

The Current Flow

Issue #5 ~ 2009

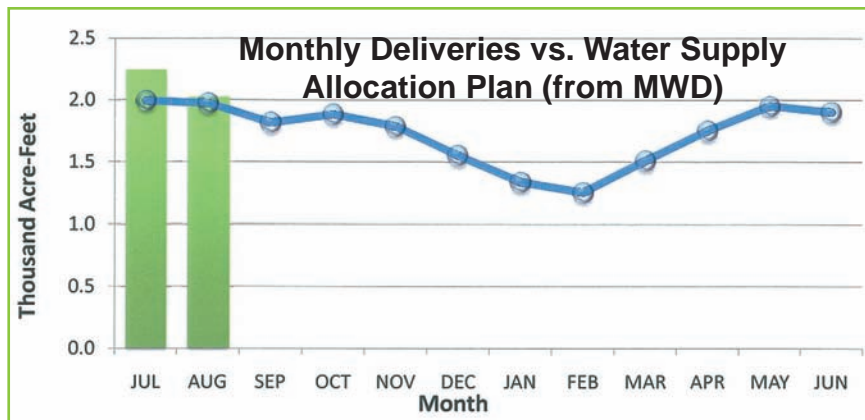
Water Budget Update

Water Use Reduced But Still Short of Goal

Results are in for the first two months of LVMWD's water budget program and the news is mixed. The good news is, across-the-board use is down by nearly 18 percent. The bad news is, more conservation effort is necessary to come in at or below the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) allocation to the District. Failure to reach the MWD allotment will result in the District paying significant penalties for excess use, perhaps in the millions of dollars.

"Nearly two-thirds of our customers have shown a significant reduction in use, which is good, but we need the remaining group to take an active role in conservation practices," said John R. Mundy, general manager for LVMWD. "As we head into the cooler months, customers must take the opportunity to significantly reduce their outdoor water use."

Mr. Mundy said he received a letter from Metropolitan indicating that LVMWD had exceeded its allotment which also conveyed the expectation for further reductions in demand.



California is in the third year of water shortages rising from drought and judicial restrictions on transferring water from north to south. LVMWD is entirely dependent upon imported water; there are no local sources.

Customers are asked to restrict outdoor water use as much as possible and practice indoor conservation by only washing full loads of clothes and dishes, taking shorter showers and repairing leaks immediately.

"It is unfortunate that some customers have had penalties applied to their service bills for exceeding their budgets," Mr. Mundy said. "Those penalties reinforce the reality of our supply situation and we must recover the excess use fees imposed by Metropolitan from those who are not within their budgets."

Customer seeking conservation information can visit www.LVMWD.com or call Customer Service, 818-251-2200 to request a home water-use survey. 💧

Rebates are BACK!

Rebates for water-saving devices are again available for LVMWD residential customers through the SoCal Water\$mart program. Residential water customers include those living in houses or apartments, townhomes, condominiums or mobile home complexes with less than five dwellings whose water bills are not paid by a homeowners association or property management company.



It's important to know rebate terms and conditions before you make a purchase, so please carefully read the information found at the SoCal Water\$mart website: socalwatersmart.com

Items qualifying for a rebate include: Selected high-efficiency clothes washers, high-efficiency toilets, rotary irrigation nozzles installed with a pressure-regulating head and weather-based irrigation controllers. Act quickly, dollar amounts and item availability may be subject to change or discontinuation.

Rebates are administered by SoCal Water\$mart and may take several weeks to process. For more information, please contact us at 818.251.2200. 💧

In This Issue

- ✓ Crank it Back!
- ✓ Water Softeners & Salinity
- ✓ No FOG in Sewers
- ✓ Poor Soil Plants

Water Efficient Landscapes in Your Neighborhoods



These photos show ideas on how to minimize the amount of turf and still have a beautiful water efficient landscape! 💧



Crank It Back!



Autumn is here and your plants need a lot less water!

When the days get shorter, reduced sunlight means your plants are not as active. Even though temperatures may remain warm, it's the sun that "powers" your plants. Overwatering during these shorter days can result in wasted water and urban runoff that

contaminates the streams and the ocean.

Reduce your watering schedule to two days per week and consider shorter run times for each zone. Your plants will "tell" you if they need more water. Lost your controller manual? Visit the manufacturer's website and download a new copy. Remember to replace your controller's back-up battery, too.

**Autumn and winter are great opportunities to save water and stay within your water budget. Need help?
Call customer service at 818.251.2100.**

Do You Really Need a Water Softener?

A water softener can turn "hard" water to "soft" but some types of softeners create environmental impacts.

Salinity is the concentration of dissolved mineral salts in water and is referred to as total dissolved solids (TDS). Typical salts include calcium, magnesium, sodium, sulfate, and chloride. When calcium and magnesium levels are high, the water is referred to as "hard" and a water softener can be used to remove these minerals.

The traditional "softening" process, however, creates a highly salty byproduct that is usually discharged into the wastewater collection system. Because salinity is a water quality concern in the southwest, some local communities restrict the use of water softeners. "Softened" water also contains sodium which can be problematic for people on low-sodium diets.

