



What has the City of Sacramento done to increase water conservation?

While the City of Sacramento recognizes the need to improve its water conservation efforts, the City is making progress. Following are some examples:

- Updated the City's Water Conservation Ordinance, which provides guidelines for outdoor water use.
- Increased efforts to educate residential customers about using water wisely and offering assistance, which boosted water waste calls 70 percent and requests for Water Wise House Calls 40 percent in two months.
- Aggressively pursued outside funding for water conservation programs, securing \$20 million in stimulus money to accelerate water meter installation.
- Approved a contract for state-of-the-art automated meter reading to help proactively assess any issues related to our water meters.
- Converted 55 parks to new, water-conserving central irrigation systems.
- Included two new artificial sports fields in City park plans, scheduled for installation in 2010. They are expected to save approximately 5 million gallons of water each year.

What additional efforts will the City undertake to improve water efficiency?

In addition to our current efforts, the City is working to accomplish the following:

- Increase water efficiency, decrease water consumption and comply with the Water Conservation Ordinance on City property, even with fewer employees and reduced funding. This task includes developing conservation action plans and best practices for departments that manage landscape irrigation on City property.
- Increase outreach to our largest water users to help them save water and money on their utility bills.
- Continue to review and monitor our process for collecting and managing metering data to ensure data is complete and correct.

How does the city gather, manage and report water data and notify customers of possible problems?

The City has several processes in place to gather, manage and report water meter data. Once an account is setup, meter reads are gathered electronically and loaded into the billing system automatically. Reports and measures are in place to identify high and low reads. In addition, the City periodically audits accounts to check for potential errors. If high or low reads are detected, a field inspector checks the meters to ensure they are functioning properly. If billing discrepancies are identified, the City researches the account and adjusts billing, as needed. It should also be noted that customers with a water meter can track their usage via their monthly bill.

What is the City doing to improve water conservation at the City Cemetery?

The City is currently evaluating how to water more efficiently and comply with the Water Conservation Ordinance on all City properties. The Cemetery, in particular, poses some special challenges, including having only one employee (due to budget cuts) to operate more than 300 manual sprinklers and 30 manual systems sprinklers on 28 acres. The City also must coordinate the efforts of more than 100 volunteers and contractors who help irrigate and maintain the cemetery.

Why does the Land Park golf course irrigate fairways in the afternoon?

To maintain adequate water pressure, currently half of Land Park is watered at night, and the golf course is watered during the day. However, the City is currently exploring how to increase water efficiency at Land Park, including adjusting the irrigation schedule.

Why do City parks sometimes irrigate during the afternoon or on Mondays?

Currently, the Department of Parks and Recreation is exempt from certain provisions of the Water Conservation Ordinance for the following reasons (note that these exemptions are used as-needed and only as a last resort):

- Since special events can occur in parks any day of the week, prescribing specific watering days (i.e. irrigating on only Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) is impractical since special events may need to take place at a particular park on its prescribed watering day. Even though parks are watered at night or early mornings, wet turf and ground conditions may impact scheduled events. Therefore, parks are watered only three days a week but those days and times are flexible to accommodate scheduled events.
- Unexpected weather conditions can greatly impact watering days and intensity. For example, if Sacramento experiences extremely hot temperatures (100 degrees or greater) for extended periods or extremely windy conditions, the Department of Parks and Recreation may need to irrigate landscapes more intensely or on additional days, including Mondays.

Other reasons City irrigation systems might run in the afternoon include:

- System failure—internal malfunction or clock reset to wrong time
- Repairs—staff might be checking the sprinkler system or making repairs
- Human error—the wrong time is inputted into the system
- Damage—accidental or willful damage to the sprinkler system, heads, pipes, etc.

Please call 311 to report suspect irrigation, and staff will respond as soon as possible.

What are the City's plans for replacing thirsty landscaping and outdated irrigation systems on City property?

The City is continuing to pursue outside funding for water conservation programs, including those to install drought-tolerant landscaping and inefficient irrigation systems.

What are the City's plans to help its largest users (including private companies and other public agencies) use water efficiently?

The City will be increasing outreach to our largest water users to review their water use and provide suggestions for saving water. Similar to our residential Water Wise House Call program, a trained water efficiency expert will visit these sites and check appliances and plumbing fixtures for leaks, test the irrigation system, discuss rebate opportunities and provide detailed water-saving recommendations.

What services and programs does the City offers to help customers use water wisely?

- Water Wise House Calls: A trained Water Conservation Specialist will visit a customer's home free of charge to identify potential water savings inside and out by checking irrigation systems and giving customers water wise items such as low-flow showerheads, hose nozzles and informational materials. This free service takes only about an hour.
- Rebates: to replace older toilets and clothes washers with high-efficiency models.
- Monthly workshops to help customers both comply with the ordinance and maintain a beautiful landscape.

Where can people learn more about the free services and programs offered by the City?

Please visit www.SpareSacWater.org or call 311.