



Water Views

June 2009
Special Newsletter

"A District of Distinction"
Serving the Public - Respecting the Environment

BOARD DECLARES LEVEL 1 WATER ALERT MANDATING WATER ALLOCATIONS!

A Letter from the General Manager

El Toro Water District (ETWD) has always provided our customers with a safe, adequate and reliable supply of water. We have done so in an environmentally and economically responsible way with a state-of-the-art system. Unfortunately, our good stewardship is no longer enough.

California is currently experiencing a drought that is different than any we have experienced before, caused by a confluence of issues that cannot be solved by rainfall alone. Following three straight years of below-average rainfall, very low snowmelt runoff and the largest court-ordered water transfer restrictions in state history, ETWD is forced to address this dire situation and mandate water conservation and rationing. This mandate is a direct result of the cutbacks and rationing that has been forced upon ETWD from our major water supplier, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

However, we believe that together we can change our consumption habits. If everyone contributes then we can get through this crisis, and create a new standard of environmental stewardship.

This newsletter is dedicated to helping our customers understand the current water shortage crisis, the steps that ETWD has taken to effectively manage water supply and the restrictions that residential and commercial customers need to adhere to, effective immediately.

We appreciate your immediate attention to the important information that is included in this issue.

Sincerely,

Bob Hill
General Manager

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How Were Allocations Determined?

Need for Allocation

Like many water districts across southern Orange County, ETWD imports nearly 100% of its water supply from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). MWD recently reduced our water allocation and forced ETWD to follow suit and implement a water allocation plan.

Challenge of Allocation

The challenge for ETWD was to create an allocation methodology that divides water resources in a way that is fair and equitable. “Our goal was to allocate water in such a way that all recipients believe that they have received a fair amount,” explains Robert R. Hill, General Manager of El Toro Water District.

The first step was to ensure that the methodology would recognize customers who have been good water stewards and have implemented conservation methods or installed water saving devices.

Health and Safety First

The allocation method acknowledges that not all water uses are equal in their benefits to the community. The first priority for water use is for health, safety and sanitary purposes. ETWD also recognizes that economic activities need to be protected, wherever possible. Water use by commerce and industry is essential to the economic vitality of a community, and the ETWD plan minimizes cuts to businesses where practical and appropriate.

Outdoor Watering

Finally, the allocation approach recognizes that a significant amount of water is used for discretionary or aesthetic purposes for outdoor residential and commercial use. It is estimated that roughly half the water used in the ETWD service area is used to water landscape areas. While not without merit, the value is secondary to other uses previously described. As such, it is this outdoor water use that is the primary focus for reduction.



ETWD strongly urges customers to stay within their allocation.

Unfortunately, if the water use by all ETWD customers exceeds our allocation, ETWD will be fined by MWD. That requires ETWD to penalize individual customers who exceed their allocation.