Increased salinity in wastewater impacts recycled water, which is used for irrigation in the LVMWD service area. The technology to remove salt is costly and too much salinity in irrigation water is detrimental to the landscapes it is used on. Salt will affect the growth and

Environmental Water Science 2009

In June, several local high school students participated in LVMWD's summer Environmental Water Science (EWS) workshop. Led by experts in their respective fields, students took daily field trips throughout the Malibu Creek Watershed, learning about natural and urban impacts on watersheds. By focusing on relevant environmental issues, students were able to apply their classroom studies with real life situations on topics such



as supply and demand, water quality, urban runoff, geology, hydrology, and infrastructures for water systems. Students interested in EWS 2010, should contact Deborah Low at dlow@LVMWD.com. 💧



ter Softener?

health of plants, cause leaf damage, and potential plant death.

Customers with water softeners can significantly reduce the amount of salt discharged into the wastewater system. If you currently have a self-contained system, check with a water softener provider and ask if a portable exchange device can be used instead. Your vendor would exchange a new cartridge for a used one and dispose of the brine where it does not affect water supplies. Another way of reducing water softener use is to re-plumb it to only treat the hot water used in a home. Importantly, salt-free anti-scaling devices have been developed and are now becoming available.

If you've been getting by without a water softener, you probably don't need one. If you have one, you may wish to re-think the need to keep it, along with the expenses for maintenance. Water served by LVMWD is among the

"softest" served in Southern California. You should also know that "hard" water is not a health threat. By eliminating an old regenerative softener or changing to one using newer technology, you can save thousands of gallons of water per year and help reduce the salt load in our local environment. 💧



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Board meetings are scheduled at 5 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. See web site for meeting and agenda information.

Customer Service -
818.251.2200

After hours emergency -
818.251.2100

**Rancho Las Virgenes
Composting Facility
Compost Giveaway**

Hours: Saturdays 8:00 am - 1:00 pm
(except holidays)

Rebate Information

www.LVMWD.com ~ Conservation

Potable Water
Recycled Water
Wastewater Treatment
Biosolids Composting



4232 Las Virgenes Road
Calabasas, CA 91302
www.LVMWD.com

At Your Service...

Avoid "FOG" in the Sewer!

Just as foggy weather can clog highway traffic, a different kind of "FOG" can be risky for the sewer system. FATs, OILs, and GREASE accumulate and clog sewer service lines and mains, resulting in plugged drains or sewer overflows. They can also disrupt the biological processes used to treat wastewater.



FOG commonly comes from cooking wastes. Rather than putting these down the drain, set the pan aside to cool, wipe it out, and put FOG in the trash. It's not a good idea to put meat waste down the garbage disposal and NEVER put petroleum products (oil or gasoline) down the drain – it's illegal and dangerous. These items should be taken to a hazardous waste collection site. ♪



THE MISSING PIECE

LVMWD is entirely dependent upon imported water. True or False?

Send your response to:

THE MISSING PIECE, LVMWD, 4232 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas, CA 91302, or visit our web site at www.LVMWD.com and send your answer through Contact Us. Prizes awarded monthly to ten winners randomly selected from the correct responses.

Previous issue's **MISSING PIECE** answer:

What type of filtration system is used at Westlake Filtration Plant?

Answer: A vacuum diatomaceous earth filtration system ♪

Flowering Plants for Poor Soils

If you have dry, sandy, limestone, clay loam, or decomposed granite type soil, these colorful choices will do well in the sunny areas of your landscape. Planted in clusters, they blend well visually, grow to different heights, present a variety of textures, and are extremely low water users. ♪

Achillea millefolium

A perennial ground-cover that spreads by its roots, can be used as substitute lawn. Small white flowers bloom above evergreen foliage spring to summer. Butterflies enjoy this plant. 4-6" h x 3' w



Common Yarrow²

Desert Marigold¹²



Baileya multiradiata

Everblooming plant with yellow "daisies" atop long pale bluish green stems. Blossoms make good cut flowers. Short lived, but reseeds easily. Prefers soil with low organic content that drains well. 1' h x 1-2' w

Encelia farinosa

A mound of grayish white foliage, covered with small yellow flowers in the spring. Extremely hardy, prefers excellent drainage in soil with low organic content. May die back in the summer and can be trimmed to the ground before the rainy season. 2-4' h x 2-4' w



Brittlebush¹¹

Apache Plume¹²



Fallugia paradoxa

Eye catching feathery seed heads range from pale peach to bright pink on this evergreen shrub. Prefers excellent drainage in soil with low organic content. 4-6' h x 5' w

For more information on these waterwise plants, go to the Conservation section of our web site - www.LVMWD.com. To find a local retailer to purchase native plants, go to BeWaterWise (<http://www.bewaterwise.com/retailers.html>).

Photo Credit: ²Charles Webber, California Academy of Sciences; ¹¹Christopher L. Christie; ¹²Charles E. Jones