



WATERVIEWS

California Drought Emergency

El Toro Water District

Summer 2016

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

DROUGHT UPDATE

Earlier this year, the State of California made some significant water-industry observations and changes that have everyone talking. These changes impact the way that El Toro Water District operates and how we, together use and manage our water.

Weather Conditions and El Nino

Although El Nino didn't produce the hoped-for levels of rainfall, California did receive a moderate level of rainfall in the Sierra Mountains and in Northern California which certainly helped Northern California reservoir storage. Orange County's precipitation over the last 8 months has been 49% of normal. Although this is an increase, water supply conditions in Southern California are below normal for the 5th straight year. Lake Mead reservoir level is at an all-time low with the Colorado River system continuing to decline and possibly facing a shortage in the future.

El Toro Water District Customers Hit the State's Drought Mandate Goal

From June 2015 to March 2016 Governor Brown mandated that the state reduce water usage by 25% over 2013 usage. Californians conserved at unprecedented levels, reducing water use by 23.9%, enough water during this period to provide 6.5 million Californians with water for one year. El Toro Water District customers saved an impressive cumulative total of 27% from June 2015 to June 2016.

Permanent Water-Saving Measures

Water waste restrictions such as the prohibition on spraying down concrete driveways and other hardscapes are not only permanent for ETWD customers but have now been made permanent by the State. The fact is that in Southern California, water conservation must remain a permanent emphasis and priority for all of us. As the State pivots from state-mandated emergency conservation to a locally-driven approach, ETWD will monitor and evaluate the permanent water-saving measures. For now, Gov. Brown has extended the Emergency Drought Regulations to January 31, 2017.

ETWD Steps Up

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) replaced specific State Mandated Conservation Standards with a locally-driven approach that transfers the responsibility to the retail water agencies to ensure that they can reliably meet projected water demands under continued drought conditions for the next three years. Working with ETWD's wholesale water provider, the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), the District satisfactorily demonstrated to the SWRCB that it could meet projected water demands for 2017, 2018 & 2019 under similar drought conditions experienced in 2013, 2014 & 2015. Recognizing that there is uncertainty with regards to whether Southern California will experience a sixth year of unprecedented drought this coming winter, ETWD's wholesale water provider has called for a county-wide 10% reduction in water use when compared

WATER CONSERVATION BECOMES A WAY OF LIFE IN CALIFORNIA

to the average of calendar years 2013 and 2014. ETWD's Board of Directors has established a 10% reduction standard which replaces the previous State mandated reduction standard of 24%.

ETWD Eases the Pressure

ETWD believes that its customers will understand the challenge of an ongoing, severe drought. ETWD has decided to ease some of the pressure on its customers. Although the drought remains a serious concern, our approach was to extend relief to our customers since the District received some relief from the State. Effective August 1, 2016 some of those changes include:

- Adjusting the overall water-use reduction goal to 10%, down from 24%, over 2013/14 water use
- Increasing the Water Budget Based Tiered Conservation Rate Structure outdoor Drought Factor from 50% to 75%
- Suspended the \$2/billing unit Administrative Drought Penalty

In short, we are encouraged to have received some relief from the State in the midst of this severe, 5+ year drought. However, we must all work diligently to be good stewards of our water supply that we have – that water conservation is a way of life in Southern California.

On behalf of ETWD, I want to thank you for doing your part to save our most precious resource. You really stepped up over the last year. Your efforts have, and continue to, make a difference.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Hill
General Manager



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PAYING YOUR BILL ONLINE JUST GOT EASIER

El Toro Water District has transitioned to a new online bill pay system. Not only can you pay your bill, you will have access to these great features 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visit <https://etwd.epayub.com> to learn more.



View history and usage



Make payments online conveniently and securely



Manage your account - update phone numbers, addresses and bill preferences.



Sign up for automatic payments



Pay multiple accounts and service locations



Request new service, transfer service, terminate service or service call



First time users will need to set up a user name and password to access and use the new system. Quick pay will be available to those who just want to pay their bill without logging in.

For additional information, please visit www.etwd.com and select "Pay your Bill" on the left hand side and click on "online payments". Customer Service is also available to answer questions at 949.837.0660.

ETWD PARTNERS TO IMPROVE AND SAVE

In south Orange County there are ten (10) water agencies that meet bi-monthly to discuss sharing resources and collaborate on projects – large and small. Over the past 15 years, ETWD has collaborated on numerous projects with Moulton Niguel, Santa Margarita, Trabuco Canyon and Irvine Ranch Water Districts.

Last month ETWD General Manager, Bob Hill wrote a feature article about ETWD's collaborations and partnerships with other water districts for the current issue California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Magazine.

