Western Adopts Stricter Outdoor Watering Measures in Response to Governor’s Mandate

Customers need to conserve 50 percent outdoors

Riverside, Calif. – In response to Governor Brown’s executive order for mandatory water reductions, Western Municipal Water District’s Board of Directors implemented Stage 4B of the Water Supply Shortage Contingency Program. The board voted unanimously Wednesday night to move forward with Stage 4B, which will reduce customers’ outdoor water budgets by 30 percent; commercial customer budgets will also be reduced by 10 percent.

In the face of continuing extreme drought, every water agency in California is implementing measures to comply with the Governor’s April 1 mandate and the State Water Resources Control Board’s subsequent framework to cut back on water use. For Western customers this means severely limiting outdoor water use. The District recommends customers reduce their outdoor watering by 50 percent to meet this goal. If customers exceed their water budget, they will pay the Tier 5 rate for that excessive water use.

“In years with normal rainfall, current efforts by our customers would have met water efficient goals,” said General Manager John Rossi. “However, California’s four-year drought calls for extraordinary measures. Given the amount of reduction mandated by the state, we must all do our part to get through these historic dry times, brown lawns included.” Outdoor water accounts for the majority of household water use, so customers must continue with the on-going mandatory actions, such as repairing leaks immediately and watering between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. The following actions are recommended to achieve a 50 percent cutback in outdoor water use:

- Water lawns and annuals (replaced each year) no more than three days per week in the summer; two days per week or less in the winter.
- Don’t plant any new plants, which require more water to become established.
- Water trees thoroughly once every four weeks by soaking an area away from the trunk but within the drip line of the tree canopy.
- Water shrubs, young trees and roses no more than once each week by creating a basin around the plant and using a bucket to fill it with three to four gallons of water that can soak in slowly.
- Add a four-inch layer of wood chip mulch to all soil areas. Keep mulch from touching trunks and stems of plants.
- Don’t prune plants except to remove a hazard; pruning stimulates growth that requires more water.
- Don’t fertilize plants, as fertilizer stimulates new growth.
- Catch unused water (such as water being warmed in the shower) in a bucket to water plants.

Western is hosting three Drought Town Halls to give customers an overview of the current water restrictions, how the restrictions will affect them and how to implement changes to their home to immediately begin reducing water use.

May 26, 6 p.m.    Murrieta Library Community Room, 24700 Adams Ave., Murrieta
June 2, 6 p.m.    Woodcrest Library Community Room, 16625 Krameria Ave., Riverside
June 4, 6 p.m.    Western Municipal Water District Office, 14205 Meridian Parkway, Riverside

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Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner.