



The City of



## Public Utilities Department

FAQ

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Effective June 2016

#### **Why is San Diego moving from Level 2 to Level 1?**

While El Niño produced only modest rainfall in San Diego, the state, as a whole, has improved its water reserves. An examination of San Diego's water requirements for the next three years indicate that we have sufficient supply to move to a more moderate conservation level. In response to this regional report the City Council has approved the Mayor's recommendation to enact drought response Level 1 which includes voluntary restrictions.

#### **What are the current voluntary Level 1 restrictions?**

The following are voluntary water-use restrictions:

- Limit watering of landscapes to no more than three days per week.
  - Odd numbered addresses should water Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.
  - Even numbered addresses should water Saturday, Monday, and Wednesday.
  - Apartments, condos and businesses should water Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

This provision does not apply to commercial growers or nurseries, nor to the irrigation of golf course greens and tees.

- Use a hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle or hand held container or a garden hose sprinkler system on a timer to water landscaped areas, including trees and shrubs located on residential and commercial properties that are not irrigated by a landscape irrigation system.
- The washing of mobile equipment is permitted only before 10:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. with a hand-held container or a hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle for quick rinses except where health, safety and welfare of the public are contingent upon frequent vehicle cleanings. Boats and boat engines are permitted to be washed down after use

#### **What are the permanent Water Waste Prohibitions?**

The following are the permanent restrictions that will be in effect at all times:

- A customer shall not allow potable water to irrigate outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes runoff, such that, water flows onto adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, private and public walkways, roadways, parking lots, or structures.
- Customers shall repair or stop all water leaks upon discovery or within seventy-two hours of notification by the City of San Diego.
- Customers shall not wash down sidewalks, driveways, parking areas, tennis courts, or other paved areas without using a power washer or a hose with a shutoff nozzle. Washing any paved areas is only allowed to alleviate immediate safety or sanitation hazards. Water shall be collected and prevented from leaving the property and entering the municipal separate storm sewer system.
- Customers shall not overfill swimming pools and spas.
- Customers shall not use non-recirculating potable water in ornamental fountains or cascading fountains.





- Customers shall not use a hose that dispenses potable water to wash a motor vehicle, except where the hose is fitted with a shut-off nozzle or device attached to it that causes it to cease dispensing water immediately when not in use.
- Single pass-through cooling systems, as part of water service connections, shall be prohibited after the effective date of this section. Non-recirculating systems in all conveyer car wash and commercial laundry systems shall be prohibited after the effective date of this section.
- The serving of drinking water other than upon request in eating or drinking establishments, including but not limited to restaurants, hotels, cafes, cafeterias, bars, or other public places where food or drink are served and/or purchased is prohibited.
- To promote water conservation, operators of hotels and motels shall provide guests with the option of choosing not to have towels and linens laundered daily. The hotel or motel shall prominently display notice of this option in each guestroom using clear and easily understood language.
- Potted plants, non-commercial vegetable gardens and fruit trees, residential and commercial landscapes, including golf courses, parks, school grounds and recreation fields, may only be watered before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
- The irrigation with potable water of ornamental turf on public street medians shall be prohibited.
- The application of potable water to outdoor landscapes during and within 48 hours after measureable rainfall is prohibited.

### **How do I report water waste?**

Please email [waterwaste@sandiego.gov](mailto:waterwaste@sandiego.gov) or call (619) 533-5271 whenever you see water being wasted. The City's free "Waste No Water" smart phone application allows San Diegans to report sightings of water waste. Go to the app store on your iPhone or Android device and search for "Waste No Water" to download the app. You also may report water waste entering the City's storm drain system by calling the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Hotline at (619) 235-1000 or visiting [sandiego.gov/stormwater](http://sandiego.gov/stormwater).

### **How will this effect fighting wildfires?**

Fighting wildfires and protecting the health and safety of our citizens is a top priority for the City of San Diego. There are no restrictions on the availability of water for that critical mission.

### **What is the easiest way to save water?**

The City of San Diego will continue offering the free [Residential Water Survey Program](#). City of San Diego Public Utilities customers will receive information and tips, water-saving devices, evaluation of landscape irrigation, and investigation of common household leaks. The City also has free classes for conserving water while improving landscapes, rebates for purchase of water-saving devices, and continue public outreach. Visit <https://www.sandiego.gov/water/conservation> for more information.

### **Will these changes affect rebates and programs being offered?**

City of San Diego Public Utilities residential customers can receive a cash-back rebate for the purchase of a rain barrel and a rain gutter downspout connection. Receive up to \$1 per gallon of barrel storage capacity from the **Residential Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program**, up to 400 gallons and \$400 per property. For more information, visit [www.WasteNoWater.org](http://www.WasteNoWater.org).

The **Graywater Systems Rebate Program** is available to San Diego residents as well. Using graywater is an excellent way to recycle and conserve water. Graywater is untreated wastewater which has not come into contact with toilet or kitchen sink waste. It is used water from showers and baths, bathroom sinks and washing machines that can be directly reused for irrigation without undergoing a treatment process. Rebates for setting up a graywater system in your home can range from \$150 to \$250. For more information on this and other rebate programs, visit [www.WasteNoWater.org](http://www.WasteNoWater.org).





Several rebates are offered by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California through the **SoCal WaterSmart Program**, including incentives for high efficiency clothes washers and toilets, moisture sensor and rotating sprinkler nozzles and weather based irrigation controllers. For more information, visit [www.SoCalWaterSmart.com](http://www.SoCalWaterSmart.com).

### **What is the City doing for our long-term water supply?**

One of the most exciting programs the City of San Diego is implementing to ensure supply reliability is Pure Water San Diego. This innovative program will produce 1/3 of our city's water supply by 2035. To learn more about the program, visit [purewatersd.org](http://purewatersd.org).

In addition to Pure Water San Diego, the City continues to provide recycled water for irrigation and industrial purposes, explore expansion of our groundwater development and continue to promote water use efficiency and conservation through awareness, programs and services. To learn more about the City's efforts to provide sustainable water supply, visit [https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2015\\_uwmp\\_report.pdf](https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2015_uwmp_report.pdf) to review the Urban Water Management Plan.

Additionally, San Diego County Water Authority and its member agencies that serve the region's cities and communities have enough water supplies to meet the region's demands for the next three years even as the drought continues. The recent opening of the Carlsbad desalination plant and the raising of the San Vicente dam project, as well as a variety of City of San Diego projects, helped regional water supplies and will continue to do so for decades to come.

### **Will the City's water conservation enforcement policy change?**

The City will enforce the water use restrictions associated with Level 1 Drought Watch and the Permanent Water Use Restrictions. Additionally, the City of San Diego will continue to comply with current statewide urban water conservation regulations that have been set in place by State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Efforts are leaning more towards increasing public education outreach on the importance of water conservation practices not only in drought, but our continual efforts to conserve water before drought emergencies.