



WaterViews

February 2011

"A District of Distinction"

Serving the Public - Respecting the Environment

2011 and Beyond: Water-Use Efficiency

It may seem odd discussing water conservation after the heavy rainfalls we endured this past December, but no matter the rainfall amounts, we need to be conscious of our personal water usage. The recent heavy rainfall and snow does not make up for several years of drought in California and on the Colorado River, reduced statewide and regional reservoir storage levels and unprecedented court-ordered restrictions on water deliveries from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Across the state, the practice of water use efficiency should be used as the norm.



Recent severe winter storms struck Southern California with flooding, debris and mud flows.

20x2020 Water Conservation Plan

In February 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger introduced a seven part comprehensive plan (known as SB 7) to address California's water supply issues and growing concerns about the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta's delicate ecosystem. As part of the plan, the Governor directed state agencies to develop a strategy to reduce statewide per capita urban water use by 20 percent by the year 2020.

This marked the beginning of the 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan - a statewide roadmap to maximize the state's urban water efficiency and conservation opportunities between 2009 and 2020 and beyond. Our need to pursue water use efficiency measures to conserve and eliminate unnecessary uses of water continues to be a priority to ensure the future of our state.

Like many water districts across southern Orange County, El Toro Water District (ETWD) imports nearly 100% of its water supply and the reliability of our imported supply is at risk. ETWD has taken steps to help reduce water consumption by 20 percent through the implementation of the new rate structure, adopting permanent-mandatory conservation measures and currently studying the feasibility of expanding the use of recycled water in our service area.

Continued on Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

2011 and Beyond	1-2
CA Friendly Plant of the Month	3
South OC Smartscape Incentive Program	3
LaBounty Safety Awards	4

Water Use Efficiency (continued from Page 1)

Water Budget-Based Tiered Conservation Rate

Structure

In response to this confluence of issues and the Governor's call for increased water efficiency and conservation, ETWD implemented a new-tiered rate structure in July 2010. Our new Water Budget-Based Tiered Conservation Rate Structure rewards customers who use water responsibly and discourages waste.

The Water Budget-Based Tiered Conservation Rate Structure 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. Indoor water use budgets (Tier I rates) are calculated based on the number of residents in the home and an average use per day, per person. Outdoor water use budgets (Tier II rates) are calculated based on the size of the property's estimated irrigated area, County parcel data (lot size), GIS information (house footprint, garage area and driveway) and real time weather data.

Actual budgets will vary based on special needs. Customers may apply for a variance to their water budget to adjust the number of residents in the household, irrigation area or to address a special circumstance.

The Water Budget-Based Tiered Conservation Rate Structure became effective with the first full billing period after July 1, 2010 for pricing in Tiers I and II. To ease this transition, the new rates for Tiers III and IV were phased in during the November and January billing. This phased in approach was designed to allow our customers time to become familiar with the new tiered rate structure and their indoor/outdoor water budgets.



Practice water use efficiency by fixing leaking toilets in your home

Permanent Mandatory Water Conservation Measures

Water use efficiency is seen as one of the key ways to achieve and maintain the 20 percent per capita reduction in water demand by 2020. As such ETWD implemented the following permanent mandatory conservation measures in June 2009.

- Water your lawn and landscape before 10 a.m. or after 5 p.m. when wind and evaporation are at a minimum.
 - Limit outside irrigation system watering duration to no more than 15 minutes per day per valve.
 - Turn your sprinklers off while it is raining.
 - Prevent excessive water flow or runoff.
 - Fix leaks, breaks or malfunctions in water lines and fixtures promptly.
- Do not hose or wash down hard or paved surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways and patios.
 - Wash your vehicles with a bucket and/or hose with a positive shut off hose nozzle.

With everyone working together, we can ensure plenty of safe, sustainable water for future generations in Southern California.

