



Dear Customers:

As we hope for more rain so that our rivers flow and our groundwater aquifers get replenished, I want to share with you another way to manage our water supply that doesn't leave so much to chance.

We often talk about using less water as the best strategy to ensure more water for the future. So what is the most effective action you can take to make that happen? Use less water outside.

Here in Ventura, we estimate that 40 to 60 percent of household water use is consumed on the great outdoors. As a society, we have long valued a lawn for the kids to play on or to remind us of the gardens from England and the East Coast where the United States found its birth. But, does a lawn that requires more water than another other plant really make sense in an area that typically receives less than 16 inches of rain annually? Here are some common sense steps that we hope will help you rethink your lawn.

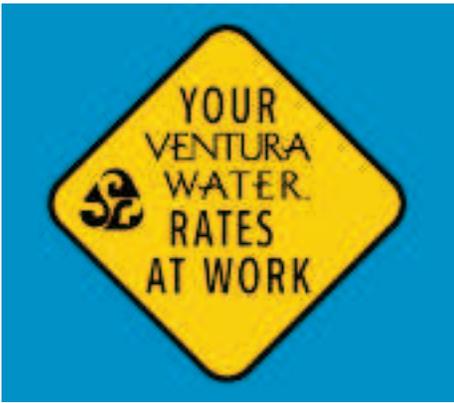
## Santa Clara River Estuary Special Studies Stakeholder Meeting

Ventura Water customers are encouraged to attend a stakeholder meeting to offer input into the Draft Phase 2 Report of the Santa Clara River Estuary special studies. The meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, Feb. 21, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** in the Community Meeting Room at Ventura City Hall.

These studies are providing analysis to guide reuse planning for water currently released by the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility into the Santa Clara River Estuary. The Estuary Protection charge reflected in customers' bills will financially support the reuse program's development. For more information, visit [cityofventura.net/water/screstudies](http://cityofventura.net/water/screstudies).

My Ventura Landscape Watering Guide	
	<b>March</b> Depending on wind, soil conditions and your yard's unique design, your watering times may vary from the guide. Begin with the recommended times, then decrease by one or two minutes every few days until the plants begin to show stress. Remember to adjust each month!
Grass with spray system	15 min. per week
Shrubs & perennials	11 min. per week
Drip irrigation system	22 min. per week

Continued on next page • ➤



## Wastewater Plant Dewatering Equipment

The Ventura Water Reclamation Facility near the Ventura Harbor currently uses a mechanical and chemical system for removing solids from the water during the treatment process. The mechanical system uses two plates (presses) to compress out the moisture in the wastewater sludge, so the sludge can be properly disposed by transporting it to the local landfill. The presses were installed in 1985 and are

labor intensive to operate and maintain due to their age. An engineering firm, CDM Smith, Inc., will evaluate replacement technologies and recommend the most cost-effective alternative. The total cost for replacing the dewatering equipment is currently estimated at \$15 million and when it is installed, the equipment is projected to last at least 25 years. Without efficient dewatering equipment, a much larger amount of heavier sludge would have to be trucked to a distant disposal site, ultimately driving long-term operational costs much higher than the projected expense of this replacement project.

## State Beach Lift Station Drywell Replacement

Ventura Water's 11 wastewater lift stations (pump stations) are critical to moving untreated wastewater from low-lying areas in the City to the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility. One station, located at State Beach Park property near San Pedro Street, receives wastewater flow from adjacent neighborhoods and from within the park. The existing lift station consists of a 6-foot diameter, 25-foot deep manhole and a buried concrete vault for the pump and electrical equipment. It has served its purpose for over 30 years, but the structure has aged and deteriorated. Located below the groundwater table, the station's buried walls experience constant water infiltration. This high level of humidity has shortened the life of the electrical equipment located in the vault and is a safety hazard for Ventura Water staff performing electrical maintenance inside the vault.

The State Beach Lift Station Drywell Replacement project will replace the existing dry well with submersible pumps and an above-ground electrical control system. All electrical controls will be linked by a radio signal to the Reclamation Facility's Operations Center for remote monitoring and control. The design for the project has been completed and bids from contractors will be received within the next two months. The total cost to replace the lift station is estimated at \$420,000. Construction work will not begin until after Labor Day and is scheduled for completion by the end of this year.



[www.saveourh2o.org](http://www.saveourh2o.org)



[www.home-water-works.org/calculator](http://www.home-water-works.org/calculator)



[www.venturawater.net](http://www.venturawater.net)

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**Step 1** – Monitor your irrigation-watering schedule. To remind you to adjust with the seasons, we have developed a “My Ventura Landscape Watering Guide” which we will publish monthly. Of course, there are lots of variables in deciding how much water you need. The most important thing is to know your plants and your irrigation system. In our experience, most landscapes are over-watered by as much as 50 percent.

**Step 2** – Convert your lawn into a climate-appropriate garden that retains rainwater for nourishment. Ventura Water has been a long-standing partner with Surfriders' Ocean Friendly Gardens program. Around town there are a growing number of gardens at homes and other public areas that are demonstrating how gardens can be an integral part of the watershed. In addition, we are working with local nurseries and irrigation providers to share the latest plant materials and technology to assist you in using less while still enjoying beautiful outdoor spaces. If you didn't get a chance last month to see how some of your neighbors have already made the leap to using less to protect our water resources for the future, visit Save Our Water's Real People, Real Savings.

Sincerely,

Shana Epstein, General Manager