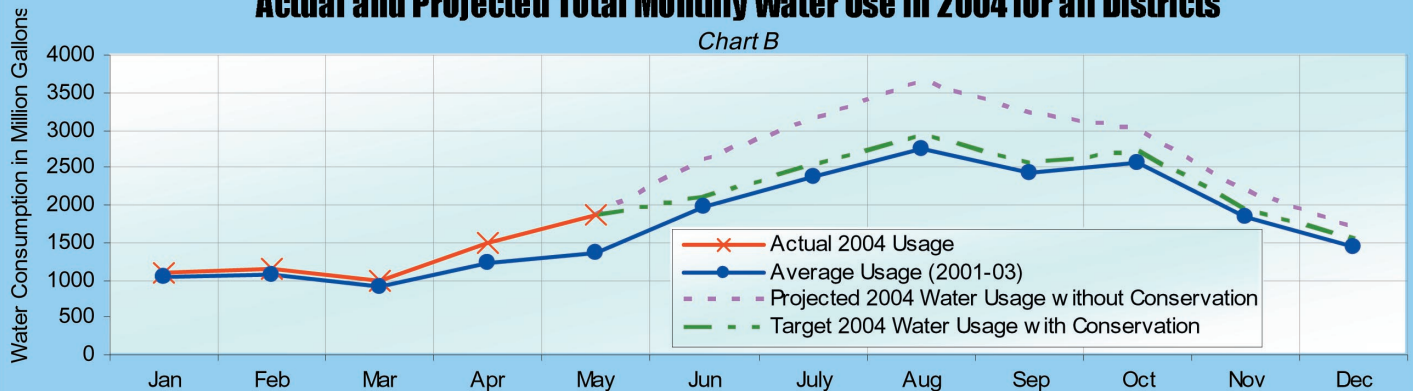
A) Make sure the washing machine, dishwasher, faucets, hoses, and sprinklers are all turned off. Then, check the water meter register located inside the meter box. The meter box is usually found in the parkway near the street. There will be either a red sweep hand or a red triangle to use as a 'leak indicator.' If there is no leak, the red indicator will be stationary because no water is passing through the meter. If the red indicator is rotating, water is passing through the meter, which could indicate a leak on the property.

### Q) Why is my water sometimes cloudy?

A) If your water appears cloudy or milky, it is usually due to tiny air bubbles in the water. If you let the water stand, the bubbles will clear in a short amount of time. Cloudy water usually occurs when air is temporarily trapped in the water lines and will typically clear once all the air has dissipated.

## Actual and Projected Total Monthly Water Use in 2004 for all Districts

Chart B



## Current Monthly Trends

The charts above show the actual volume of water used in the Districts through May 2004. Chart A shows the average daily water consumption per person in each District for the purpose of illustrating the variation in water usage in the five Districts. Chart B shows the Districts' 2004 actual and projected total monthly water consumption compared to the average values for the previous three years.

Chart B shows that the amount of water used so far this year is considerably more than the average amount over the last three years, after considering the increase in the number of the Districts' customers. If the current trend of water use continues, nearly a billion gallons above the average could be used monthly during the summer. While that is a large amount of water for one user to conserve, a collective effort involving small reductions in water usage by all

our customers can easily conserve this amount of water. For example, if each person in our Districts flushed the toilet one less time each day, nearly 10,000,000 gallons of water would be conserved in a month!

Irrigation during the summer significantly increases water use. Please "water smartly." Check to make sure your sprinklers are not watering hard surfaces or over-watering vegetation. Try decreasing the length of each watering cycle by small increments to see if your lawn really needs all the water you are giving it. Consider carefully the ways you use water. Conservation is a way of life. Make it your way of life. We encourage those who already use water wisely in our Districts to continue their efforts and urge all others to begin now. Thanks for your conscious efforts to conserve a natural resource!