

Outdoor Water Saving Tip Sheet

Plants and Mulch

- ◆ Put at least a 3-4" layer of mulch around trees and plants to retain moisture and keep the soil cool.
- ◆ Use drought tolerant plants. They require less water and are capable of withstanding extended periods without watering.
- ◆ Consider reducing or replacing grass lawns or overhead spray irrigation landscape areas with food gardens, drought tolerant and native plants, mulch, lawn alternatives or artificial grass lawns.

Efficient Maintenance Tasks

- ◆ Grass-cycle by leaving your grass clippings on the lawn to decompose and return nutrients to the soil.
- ◆ Don't overwater. You should only be watering outdoors every other day or Monday, Thursday, and Saturday according to Santa Ana's Water Use Efficiency Program.
- ◆ Water only between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. according to Santa Ana's Water Use Efficiency Program. Watering during this time when temperatures are cooler will avoid unnecessary evaporation.
- ◆ Limit pruning to the removal of dead, damaged, or diseased branches, dead foliage, and flowers. Pruning encourages new growth, which is much less tolerant of reduced water uptake
- ◆ Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.
- ◆ Does a professional landscaper manage your yard? Make sure to hire a Certified Green Gardener who has been trained to save water and prevent pollution while keeping your landscape vibrant.

Irrigation and Equipment

- ◆ Do not leave sprinklers or hoses unattended. A garden hose can pour out 600 gallons or more in only a few hours. Use a kitchen timer to remind yourself to turn sprinklers off.
- ◆ Use a shut-off nozzle on your hose which can be adjusted so that water flows only as needed. When finished, turn it off at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid leaks.
- ◆ Don't allow sprinklers to water your street, driveway or sidewalk (overspray).
- ◆ Check hose connectors to make sure plastic or rubber washers are in place. Washers prevent leaks.
- ◆ Choose a water-efficient irrigation system such as drip irrigation for your trees, shrubs, and flowers.
- ◆ Install a laundry-to-landscape or other greywater system to water shrubs, trees, orchards and planting beds.
- ◆ Install rain barrels to collect and reuse rainwater to cover a portion of your landscape irrigation needs each year.

Cars and Pools/Spas

- ◆ Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water. If you wash your own car, park on the grass and use a hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle.
- ◆ Curb diving, splashing and water fights in your pool and spa. Boisterous play causes inordinate amounts of water loss due to splash-out.
- ◆ Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation. Save money on heating bills and cost of chemicals too.
- ◆ Manually clean your filter. The average backwash uses between 250 to 1,000 gallons of water — without completely cleaning your filter! Plug the overflow line when the pool is in use and always when adding water. Keep the pool water in the pool.
- ◆ Consider a new water-saving pool filter. A single back-flushing with a traditional filter uses 180 to 250 gallons of water.
- ◆ Repair any swimming pool leaks. Even a small leak in either pool equipment or the pool's structure represents a substantial waste. In fact, an inch-a-day leak in a 15-by-30-foot pool can waste approximately 102,000 gallons per year!
- ◆ Maintain proper chemical levels and adequate circulation time. Not only will your pool water be safer and cleaner, but you'll avoid the need to drain your pool or use excessive water to correct conditions of neglect.
- ◆ If you have a well at home, check your pump periodically. Listen to hear if the pump kicks on and off while water is not being used. If it does, you have a leak.