Commitment and contractual arrangements between multiple agencies resulted in mutually beneficial projects like the \$10 million expansion and regionalization of the District's El Toro Reservoir and a \$103 million Baker Water Treatment Plant that would not have been possible without partnering. ETWD has provided services for smaller projects to other districts which generated non-rate revenue for ETWD and have allowed the other water districts to save costs and hold off from adding resources and costs until they were ready to expand their operations.

Visit www.etwd.com/category/water-news to read the CSDA Magazine article.



WATER QUALITY REPORT

Since 1990, California public water agencies have been providing an annual Water Quality Report to their customers. This year's report was mailed out in June 2016 and covers calendar year 2015 drinking water testing and reporting. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Public Health are the agencies responsible for establishing and enforcing drinking water quality standards. ETWD's staff routinely monitors the water supply, conducting approximately 12,000 water quality tests each year from 70 representative sample locations throughout the District. We are proud to have a state-of-the-art Water Quality Laboratory that is state certified. ETWD is committed to delivering safe drinking water to your home or business.

The report is intended to provide you with information about what you need to know about your water and how it may affect you. For more information about this report, or your water quality in general, please contact Customer Service at (949) 837-0660.

The best way to ensure that you are getting the highest quality water available is to educate yourself. Water utilities in the United States are required to monitor for more than 100 contaminants on a regular basis. More than 94 percent of U.S. drinking water utilities, including ETWD are in full compliance with health-based federal regulations annually, meaning that nearly all public water supplies in the United States meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standards for safe drinking water.

The American Water Works Association website DrinkTap.org offers water customers an opportunity to browse information on various water-related subjects including conservation, household leaks, infrastructure, bottled water, drought, pollution, fluoridation and contaminants – including lead.



2016 SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY WATER EXPO: SUPERVISOR LISA BARTLETT



Join us to learn more about water in your community!

Supervisor and Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett is partnering with local water agencies to host a Water Expo event focused on water conservation. The event is intended for homeowners and families in South Orange County; speakers and booths will offer kids activities and "how to" demonstrations of best practices and home improvements for homeowners to increase their water use efficiency.

Event: **South Orange County Water Expo**
Date: **October 1, 2016**
Time: **10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**
Location: **Norman P. Murray Community and Senior Center**
24932 Veterans Way
Mission Viejo, CA 92692

The following agencies will be participating in the event:
County of Orange, El Toro Water District, South Orange County Waste Water Authority (SOCWA), Irvine Ranch Water District, Trabuco Canyon Water District, City of San Juan Capistrano, City of Mission Viejo, City of San Clemente, UCCE, Santa Margarita Water District, South Coast Water District, Municipal Water District of Orange County and Moulton Niguel Water District.

Residential Rebates make it easy and affordable to save water indoors and outdoors!

Rebates Available July 1st (while funding lasts)



SMART SPRINKLER TIMERS

Choose a weather-based irrigation controller that adjusts the watering schedule based on current weather conditions, or a soil moisture sensor controller that measures the soil's water content to determine how much water plants need.

Water Savings: 40-50 gallons per day

ROTATING SPRINKLER NOZZLES

Upgrade to rotating sprinkler nozzles that water more evenly and efficiently than traditional pop-up spray heads.

Water Savings: 15 gallons per day



DRIP IRRIGATION

Convert spray heads to drip irrigation, which uses emitters to deliver water to specific locations at or near plant root zones.

Water Savings: 50 gallons per day

RAIN BARRELS

Capture the rain water that falls on your roof and use it to water your plants! Rain barrels can reduce urban runoff and ocean pollution.

Water Savings: Varies based on rainfall



HIGH EFFICIENCY CLOTHES WASHER

Upgrade your old washing machine to a high efficiency clothes washer that uses up to 55% less water and gets clothes just as clean.

Water Savings: 15 gallons per day

HIGH EFFICIENCY TOILETS

Get paid to replace your old toilets with high efficiency models that use just 1.06 gallons or less per flush while maintaining high performance standards.

Water Savings: 45 gallons per day



Sprinkler Adjustment Reminders

Sign up for free sprinkler adjustment reminder emails that tell you when/how to use the percent adjust feature on your basic sprinkler timer, ensuring appropriate watering year-round. Visit OCWaterSmart.com



**Rebate levels are subject to change based on funding availability. Rebate paid will not exceed device cost. Please check OCWaterSmart.com for a list of current rebate levels.*



www.OCWaterSmart.com | 888.376.3314

TURF REMOVAL

For more information on turf removal rebates and program availability, please visit www.ocwatersmart.com.

INDOOR AND OUTDOOR COMMERCIAL REBATES ALSO AVAILABLE



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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
El Toro Water District
24251 Los Alisos Boulevard
Lake Forest, CA 92630

24 Hour Customer Service:
949.837.0660

Customer Service Email:

district@etwd.com

Website:

www.etwd.com

Para la información en Español, llame por favor al servicio de cliente, 949.837.0660.

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