

## UPDATE ON WATER MANDATES

On April 1, 2015, Governor Brown issued an historic Executive Order requiring mandatory conservation for all residents and directed several state agencies, including the State Water Board, to take immediate action to safeguard the state's remaining potable urban water supplies in preparation for a possible fifth year of drought.

On May 5, 2015, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted a Mandatory Water Conservation Regulation. The emergency regulation identified how much water communities must conserve based on their average residential water use, per person per day, last summer. Findings were made that every person should be able to keep indoor water use to no more than 55 gallons per day. For the most part, the amount of water that each person uses in excess of this amount is water that is applied to lawns and other ornamental landscapes. On average, 50 percent of total residential use is outdoors, in some cases up to 80 percent. To save water now, during this drought emergency, the regulation targets these outdoor uses.

There have been a lot of questions about what these new emergency regulations mean to residents and businesses in the City of Dunsmuir. The City of Dunsmuir is considered a small water supplier (serving fewer than 3,000 connections). Smaller suppliers, that collectively serve less than 10 percent of Californians, must submit a report on December 15, 2015, to demonstrate compliance with state regulations.

The new regulations dictate that small water suppliers restrict outdoor irrigation to no more than two days per week. The City of Dunsmuir previously requested voluntary compliance and on July 2 adopted Ordinance No. 547 complying with state dictates to make this mandatory in Dunsmuir.

**In order to comply with state mandates, the City is requiring that those homes and businesses with addresses ending in an even number irrigate outdoor ornamental landscapes or turf on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and those with addresses ending in an odd number irrigate on Wednesdays and Sundays.**

Additionally, the new state regulations, which must be followed by all water users regardless of the size of the City, dictates the following:

- No use of potable water to wash sidewalks and driveways
- No runoff when irrigating with potable water
- No using hoses with no automatic shutoff nozzles to wash cars
- No using potable water in decorative water features that do not recirculate the water
- No irrigating outdoors during and within 48 hours following measureable rainfall
- Restaurants cannot serve water to their customers unless the customer requests it

Additionally, hotels and motels must offer their guests the option to not have their linens and towels laundered daily and prominently display this option in each guest room.

The State has held that local agencies can fine property owners up to \$500 a day for failure to implement the water use prohibitions and restrictions. The State Water Board can issue informational orders, conservation orders or cease and desist orders to water suppliers for failure to meet their conservation standard. Water agencies that violate cease and desist orders are subject to a civil liability of up to \$10,000 a day.

Residents and business owners are urged to institute water conservation measures that are required to reduce water demand. They are asked to limit their outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf with potable water to the required two days per week as well as following the other state regulations that have been put into place. If the City cannot gain compliance, it may be necessary to begin issuing administrative fines. The City does not want to take this position; but faced with fines of up to \$10,000, it may not have a choice.

## WAYS TO REDUCE WATER USE

There are a lot of simple ways to reduce the amount of water that we use at home, both inside and outside. Some of the simple basic ways to reduce outdoor water use includes:

- Water early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are cooler (save 25 gallons each time you water)
- Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street (save 12 to 15 gallons each time you water)
- Choose a water-efficient irrigation system such as drip irrigation for your trees, shrubs, and flowers (save 15 gallons each time you water)
- Water deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes
- Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants to reduce evaporation and keep the soil cool. Organic mulch also improves the soil and prevents weeds (save 20-30 gallons per 1,000 square feet each time you water)
- Plant drought-resistant trees and plants (save 30 to 60 gallons per 1,000 square feet each time you water)
- Use a broom to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios (save 8 to 18 gallons per minute)
- Wash cars/boats with a bucket, sponge, and hose with self-closing nozzle (save 8 to 18 gallons per minute)

Some of the simple basic ways to reduce indoor water use include:

### Kitchen

- Run the dishwasher only when full to save water and energy
- Install a water and energy-efficient dishwasher (save 3 to 8 gallons per load)
- Install aerators on the kitchen faucet to reduce flows to less than 1 gallon per minute
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run; fill one basin with wash water and the other with rinse water
- Dishwashers typically use less water than washing dishes by hand
- If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing; newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones
- Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Instead, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons every time
- Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap. Collect the water you use while rinsing fruit and vegetables. Use it to water house plants.
- Don't use running water to thaw food; instead, defrost food in the refrigerator.
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap.

### Bathroom

- Install low-flow shower heads (save 2.5 gallons)
- Take five minute showers instead of 10 minute showers (save 12.5 gallons with a low flow showerhead, 25 gallons with a standard 5.0 gallon per minute showerhead).
- Fill the bathtub halfway or less (save 12 gallons)
- When running a bath, plug the bathtub before turning on the water. Adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
- Install aerators on bathroom faucets (save 1.2 gallons per person per day).
- Turn water off when brushing teeth or shaving (save approximately 10 gallons per day).
- Install a high-efficiency toilet (save 19 gallons per person per day)
- Be sure to test your toilet for leaks at least once a year. Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the bowl without flushing, there's a leak. Fix it and start saving gallons.
- Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons per month.
- Turn off the water while washing your hair and save up to 150 gallons a month.
- When washing your hands, turn the water off while you lather.
- Take a (short) shower instead of a bath. A bathtub can use up to 70 gallons of water.

If we all work together, we can make a difference for California's future. For more information on ways to save water indoors and outdoors, visit [saveourh2o.org](http://saveourh2o.org)