



Water News

Special Edition: Planning for Your District's Water Future ■ Spring 2009

Drought Impacts Local Water Supply

TO BALANCE SUPPLY AND DEMAND, CUSTOMERS ARE URGED TO CUT THEIR WATER USE BY 10%



Customer water consumption is lower this year than it was during the past two years when it hit record highs. But cutting your water usage by another 10% is absolutely necessary.

Last year we completed over 225 free household water checkups and saved tens of millions of gallons of water.

We can show you how to save water and save money while maintaining a beautiful and healthy landscape.

CALL 969-2271 FOR YOUR FREE WATER CHECKUP

Third Dry Year Taking a Toll

Three consecutive years of below-average rainfall, coupled with court decisions that cut imported water deliveries, have taken a toll on our water supply. With the drought now affecting all of California, the Governor has declared a statewide drought emergency.

State and local factors have combined to create a water deficit for the District area, including:

continued below-average rainfall; a cut in our allotment of State Project water; and record high customer usage in 2007 and 2008 that has dipped, but is still above sustainable levels.



Imported Water Canal

Purchased Temporary Water Supply

The District has intensified its conservation program, and has taken aggressive action to find new sources of water. A fortunate purchase last year was a major acquisition of surplus State Project water. This relieved the situation for another year, although at a strikingly higher cost. Today, there is less available water to buy, the competition for it is greater, and the price has risen another 65%!

Pursuing Cooperative Recycled Water Program

Looking farther into the future, the District has joined a coalition of local agencies seeking state grants to help jump start a \$4 - \$5 million program to develop new recycled water supplies that could be used to irrigate large landscapes, such as golf courses, parks and cemeteries.

We can't count on finding water to buy, especially if low rainfall years continue. We need you to cut your water use.

Decrease Your Water Use and Still Have a Lovely Garden

Water Efficiency—How To Use Less Water, While Maintaining a Beautiful Garden

Many District customers have attractive, intensively cultivated landscapes with spacious lawns that unfortunately use large amounts of water. This provides excellent opportunities for water efficiency. The reason: most local landscapes are over-watered.



This is what we have learned from hundreds of on-site landscape reviews:

Over-watering is common, irrigation controllers are generally outdated and little account is taken of weather changes. But substantial water savings can be achieved quickly, easily and with modest cost. The key is introducing modern, weather-based irrigation controls and making other changes. The payoff can typically be 15% or greater water savings and equivalent savings in water bills.



For a **FREE** landscape water check-up call Mike at:

805/969-2271

He will show you how to save water and lower your water bill.

Simple Water Saving Tips Everyone Can Do:

Don't Overwater. Most landscapes are overwatered, actually harming the plants.



Choose Water-Smart Plants. A water-smart garden features plants that grow well in the local environment. These plants are often beautiful, easy to care for and colorful.

Switch to Satellite-Based Irrigation Controllers. Call us for more information.

Mulch, Mulch, Mulch. A two or three-inch layer of shredded redwood, gravel or other mulch slows evaporation, cools and protects soil and keeps down weeds.



Use Proper Lawn Care. Step on your grass; if it springs back, it doesn't need water. Mow lawns 4 to 5 inches, aerate and leave clippings for the healthiest, most water-thrifty lawn. Limit turf area.

The Governor has declared a drought emergency for all of California.

While we are making every effort to locate additional water supplies, District customers must achieve 10% water saving to help ensure adequate water supplies.

Hundreds of Your Neighbors Have Proved It: Free Water-Saving Check-Ups Really Work

Progress in reducing customer usage is gaining momentum at the Montecito Water District. Free landscape water checkups by our experienced water conservation staff have been carried out in hundreds of homes and businesses. In 2008 alone, we completed 225 landscape audits. 79 were closely tracked, and resulted in 13 million gallons of water saved in the first year!



Take advantage of this free offer: call and our conservation specialist will come to your home or business and show you:

- How to replace old-fashioned irrigation controllers with water-saving, weather-based controllers
- When not to water frequently (mature trees and shrubs)
- How to separate plant zones, to provide adequate watering where needed
- Selecting beautiful but water-thrifty plants

REMEMBER THERE IS NO COST FOR THE LANDSCAPE CHECKUP SERVICE.



Water Conservation Profile: Westmont College

Following a very successful effort to cut water usage, Westmont College reduced use of District water by over 25%.

Landscapes Are the Focus. The program began in 2005 with an emphasis on landscape irrigation, where most water is used. The college's outdated irrigation system was entirely rebuilt. Currently, 90% of playing fields and turf areas on campus are being served by Westmont's own private non-potable water source.



New low-flow, infrared sensor-type lavatory faucets were installed in Murchison Gym. New ultra-low-flow urinals were also installed.

Indoor Use is Targeted. All common area plumbing fixtures have been replaced with ultra-low-use fixtures that use 75% less water than old-style equipment. The college is also taking advantage of a County program that provides rebates for low-water-use fixtures.

New Pipelines. Of particular interest to the District is their upgrade and replacement of the College's 1930s-era pipelines with its own modern pipes, eliminating breaks and leaks.

The District acknowledges the water saving achievements of Tom Beveridge, Physical Plant Director; Hugo Franco, Trades Manager; and Phil Baker, Grounds Manager.

Westmont's water saving successes, and water savings efforts by all our customers really benefit the community.

Thank You and Goodbye to Carol Valentine, Former Director and President

An inspirational community leader passed away this spring at the age of 99.

Carol Valentine, was a Director of the Montecito Water District for 16 years, and president of the Board of Directors for 15 years. She led the District through a difficult drought period, helped create a vital water allocation system, and was one of the leaders of the campaign to bring supplemental State Project water to our water-short community. She also represented the District on several boards that govern the Cachuma Project.



Professional Portrait by Brian Hodges

Carol's lifelong love of gardening led to her interest in water. She instituted the District's early low-water-use demonstration garden. All the while, she was a leader in numerous community organizations.

When Carol Valentine stepped down from the Board in 1991, she was recognized for her "distinguished accomplishments, dedication to the District and invaluable service."

A loved and lovely woman, she is remembered with gratitude by all of us in the water district.

Heroic Tea Fire Exploits Kept Water Flowing

In the midst of a raging fire, water District personnel responded instantly and effectively to support our local fire district.

District personnel worked closely with the Montecito Fire Protection District to support emergency water demands. Reservoirs in the burn area were threatened, water supplies were falling, and vital pump stations lost power as electric lines went down. Water District personnel re-routed water, got backup generators to provide power, and re-powered vital pumps located directly in the path of the fire.

Many home water pipes burst from the heat, causing huge losses of water. At midnight, escorted by firefighters from the Fire Protection District, District staff shut down 38 broken connections, saving the water for firefighting. Cooperation, bravery and hard work helped deal with this community catastrophe.



Years of training and preparation paid off immediately: within little more than half an hour after the fire was reported, the District's field and treatment personnel reported for duty.

Printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink. Each ton of recycled paper saves 7,000 gallons of water.

Tom Mosby

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