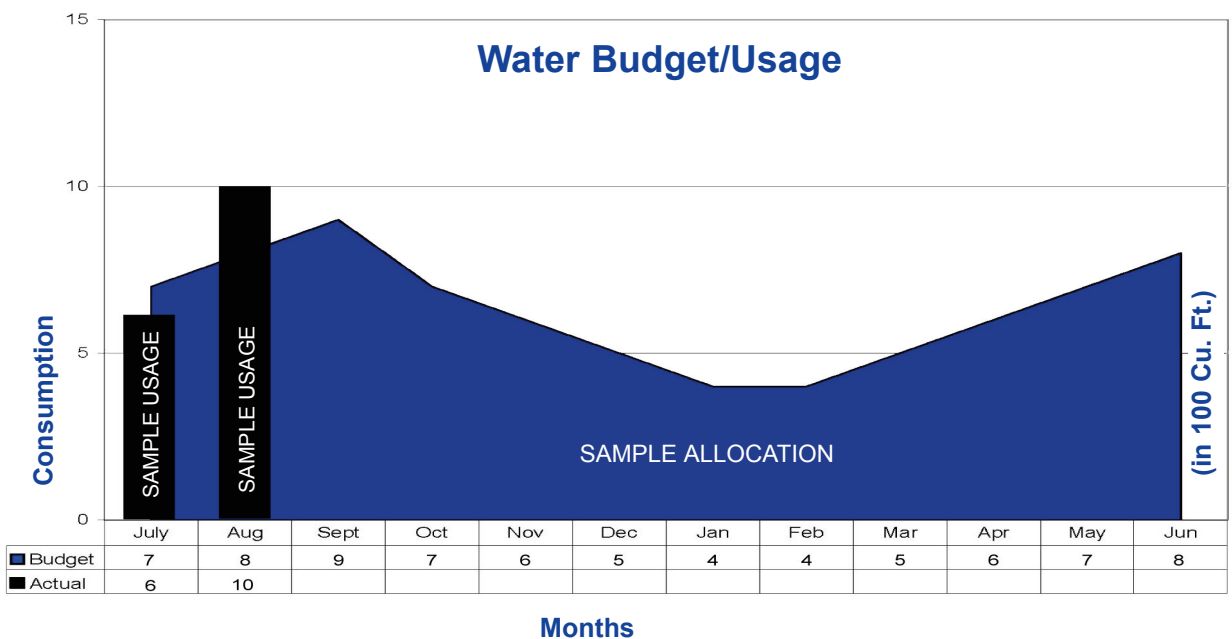
For more information about the allocation methodology, please contact Customer Service at 949.837.0660 or e-mail at district@etwd.com.

Understanding Your Bill

New feature will highlight water budget as compared to actual usage

A new feature has been added to your monthly bill – a water budget and usage graph. This illustration will assist customers in tracking and managing their monthly water use during the allocation period, July 2009 to June 2010. ETWD is doing everything possible to make it easy for our customers to understand the new water allocations and to provide the tools to help you manage your water usage.

The new graph illustrates the allocated water usage month by month, based on the 2007/08 usage. As you can see in the example below, the graph compares the actual water usage to the allocated usage is provided to clearly show performance against the budget.



Customers will be assigned an allocation budget based on 2007/08 water usage and the type of usage. For example, ETWD has prioritized the different types of water usage according to health and safety, domestic use inside the home and external uses such as landscape irrigation. Customers who exceed their allocation budget in a given month will be charged a higher rate for the water they used over their allocation budget. The allocation is measured month-by-month, not annually.

If you have any questions about your allocation or the new water budget/usage graph, please contact Customer Service at 949.837.0660 or e-mail at district@etwd.com.

Water Education Corner



Looking for Ways to Conserve Water...

Add new water conservation habits to your daily routine.

- Water your lawn only when allowed. Saves 750 to 1500 gallons of water per month.

ASSIGNED WATERING DAYS			
Aliso Viejo	MON THUR	SAT or SUN	
Laguna Hills	TUE FRI	SAT or SUN	
Laguna Woods	TUE FRI	SAT or SUN	
Lake Forest	TUE FRI	SAT or SUN	
Mission Viejo	MON THUR	SAT or SUN	

- Shorten your shower time. Even a one or two minute reduction can save up to 700 gallons per month.

- Reduce outdoor watering by landscaping with native and California friendly plants.

- Capture tap water. While you wait for hot water to come through the pipes, catch the water flow in a watering can and use it later on houseplants or gardens. Saves between 200 and 300 gallons per month.

- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator. This beats the wasteful habit of running tap water to cool it for drinking. Save 200 to 300 gallons a month by using this tip.

- Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher, and save 300 to 800 gallons per month.

- 748 gallons = 1 billing unit (ccf)

For additional conservation ideas, visit www.bewaterwise.com.

Para la información en español, llame por favor al servicio de cliente, (949) 837-0660

The El Toro Water District is a California Water District governed by an elected Board of Directors.



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The Mission of the El Toro Water District is to plan and invest appropriately to provide its customers a safe, adequate and reliable supply of water, wastewater and recycled water service in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

Water Views is published quarterly to keep water users in the El Toro Water District informed about water and wastewater related issues and events and is prepared by District staff.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

Please call Customer Service at (949) 837-0660 or visit our website at www.etwd.com.

Printed on recycled paper.