



# City of Newport Beach 2015 Drought Emergency Water Restrictions Frequently Asked Questions



## What are the new water restrictions, and how do they apply to me?

Recently, the State passed drought emergency regulations that prohibit certain types of outdoor water use. Here's what you need to know:

- ◆ **Mandatory irrigation restrictions** are in effect – Your property has been assigned a specific day for using outdoor irrigation. To find your assigned watering day, visit [www.newportbeachca.gov/water](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/water).
- ◆ **Landscape watering is prohibited between the hours of 9 a.m. -5 p.m.** By running your irrigation in the evening and early morning, less water will be evaporated into the environment.
- ◆ **Watering your landscape more than 15 minutes per station** is prohibited.
- ◆ **Watering outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes runoff is prohibited.** This means no water should runoff of your landscape onto hardscape / sidewalk and into the gutter.
- ◆ **No landscape watering 48 hours after a measurable rain event.** Think of measurable as a ¼ inch or more.
- ◆ **Washing down driveways and sidewalks is prohibited.** The only exception is for health and safety related circumstances.
- ◆ **Using potable water in a fountain or decorative water feature is prohibited,** unless the water is on a recirculating system.
- ◆ **Using a hose to wash a vehicle is prohibited, unless the hose is fitted with an automatic shut-off nozzle.** This applies to all motorized or non-motorized types of vehicles such as cars, boats, motorcycles, trailers, etc.
- ◆ **New Construction Irrigation** needs to be consistent with regulations or other requirements established by the California Building Standards Commission and the Department of Housing and the City of Newport Beach's (City) Municipal Code.

## When do the restrictions go into effect?

The new water restrictions go into effect immediately. They will remain in effect until at least February 29, 2016. At that time, the State may decide to extend the restrictions if drought conditions persist. Additional local watering restrictions may be added, ongoing or become permanent.

## Where can I find my designated outdoor irrigation days?

There are four ways to locate the assigned watering days for your property(s).

1. Refer to the letter or postcard that was mailed to each water customer specifying the assigned watering days.
2. Locate your Municipal Services Statement. In the section titled "important information" your assigned watering days are listed.
3. You may view your assigned watering days online at [www.newportbeachca.gov/water](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/water) by entering your address into the section labeled "what are my watering days?"
4. Call **949-644-3388** and City staff will assist you.

## If I stop watering my grass and it turns brown, will I get a citation?

No. Brown lawns are acceptable. However, the City requires owners to remove all weeds, overgrown dead vegetation (bushes, plants, etc.) and maintain their property. All landscaping shall be maintained preventing dirt patches, blight, dust, and fire hazards. All other landscaping must remain maintained.

## Do I have to water the City-owned parkway tree in front of my property?

Yes. Trees are an essential community asset and it is important that all trees remain healthy throughout the drought. It is recommended to water your parkway tree with a hose fitted with a shut-off nozzle, watering can, bucket or install a drip irrigation line to provide enough water to maintain the health of the tree.

## How will the water restrictions be enforced?

The City will typically notify customers (through letters, door hangers, etc.) to alert the customer of the violation that occurred. This will be a process that focuses on education, directing the customer toward resources to achieve compliance. Citations will be assessed for continued non-compliance (\$100, \$200 and \$500).

*Note: If water agencies do not enforce the water restrictions, they can be fined up to \$10,000 per day by the State. Both water agencies and residents will be held responsible for the new statewide water restrictions; we're all in this together.*

### Can I call to report a water leak or get general drought-related information?

Yes. The City has set up a drought response number **949-644-3388** to answer most common questions or to route you to the appropriate staff member. In addition, many commonly asked questions and answers are available online at [www.newportbeachca.gov/water](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/water). This web page includes information on your assigned watering days, City permanent water use restrictions and current State law information.

### What resources are available to help me reduce my water use?

There are a wide range of programs and incentives to help you reduce your daily water use. The Municipal Water District of Orange County and the City offer rebates on many water efficient devices. Rebates and programs include installing smart sprinkler timers and rotating sprinkler nozzles; replacing turf with California Friendly landscapes; free home water use surveys, water-wise gardening classes; and much more. Visit [www.watersmartnewport.org](http://www.watersmartnewport.org) for more information and tips on reducing indoor and outdoor water use.

### I need to empty and refill my pool. Can I do so without getting fined?

If a new pool is installed or routine pool maintenance requires the filling of a pool the water customer should fill out a "Relief from Compliance" form. You may fill out the application online at [www.newportbeachca.gov/water](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/water). If you need assistance with the form give us a call at **949-644-3388**. Remember also that new regulations require that pools or outdoor spas can only be filled no more than 3 inches per week.

### Can I store my pool water in a holding tank while I make repairs?

Yes. Saving pool water in a storage tank is permissible. If the storage tank will be on a city street, a street closure permit is required for its storage. The permit is for a maximum of 14 days (extensions may be approved) and the permit fee is \$55, additional fees may be required. Should the location be on a private street, please contact your homeowner association for approvals, a city permit is not required for private streets.

### How are government agencies doing their part?

The City is responding to the drought by reducing water use at public properties, including:

- ◆ Reducing irrigation run times and replacing turf with drought tolerant landscapes where appropriate.
- ◆ Turning off irrigation to all grass medians, public and private (530,000 sq. feet.)
- ◆ Removing nearly 160,000 square feet of grass at the Bonita Creek ball fields and replacing with artificial turf (approximate annual water savings, 3.5 million gallons)
- ◆ New buildings have low flow fixtures and older facilities have been retrofitted with low-flow toilets (1.2 gpf.) and other water-efficient fixtures.
- ◆ Beach showers have been timed with 15-second cycles.
- ◆ Irrigation water budgets for all City parks, medians and landscape using a weather-based central water management systems.
- ◆ New landscaping design pallets for medians and slopes include drought tolerant and Cal-Friendly<sup>®</sup> plantings.
- ◆ Investigating ways to expand the use of reclaimed water.

The City is striving to set the example by following the same watering days where possible as designated to our water customers. Efforts are also being made to increase the City's drought outreach programs by providing additional incentives for customers to install water efficient devices. Visit [www.watersmartnewport.org/rebates](http://www.watersmartnewport.org/rebates) for information on rebates and other water saving programs.

### Still have questions?

If you still have questions about the drought, ways to save water or the water restrictions, call the City's drought response number 949-644-3388 or visit our website for updated information [www.newportbeachca.gov/water](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/water).

Dealing with Drought, we're all in this together.

