



Water-Efficient Guidelines for Landscape and Irrigation

California is in a Drought; Efficient Water Use is Critical!

Conservation is a way of life for Californians. The following outdoor water waste restrictions are permanent:

- Watering outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes runoff to sidewalks, streets, and hardscapes.
- Using a hose, without a shut-off nozzle, for any purpose.
- Using drinking water in non-recirculating fountains or decorative water devices.
- Washing driveways and sidewalks for purposes other than health and safety (removal of unsanitary conditions).
- Watering landscapes during or 48 hours after a measurable rain event.

Tips for Efficient Landscape Watering

For a typical site, watering twice a week during non-rainy months should be sufficient to keep your plants healthy. Rain or shine, the following tips can help improve the efficiency of your outdoor watering practices.

- Water between the hours of 8 pm and 10 am to reduce water lost to evaporation and wind.
- Add organic material to soil, such as mulch or compost, to help improve the soil's ability to retain water.
- Discuss conservation goals with your gardener or landscape professional. Use the appropriate irrigation method and irrigation controller programming to match your plant's water use needs.
- Turn off irrigation when it's raining or install a rain or soil moisture sensor.
- Check your irrigation system regularly to identify misdirected spray heads or leaks. Manual adjustment is often all that is required to redirect a spray head to the appropriate area and avoid overspray and runoff.
- Help avoid water losses from overspray and runoff.
 - For gardens on a sloped area or with compacted soil, adjust the irrigation controller to run multiple start times on watering days. For example, if you normally water for 10 minutes, adjust the schedule to water for 5 minutes, turn off for an hour, and then water again for another 5 minutes. This allows the soil to absorb water at an appropriate rate and helps prevent runoff.
 - Use a mulched or planted border next to sidewalks and hardscapes to help capture and prevent runoff.
- Consider converting overhead sprinklers to drip. This is the most effective way to directly water the root zone.

Learn more about free SFPUC assistance and resources at www.sfpuc.org/savewater

- Water-Wise Gardening for San Francisco Guidebook and gardening classes
- Indoor and outdoor water use efficiency evaluations (virtual and in-person)
- Low water use plant lists
- MyAccount online portal to view and track water use and check for leaks
- Grants to retrofit irrigated landscapes over 10,000 square feet
- Incentives for laundry-to-landscape graywater systems, rain barrels and cisterns