

## New Water Rates Set For July 1

After a yearlong public process studying the fiscal stability of Ventura’s water and wastewater infrastructure and services, the City Council approved new rates for the next four years following a **public hearing on May 5**. Customers will begin to see the higher **rates** on bills after July 1. Using the same amount of water, the average residential customer is expected to pay about \$5 more per month the first year, and \$6-\$7 more per month the following years. Even with the increases, Ventura Water customers will pay less than a penny for a gallon of water.

The **rates** paid by customers for water and wastewater services fund operations, maintenance, debt payments and capital improvements for Ventura’s extensive and aging water and wastewater systems (including replacement of deteriorating pipelines and facilities.) The



The new rates will help keep our systems reliable as many of our 380 miles of water and 300 miles of wastewater mainlines will reach the end of their lifecycle over the next two decades. In fact, many of the water mains made of cast iron, which comprise 25 percent of our water distribution system, are already failing, resulting in main breaks and service disruptions.

For more information about the rates and other Ventura Water programs, please visit [www.venturawater.net](http://www.venturawater.net).

## Dry Times = Action

Ventura gets 100 percent of its water from local sources – the Ventura River, Lake Casitas and groundwater aquifers. It’s been a dry, warm start to the summer and preliminary water usage reports show that our customers are doing a great job at saving water as requested last February.

You may have noticed that brown lawns and more gardens, instead of turf, are showing up all over town as residents take big steps to use less water. If you want to join the lawn alternative trend, there are lots of **online resources** that offer guidance and great ideas.



### Dear Valued Customer,

As the water shortage continues to dominate the news, I would like to take this opportunity to explain about a little known agency that has an impact on our local water supplies - Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (**FCGMA**). What is this organization and why should you care about it? This organization acts as the water master to the Oxnard Plain Groundwater Basin, where the city extracts the highest quality groundwater serving Ventura Water’s customers. **FCGMA** was created by the state in 1982 to manage local groundwater resources in order to reduce over-draft of the Oxnard Plain Basin and stop seawater intrusion. In this role, FCGMA allocates to agribusiness landowners and cities how much water they may extract from the basins they oversee. In addition, FCGMA established a conservation credits program so that pumpers that used less water than their allocation could “bank” the unused water and accumulate “credits.” Over time, the city



**Register today** for our next FREE Water Wise class, "SoCal Bloomers," on Saturday, June 14 from 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at the City of Ventura Public Works Maintenance Yard, 336 Sanjon Rd. Discover colorful, climate-appropriate plants to incorporate beautifully into your water-wise landscape. Lisa Burton, **Nature by Design**, who is widely recognized as a leader in sustainable landscape design, will lead this informative class.



Preventing water waste by fixing leaks and using **water wisely** in all ways will stretch our water supplies. To remind residents that water is precious, watch for more outreach efforts this summer because the water we save today may be the water we use tomorrow.



## Rescheduled Public Hearing for Water Dedication and In-Lieu Fee

The public hearing for the Ventura City Council to consider adopting an ordinance to establish **Water Dedication and In-Lieu Fee** requirements for new or intensified development has been rescheduled to:

**Monday, June 16, 2014 at 6 p.m.**

**City Hall Council Chambers, 501 Poli St., Ventura**

Please check the **City Council meetings webpage** after 5 p.m. on June 11, 2014 for the agenda information related to this hearing. All interested customers are welcome to attend and share their views with the Council.

## Composting Helps Fight the Drought



Composting – the recycling of fully decomposed organic matter such as food scraps, fallen leaves and grass clippings – helps keeps your landscape’s soil healthy, vital and nutrient-rich when these organic materials are used as an amendment for your garden, potted plants and lawn.

Compost reduces the amount of waste going to the landfill and when added to soil, it improves the soil’s ability to retain moisture. This means less water is needed to keep your garden or lawn healthy.

Compost needs a balance of carbon-rich materials known as “browns” and nitrogen-rich materials called “greens.” Browns are dry, woody materials such as dry leaves, pruned bushes and newspaper. Greens include grass clippings, freshly cut weeds, flowers, food scraps, vegetable and fruit peels. Please visit [www.venturawater.org](http://www.venturawater.org) to learn how you can create a compost pile in your yard.

used less water within the Oxnard Plain Groundwater Basin and built conservation credits for use when other water resources, such as the Ventura River, were low.

Unfortunately, due to these extraordinary dry years and the lack of accounting for water inflow and outflow in the basins, the FCGMA approved an **emergency ordinance** in April that restricts extraction from the groundwater basin and suspends the use of conservation credits. Our allocation was also reduced by 6 percent.

This action is just another reason why Ventura will continue its **call for increased conservation** this summer and into the fall. Meanwhile, the city is actively working with other stakeholders of FCGMA to resolve the issues that led to the FCGMA approving this emergency ordinance. The goal is for the groundwater basins to be a resource when surface water resources are limited.

The agency takes policy direction from a **five-member board** whose members are appointed from other elected bodies. Lynn Maulhardt is the chairman of the FCGMA board and was appointed by the United Water Conservation District’s board. Ventura County Supervisor Steve Bennett is the board member representing the county. Ventura Councilmember Neal Andrews serves as an alternate for the one board member who represents cities. The two other members represent the agricultural community and small water districts. All of the **FCGMA board meetings** are open to the public and I encourage you to attend these meetings if you have an interest in water policy.

Sincerely,

Shana Epstein,  
Ventura Water General Manager

# Water: Take 1 Online Short Film Contest

Subscribe to [#WT1 NewsReel](#) and get a behind-the-scenes look at Ventura's global film contest all about water. The new issue features our award-winning local filmmakers from CAPS-TV, Professional Filmmaker and WT1 Juror Nicole Torre, and Carollo Engineers, sponsor of the Best Student Short Film Award.

Submit Your Film: Film submissions are now being accepted for the Third Annual Water: Take 1 Global Online Short Film Contest. Filmmakers - submit your short films (5 minutes or less) with water themes to [watertake1.com](http://watertake1.com).

New this year: [Water: Take 1](#) has extended the prize period deadline. The "Early Bird" deadline is Sept. 15, 2014. "Final deadline" is Nov. 1, 2014.

New Partners: Water: Take 1 partners with Ojai Film Festival's Focus Earth (more details to come).

Let's Party: Water: Take 1's new venue for the awards ceremony in March 2015 will be the Century Downtown 10 Movie Theatre located at 555 E. Main St. in downtown Ventura.



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

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