

## ETWD Customer Saves Water and Creates Wildlife Habitat

Lake Forest residents Trude Hurd and Dan Trinidad were selected as one of the 14 Orange County yards for the California Native Plant Society's Garden Show 2015. They have been residents of Lake Forest for the past five years. Three years ago, they began the journey by converting their curbside lawn to California native drought-tolerant plants. Last October, they converted the front yard to encompass a beautiful new habit that is not only water efficient, but a habitat for wildlife.

Trude and Dan's vision was to create a garden that would become a safe haven for migratory birds and other wildlife using mostly southern California native plants. This garden was also designed to show that having a native/earth friendly garden can look green year round with perennials and lots of colorful plants. Other elements of the garden include flagstone paths, rocks, a bench, and rain chain to divert water into the garden from the gutters.

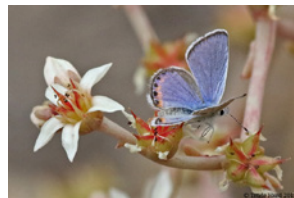


### Plant Palette

Bladderpod  
Blue Eyed Grass  
California Poppy  
Catalina Silverlace  
Desert Penstemon  
Douglas Iris  
Dudley  
Foothill Penstemon  
Island Bush Snapdragon  
Mariposa Lily  
McMinn Manzanita  
Refugio Manzanita  
San Clemente Bush Mallow  
Seaside Daisy  
Sundrops

### Wildlife Visitors

37 bird species including the nesting black phoebe and western bluebird. 10 butterfly species including western tiger swallowtail, orange sulfur, monarch and mourning oak. 3 reptile and amphibians including the wester fence lizard, southern alligator lizard and slender salamander.



Trude and Dan's garden is more than just water wise, they do not use pesticides, they save rainwater and it benefits the local birds and butterflies! El Toro Water District congratulates Trude and Dan on being good water stewards.

For additional information on California natives, please visit [www.occnps.org](http://www.occnps.org) and [www.californianativeplants.com](http://www.californianativeplants.com).

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**Water Views** is published quarterly to keep water users in the El Toro Water District informed about water and wastewater related issues and events. If you have any comments or suggestions, please mail them to: Sherri Seitz, Editor  
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Fall 2015

Serving the Public, Respecting the Environment "District of Distinction"

## ETWD Customers Save 168,453,593 Gallons of Water

ETWD thanks its customers for taking extra steps to conserve water in June and July. Overall we have collectively cut back water use by 26%. Please keep up the good work - we are in this together!

Responding to state drought mandate, the ETWD board of directors limited watering, imposed a drought penalty and reduced water allocations.

Under emergency orders from the state to cut water use by 24%, the El Toro Water District called on customers to conserve water indoors and outdoors.

With that goal in mind, the Board recently took a series of actions:

- 1) The board reaffirmed a Level 1 Water Alert – mandating that customers water lawns and landscape no more than three (3) days a week.**
- 2) The board imposed a temporary "drought penalty," which will be charged to customers who exceed their water budgets.**

Customers who exceed their Tier 1 (indoor efficient) and Tier 2 (outdoor efficient) water budgets will be charged a \$2 penalty for every billing unit in excess of their combined Tier 1 and Tier 2 water budget. (Customers are billed in units called "ccf." 1 ccf = 748 gallons.) The drought penalty – in effect until rescinded by the Board of Directors – comes on top of the existing tiered conservation pricing, which already charges a higher price for water in excess of the Tier 1 and 2 water budgets.

- 3) The board approved a Cost of Service Study and held a public hearing to consider reductions in customer water budgets. These reductions are effective Aug. 1:**

- Indoors, households were budgeted 60 gallons per person per day. Under the new plan, that Tier 1 allocation will be permanently reduced to 55 gallons per person per day.
- Outdoors, the plan applies a 50% "drought factor" adjustment to water budgets for each household

and dedicated irrigation meter customer. In other words, your Tier 2 outdoor watering budget will be reduced by half.

Missing the 24% reduction target is not an option. Failure could lead to ETWD facing penalties up to \$10,000 a day, which would need to be passed along to customers. The Board's actions position the district to advance toward compliance with the state's mandatory water usage reduction for the period of June 1, 2015, through Feb. 28, 2016, compared to the same period in 2013.

**ETWD General Manager Bob Hill notes,** *"Even if your water use has been at the 'efficient' level in the past, you will need to use less water or pay a higher monthly bill."*

Please stay tuned to your water budgets each month.



### We can help! Here's where to get details:

- A detailed explanation of ETWD's tiered billing system can be found on your water bill and on the district's website: [bit.ly/understandETWDbill](http://bit.ly/understandETWDbill).
- If you have questions regarding your bill, please contact ETWD Customer Service at 949.837.0660 or [district@etwd.com](mailto:district@etwd.com).

### IN THIS ISSUE

**ETWD Takes Action to Encourage Customers to Save Water**

**New Facility Triples Recycled Water for Irrigation**

**Rebates Make It Easy**

**When Can I Water?**

**ETWD Customer Saves Water and Creates Wildlife Habitat**





## New Facility Triples Recycled Water For Irrigation – freeing up drinking water for homes

Years of forethought and planning by the El Toro Water District are paying off in the form of green parks and public spaces. And as those public landscapes thrive, drinking water is being freed up to help residents survive the drought.

