



oceanside saves

# Drought Q and A

City of Oceanside Water Utilities Department

By now you have heard plenty about the drought, but what you may not know is exactly how the drought affects you, a customer of the City of Oceanside's Water Utilities Department. We're answering some of your most pressing questions.

**Q: The City of Oceanside has a water reduction goal of 20% reduction compared to water usage in 2013. Does that mean everyone must cut water use by 20 percent at home?**

A: Conserving water is everyone's responsibility. The 20 percent reduction requirement is for the entire city. All of us must reduce water use in some way so that our city as a whole can achieve our mandated goal. Some water users will need to reduce more so that those already using minimum amounts of water will not be unfairly burdened by the new requirements.

**Q: What are the mandatory water conservation restrictions?**

A: There are several mandatory restrictions that must be adhered to by our customers. Most notably, limit residential and commercial landscape irrigation to a maximum of 2 days/week on your assigned days for no more than 10 minutes. Watering days are as follows: Tuesdays and Saturdays for Single-Family Residential Homes, Mondays and Thursdays for Apartments, Condos, Businesses, and Public Agencies. Water before 10:00 a.m or after 6:00 p.m. Check your sprinklers for run-off, which occurs when water from the sprinklers over sprays or drains onto hard surfaces, such as the sidewalk or gutter. You can find a complete list of drought restrictions on our website at [www.SaveWaterOceanside.com](http://www.SaveWaterOceanside.com).

Limit watering your landscape to 2 days a week

	MON	TUE	THU	SAT
Single Family Homes 				
Apartments, Condos, Businesses & Public Agencies 				

**Q: How are violations enforced?**

A: When we receive a complaint, the City of Oceanside staff makes every effort to investigate and verify the issue. In almost all cases, a letter is sent or a phone call is made to the customer to educate them on the drought restriction violation and offer assistance. It is our goal to educate our customers to solve the problem and avoid fines whenever possible, except in extreme cases of non-compliance (i.e., multiple violations at the same address with no resolution). It is important to note that neighbor-to-neighbor complaints are not deemed enforceable and only serve to notify staff about a possible problem.

**Q: I'm doing everything I can to save water, but I feel like it is just a drop in the bucket. Why not just focus conservation efforts on big water users like agriculture?**

A: We thank you for all you've done to conserve and encourage you to stay the course. It is everyone's responsibility to conserve water for future generations and to find new ways to reduce their water footprint. At The City of Oceanside, we've also made it our mission to reach out to our highest water users and offer them personal assistance and tools that can help reduce their water use. We are proactive in communicating with our customers when we see a problem on their landscape and have made staff available to answer irrigation and conservation questions.

For more information on drought restrictions, ways to save water, and water conservation programs, please visit [www.SaveWaterOceanside.com](http://www.SaveWaterOceanside.com) or call (760) 435-5800.

**Q: Wouldn't an El Niño this year solve our water situation?**

A: It may help, but we aren't counting on it. Even if this El Niño condition provides precipitation locally, the key issue for state water supplies is how much precipitation – particularly snow – falls in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The ideal situation would be for repeated snow storms that provide a dense snowpack in Northern California that lasts well into next summer. State reservoirs need replenishment (more than just one good winter's worth) as they are critically low. It is important to remember that an El Niño was in effect last winter, and it proved to be the driest winter in state history.

**Q: What else can I do to save water at my home? Is there anything you can do to help me?**

A: Fortunately, there are many programs available to help during this difficult time. We encourage customers to schedule a FREE landscape irrigation audit, where a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor will visit your property, evaluate the efficiency of your irrigation system and check for leaks. Rebates are also available on many water conserving devices. For more information, visit [www.socalwatersmart.com](http://www.socalwatersmart.com).

**Q: How will this mandate affect me personally?**

A: Governor Brown's executive order sets out reduction targets of 12-35% on urban water users. The City of Oceanside has been given a water conservation target of 20% to be evaluated on a cumulative basis through February 2016. To achieve these savings, significant changes must be made, including eliminating water waste and reducing watering days. Staff throughout the City will receive frequent updates and are encouraged to keep coworkers, friends and family informed. Most affected will be outdoor irrigation, which uses about 60-70% of total residential water use.

**Q: How do I report water waste?**

A: There are 3 ways to report water waste. Call Customer Service at (760) 435-5800, our website at [www.SaveWaterOceanside.com](http://www.SaveWaterOceanside.com), or download our app "MyOceanside" on your cell phone or tablets app store.

**Q: Why doesn't the City curtail development?**

A: If the City placed a moratorium on new development tomorrow, the resulting water savings wouldn't come close to the savings we must achieve. Additionally, a moratorium is almost certain to hurt the local economy and create financial problems for the City. New homes are significantly more water-efficient than existing homes. Under our City building codes, toilets, showerheads and washing machines must meet high standards of water efficiency. By and large, these homes also have smaller yards and less landscaping. As older buildings are replaced with newer ones, our community's water efficiency improves.

**Q: Will California run out of water if conditions do not improve?**

A: Two decades of investments in water supply reliability for San Diego County - including independent Colorado River water transfers and the Carlsbad Desalination Project - will help current and future droughts, but the need for conservation will continue.

**Q: The Carlsbad Desalination Plant is now producing water. Will we be getting some of the desalinated water here in Oceanside?**

A: No. Water from the desalination project is blended with imported treated water supply at the San Diego County Water Authority's Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant north of San Marcos for distribution around the region. The City of Oceanside does not directly receive desalinated seawater; however, we still benefit from the use of desalination to meet the regional demands.

**Q: Will the desalination plant be turned off if we have a rainy year?**

A: No. Water from the plant is part of the region's core supply. Purchases from the plant will be based on seasonal demand fluctuations. If demand levels decrease during a wet year, the San Diego County Water Authority would purchase less supply from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, depending on the region's water reliability needs.

