

# Planning for a "Water \$mart" Future

New statewide regulations restricting outdoor water use took effect late July. Prompted by the statewide drought, **emergency conservation restrictions prohibit the following activities --**

- **hosing down driveways and sidewalks.**
- **watering outdoor landscapes if it causes excess runoff.**
- **water use as a decorative water feature unless the feature uses a recirculating system.**
- **use of a hose to wash our cars unless the hose has a shut-off nozzle.**

Amid an historic drought affecting the entire state of California, state regulators approved emergency conservation measures that will allow water wasters to be fined up to \$500 per day. The state Water Resources Control Board says the conservation steps are crucial because **the drought shows no signs of abating**. The regulations will remain in effect for 270 days.

The average residential customer spends about 70% of their water on outdoor irrigation. So what are we seeing in our community? The Landscape committee and Board wanted to share with you these details -

## **Our Association-**

1. Over the past three years we installed **weather-based irrigation controllers**. This means we've been able to minimize needless watering when the conditions don't require it.
2. We've **implemented a watering schedule of only three days per week** as required by the City of San Diego.
3. We've **turned off water lines that sprayed uphill** from the base of slopes, and watched to see that the lines at the top of the hill were providing adequately for the slope's landscape.

## **Our Homeowners-**

1. Over the last five years, many of the landscape improvements we've seen have been by homeowners ready to jettison their mowers in favor of **low-water use landscape designs**. Their efforts have been beautiful, decreased use of precious water resources, and reduced homeowner maintenance.
2. A sizable number of homeowners have opted for **artificial turf**, often incorporating other low-water use plantings, rock and mulched areas. They've "kept it green" and gorgeous.

But sadly, we're also seeing **brown and dying lawns** on other homes for lack of maintenance. Especially in Southern California, droughts are becoming the rule rather than the exception. Despite drought conditions, homeowners are still required under Article VIII of our CC&Rs to maintain their property in a neat and attractive condition. The Board of Directors is not encouraging these homeowners to water their lawns. However, we are suggesting that they come up with a plan that could restore their home's attractiveness, plans which can be accomplished without increased water usage.

For those who haven't made the "shift" yet, we offer these suggestions regarding available **rebates on removing your turf --**

SoCal Water\$mart reports that rebates are available for \$2 or more per square foot of turf removed. This increased turf removal rebate is being provided in response to Gov. Brown's emergency drought declaration. See these sites for further details:

<http://socalwatersmart.com/index.php/qualifyingproducts/turfremoval>

<http://turfreplacement.watersmartsd.org>

We can all do our bit for a bright and beautiful future for our community! If you have ideas to share, please contact us at our website.