**The secret:** recycled water.

In April, ETWD dedicated the new Ted F. Martin Tertiary Treatment Plant – which provides recycled water for irrigation in parts of Laguna Woods and Laguna Hills.



*“By producing more recycled water, the district will save precious imported potable water for household consumption and sanitary uses,”* said **Bob Hill**, ETWD General Manager.

The tertiary treatment plant along with 19 miles of new recycled-water pipelines running beneath portions of Laguna Woods and northwest Laguna Hills – is now fully operational. It nearly triples the district’s recycled water deliveries.

### Next step:

ETWD is currently installing on-site retrofits to convert 215 irrigation meters for recycled water.

ETWD has added extra work crews to speed up the conversion project. As of mid-August, 50% of the conversions had been completed. The District expects to finish in the first quarter of next year.

The recycled water will flow to some irrigation customers, including parks and other public spaces such as the Laguna Woods Village golf course.

*“With 13 public parks within the City of Laguna Hills, including the 17 million-year-old Fossil Reef Park, our irrigation needs are extensive,”* Mayor Pro Tem **Barbara Kogerman** said at the dedication ceremony. *“El Toro Water District relies on imported water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta and the Colorado River to meet the vast majority of its customer demand. Using water more than once is an important tool in conserving our dwindling water supply.”*

The 50,000-square-foot facility, at Moulton Parkway and Ridge Route Drive in Laguna Woods, will produce over 1,400 acre feet of water per year.

*“That’s the equivalent of covering the entire footprint of the Laguna Woods Village with 5 inches of water or filling Angel Stadium 19 times,”* Laguna Woods Mayor **Cynthia Conners** said at the ceremony.

### Consider this:

- The new facility will increase the use of recycled water from 5% to 15% of the district’s overall water demand.
- ETWD will have the capacity to recycle and reuse nearly 100% of its wastewater for irrigation.
- The expanded piping infrastructure will reduce the amount of treated water discharged into the ocean by 25%.

Wastewater is the water that goes down your toilets, sinks and shower drains. Recycled water is completely separate from drinking water and will be used for irrigation purposes only.

ETWD paid for the project using an innovative funding package. It included a state Proposition 50 grant, low-interest state revolving loan funds, a Metropolitan Water District rebate program, and restricted district reserves. The project cost was estimated at \$37.7 million, but construction was completed under budget at less than \$35 million.

The plant is named in honor of Ted F. Martin, the 22-year ETWD board member who passed away in November. Martin was a long-time advocate of expanding the recycled-water program, and successfully worked to fund the project without asking ETWD’s already-water-wise customers to subsidize it.

*“Expansion ... was talked about for almost 25 years,”* said ETWD Board President **Scott Goldman**. *“It took us about 10 years to line up the proper financing, but under Ted’s direction we pulled it off.”*

**The project began in earnest in 2010, and is being completed just in time to help ETWD meet its state mandate to reduce potable water use by 24%.**



## Rebates Make it Easy & Affordable to Save Water!

**Want to save water and money?**

**Thinking of removing a water-thirsty lawn, installing a smart irrigation timer, rain barrel, high efficiency washer or high efficiency toilet?**

While funding lasts, rebates are available for residents and commercial customers. Visit [www.ocwatersmart.com](http://www.ocwatersmart.com) to view available rebates and approved device lists.

High efficiency toilet rebates are also available for single family residents at [www.saveourwaterrebates.com](http://www.saveourwaterrebates.com). **Act now – funds are limited!**

### More Ways To Save Water Inside and Outside Your Home

Find conservation tips at [www.etwd.com](http://www.etwd.com), [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com), [www.saveourwater.com](http://www.saveourwater.com) and [www.h2ouse.org](http://www.h2ouse.org).

Certify your house as a “Water Smart Home”. Visit [ocwatersmart.com](http://ocwatersmart.com) for details on this free program.

## When Can I Water?

**ETWD is on a Level 1 Water Alert.**

This means that you may water no more than three (3) days a week – and only on the days specified on the chart below. Remember, your water budget is being cut – so reducing your outdoor watering is the key.

### YOUR ASSIGNED WATERING DAYS

**APRIL 1 - OCTOBER 31** - Maximum 3 Days Per Week

<b>Aliso Viejo</b>	MON	THUR	SAT OR SUN
<b>Laguna Hills</b>	TUE	FRI	SAT OR SUN
<b>Lake Forest</b>	TUE	FRI	SAT OR SUN
<b>Mission Viejo</b>	MON	THUR	SAT OR SUN

**NOVEMBER 1 - MARCH 31** - Maximum 1 Day Per Week (any day)

- Watering or irrigating is prohibited any day of the week between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. unless using a hand held bucket or a hose with a positive shut-off nozzle. Recycled water customers are also exempt.
- Already water three days a week? Try watering only two. That saves 33% of your outdoor water, which goes a long way toward meeting our overall goal.
- Ask a landscaper to ensure your irrigation timer is set correctly. Try shortening the amount of time you run each irrigation system for 10 minutes or less.