ETWD encourages you to utilize all of the available indoor and outdoor water use efficiency measures. To learn additional conservation ideas, please visit www.etwd.com or www.bewatertwise.com.



Lake Mead in Nevada, a critical Southern California water resource, experiencing dangerously low water levels

Water Conservation Corner

California-Friendly Plant of the Month

Arctostaphylos 'Lester Rowntree', Manzanita

A Habitat for Songbirds

The Lester Rowntree' Manzanita was originally collected by and named for the California plantswoman of the 1950's and was introduced by Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in 1982. It is thought to be a hybrid between *Arctostaphylos obispoensis* and *Arctostaphylos pajaroensis*.

This Manzanita is a tall, spreading, shrub with bluish foliage, pink flowers and reddish berries. It grows to 8 feet tall by 8 feet wide and the smooth, reddish bark, long, curving branches and wind-blown form give this plant a refined look that is hard to resist.

Plant in full sun to part shade in well drained soil and water once a month. Autumn flowers are followed by berries resembling small apples, adding winter interest to the garden and provide a habitat for songbirds.

Source: Tree of Life Nursery, San Juan Capistrano



Arctostaphylos 'Lester Rowntree' Manzanita

Season:	Winter
Size:	8 ft. high, 8 ft. wide
Color:	Bluish foliage with pink flowers and reddish berries.
Water:	Water 1x month
Sun:	Full sun to partial shade

New South Orange County Smartscape Incentive Program

The Municipal Water District of Orange County is partnering with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the County of Orange, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the south Orange County water agencies in launching this new program. ETWD customers are eligible to receive state-of-the-art landscape and irrigation system improvements at little or no out-of-pocket cost.

The goals of this program are to increase water use efficiency within south Orange County, reduce runoff leaving the property, and evaluate the effectiveness of water-saving practices.

Homeowners are eligible to receive up to \$2,500 in landscape and irrigation system improvements. There is a small \$50 deposit fee to participate in the program which will be refunded upon completion of the project.

Eligible improvements include:

1. Installation of a "smart" weather-based irrigation controller (required 1st step).
2. Water-saving rotating sprinkler nozzles
3. Overspray, leak and pressure adjustments to your irrigation system.
4. Beautiful "California Friendly" and native plants. Visit www.mwdoc.com/SmartScape/ for more information.



LaBounty Safety Awards

The LaBounty Safety Award program is designed for all Joint Powers Insurance Authority members as a way for them to promote safe work behavior and reward employees whose actions have contributed toward reducing the potential for liability, property or workers' compensation losses. Each year award recipients are announced at the Association of California Water Agencies/ Joint Powers Insurance Authority (ACWA/JPIA) Conference. El Toro Water District nominated 7 of the 58 people nominated from around the state. All seven employees were recognized for their entry and received an award certificate and monetary compensation from ACWA/JPIA.

Congratulations to the following employee for their safety contributions to ETWD:

Mark Pade/David Way - Developed a Workplace Hazard Assessment/Job Safety Analysis for each work task performed by the Operations and Laboratory staff at the Water Recycling Plant.
Steve Sanchez/Philip Lingenfelter - Created a safer way to perform preventative & corrective maintenance on the WRP's Headwork's Barscreen Rake.

Jim Redding - Resolved a tripping hazard and installed a land bridge providing safe access over electrical cables at a sewer lift station. For extra protection, a sheeth was added over the electrical calbes.

Ralph Palomares - Created a safety idea and practice display board for the District.

Jay Curry - Installed proper guards on all moving parts at the Water Recycling Plant.



From left to right: Ralph Palomares, Jim Redding, Jay Curry, Phillip Lingenfelter, Steve Sanchez, David Way and Mark Pade

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



EL TORO WATER DISTRICT

24251 Los Alisos Blvd. • Lake Forest, CA 92630
(949) 837-0660 • www.etwd.com

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.

General Manager
Robert R. Hill

Water Views Editor
Sherri Seitz