

## Water Conservation in Los Angeles

### *The Reality We Live In*

Released on Tuesday, May 6, 2014, the **National Climate Assessment** (<http://nca2014.globalchange.gov>) states, ***“The effects of human-induced climate change are being felt in every corner of the United States, with water growing scarcer in dry regions, torrential rains increasing in wet regions, heat waves becoming more common and more severe, wildfires growing worse, and forests dying under assault from heat-loving insects.”***

Last year, **2013, became California’s driest year on record**; and on January 17, Governor, Jerry Brown, declared a statewide drought emergency saying, *“We ought to be ready for a long, continuous, persistent effort including the possibility of drinking-water shortages. I think the drought emphasizes that we do live in an era of limits, that nature has its boundaries.”*

The department of Water and Power has announced that water rates will be going up and inspectors will soon be on the street checking to see that the three-day water rationing is being respected and that sprinkler systems are in good working order.

Unfortunate as it may be, our drought is the perfect opportunity to change habits by re-conceiving your yard or garden as a landscape that reflects the reality of the environment we now live in.

This doesn't mean that it can't be beautiful, in fact, by using a combination of drought-resistant Mediterranean and native plants, succulents and a range of ground covers that includes artificial, native and hybrid grasses as well as gravel and rocks, what was once a boring, water-guzzling turf can be transformed into a stunning xeriscape or Green Garden.

## Water Conservation Requirements

The City of Los Angeles recently implemented Phase II of its **Water Conservation Ordinance**, which requires the following:

- Outdoor watering with sprinklers is restricted to three days a week with different watering days assigned to odd-numbered and even-numbered street addresses.
- Customers with odd-numbered street addresses – ending in 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9 – are allowed to use their sprinkler systems on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Customers with even-numbered street addresses – ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, or 8 – are allowed to use their sprinkler systems on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

- Watering with sprinklers is limited to one eight-minute cycle per watering day for non-conserving nozzle sprinkler systems (typical residential system), or two 15-minute cycles per watering day for conserving nozzle sprinkler systems.
- All outdoor watering is restricted to hours before 9:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m., regardless of the watering day.

## **Saving Water At Home**

When it comes to water conservation every little step helps. **A leaky faucet can waste 1500 gallons of water per month.**

Check out the **Department of Water & Power's Website** (<https://www.ladwp.com>) to see how you can save money and water for the following:

- Toilets
- Showers
- Faucets

## **Rebate Programs**

Rebates for installing water-saving devices in your home and yard are widely available in Los Angeles County.

You can get rebates for installing:

- Ultra Low Flush and High-Efficiency Toilets
- Weather Based Irrigation Controllers
- Synthetic Turf
- High-Efficiency Clothes Washers
- Rotating Sprinkler Nozzles

Rebates will vary depending on your water provider. Check your water bill to find out who your water provider is.

## **Helpful Links**

- *Save a Buck* – Rebates for businesses, landscape programs and multi-family residential rebates.
- *SoCalWaterSmart* – Rebates for high-efficiency devices and landscapes.

## **Water Management Solutions**

There are two approaches when it comes to the use of water, use it more efficiently and create alternative sources. When combined they can save you money and be

immensely effective in cutting down on the use of our potable water resources.

## **Water Conservation Irrigation**

Here is a list of the water reduction and long-term money saving products currently available. When used in combination, the savings become even greater.

- Rotary Nozzles - (15-45% water savings)
- High Efficiency Nozzles (30% water savings)
- Above Ground Landscape Drip (30-50% less water than sprinklers)
- Sub-Surface Capillary Irrigation Systems (50% water savings)
- Wireless Water Sensors & Control Valves (60% water savings) The sensors analyze soil moisture and temperature and determine when and how long to water.

## **Rain & Graywater Collection**

These are two sources of water that are free and available to every homeowner.

### **Rainwater**

Rainwater collection is as old a civilization itself and if you have a roof and gutters can be easily and inexpensively installed. And for every square-foot of roof and inch of rain, .623 gallons of water can be collected. The products on the market provide the following:

- Collect rainwater from downspouts
- Clean and filter rainwater by removing most of the debris and contaminants
- Connect to a majority of hoses for immediate use in the garden or for collection in rain barrels and cisterns.

### **Graywater**

Graywater is water that comes from baths, showers, hand basins and washing machines only — not the toilet or the dishwasher.

If a graywater system is to be employed, it is crucial to use all-natural, biodegradable soaps whose ingredients do not harm plants. Most powdered detergents, and some liquid detergents, are sodium-based, which can inhibit seed-germination and destroy the structure of clay soils. The products on the market do the following:

- Connect to the pipes leading from the bathtub, shower and hand basin
- Filter the water of contaminants
- Connect to collection barrels and cisterns.