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SUMMER 2009

CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER CONSERVATION

What's the Link?



Did you know that in California the delivery of water is the top use of energy, using almost 20 percent of all electricity generated in the state? Much of the Districts' service area relies on water imported from Northern California through a series of dams and aqueducts. Several years of drought have reduced reservoir storage levels, requiring even more energy to pump and deliver the water to us. Using water efficiently now will not only help us weather the current drought, it can help to slow down the global climate change process. In fact, each 100 cubic feet (748 gallons) of water saved prevents five pounds of carbon emissions from being released from power plants into the atmosphere. That's the same as a person driving five fewer miles in a day.

Districts customers can do their part to save water and energy by taking advantage of free water conservation programs. We

offer onsite water use evaluations and rebates on water saving devices like high efficiency clothes washers and weather-based sprinkler controllers. For more information or to schedule an onsite evaluation visit www.lacwaterworks.org or call (888) 828-8602.

There are easy ways everyone can save water and energy to reduce our impact on the planet:

- Install water saving devices like faucet aerators and low-flow showerheads and save 1,700 gallons per year.
- Cut shower time down to five to eight minutes and save 600 gallons per month.
- Turn off water while washing your face, shaving, or brushing teeth and save 90 gallons per month.
- Turn off sprinklers when it's raining or windy and save 250 gallons per day.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to sweep driveways and sidewalks and save 600 gallons per month.
- Make sure your sprinklers water the yard, not the sidewalk or street and save 500 gallons per month.
- Fix a leaky faucet and save 2,000 gallons a year.
- Use less energy by setting your water heater no higher than 120 degrees.
- Use a high-efficiency clothes washer and save energy and 8,000 gallons per year.
- Keep a bucket in the shower to collect excess water while you wait for the water to get hot and save 2.5 gallons per minute. You can use it to water your plants.

New Rebates Coming Soon

Following the success of our initial rebate program that launched last summer, we are currently evaluating customer interest in products to add to the program. Items being considered are rain sensors for automatic sprinkler controllers, mulch, rain barrels, and replacing grass with low-water alternatives. Mulch is a simple and effective way to reduce evaporation around flowers, shrubs and trees. Rain shutoff sensors can be installed on most existing sprinkler timers and can save hundreds of gallons of water automatically. Rain barrels conserve water by collecting and storing rainwater runoff, typically from rooftops and rain gutters. Stored rainwater may be used for watering gardens and other uses. Let us know if you would be interested in participating in a rebate program for any of these items by emailing Viki Yip at vyip@dpw.lacounty.gov. Your feedback will help the Districts determine future rebate offers.

New Feature: Pay Your Water Bill Online

Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts now accepts electronic payments from many banking institutions. Contact your bank to see if you can pay your water bill through your online banking program.



Drought-Tolerant Plant Booklets

Landscaping your yard and garden with California native and drought-tolerant plants is a smart alternative for residents who want to have a beautiful garden and save water and money. These plants are adapted to local weather and soil conditions and thrive with little summer watering. Using them not only saves water, but saves maintenance time and produces a habitat for native birds, beneficial insects and wildlife. The best time to plant native plants is between October and May each year.

We offer FREE drought-tolerant plant brochures—with information on the best plants for your garden—for all our customers. If you'd like a brochure, you can pick one up at the public counter in Malibu or Lancaster or email vyip@dpw.lacounty.gov or call (626) 300-4683.

- Malibu, Topanga, Marina Del Rey, Val Verde and Kagel Canyon Customers, please refer to NEW, Drought Tolerant Plants brochure
- Antelope Valley Customers, please refer to Landscape Plants for the California High Desert brochure

California

Drought Preparedness

On February 27, 2009, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency due to drought in the face of nearly \$3 billion in potential economic losses from below-normal rainfall again this year. Governor Schwarzenegger called on cities to cut back water use by 20%. "California faces its third consecutive year of drought and we must prepare for the worst—a fourth, fifth or even sixth year of drought," Schwarzenegger said, adding that recent storms were not enough to improve the situation.

Legislators have also revived a \$10 billion bond package to build new dams, fund conservation programs, recharge aquifers, and build plants to recycle wastewater. The state Department of Water Resources will report on conservation progress this spring, and if the situation has not sufficiently improved, water rationing and mandatory cuts in water use could be instituted, the governor said.

Malibu, Topanga Canyon and Marina del Rey residents in particular may have recently heard ads or read articles about mandatory water rationing in nearby communities. If it becomes necessary, customers will be notified beginning in May and Phased Water Conservation would begin in July. Customers would be notified at least 45 days in advance of the start of Phased Conservation, and the Districts will run ads and provide information in water bills and on the website.

As California is facing a significant water crisis, it is critical that the Districts and our customers conserve and manage our resources. Now is a great time to get prepared for conserving

water this summer. Take advantage of rebates and free surveys, and look for information on future rebates for replacing lawns with low-water alternatives! We hope to have a program in place before the end of the year that offers \$1 per square foot for a variety of lawn replacements.



Visit www.lacwaterworks.org for more information on water conservation and rebates.

Every drop counts this summer – save water and money.

Let Us Know

To report water leaks or nuisance water running into the street, call **1 (800) 675-HELP**. Please provide an address for our Districts crews to investigate.



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www.lacwaterworks.org

Mission: "To provide reliable, high-quality water at a reasonable cost to all of our customers."