



PUBLIC NOTICE

City of Ventura Declares a STAGE 3 Water Shortage Emergency

Mandatory Water Conservation for all Ventura Water Customers

Trusted life source for generations

Ventura City Council Declares Water Shortage Emergency

Last week, the City Council declared a [Stage 3 Water Shortage Emergency](#) as our local water supplies continue to drop during the third year of California’s historic drought.

To achieve a 20 percent water-use reduction goal as mandated by the State Water Resources Control Board, Ventura Water customers are now required to [limit outdoor watering](#) through a sprinkler irrigation system to two days a week (Sunday through the following Saturday.) In addition, residents may not water between the hours of 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. as water evaporates more quickly during the warmer part of the day.

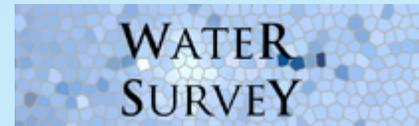
Other [prohibitions](#) remain in place:

- Sprinklers or irrigation water that sprays or runs onto sidewalks, driveways or streets
- Leaking irrigation systems or broken sprinklers that are not repaired within 48 hours of discovery
- Using a hose to wash a driveway, sidewalk or other paved surface
- Washing a car without a shutoff nozzle on the hose
- Serving water at a restaurant without being requested by the customer

“Our community has historically been very responsive during drought cycles and we are confident that Ventura residents will continue to work together successfully to save water during this emergency,” said Mayor Cheryl Heitmann.

The newest restrictions follow the recommendations of the city’s [Water Shortage Task Force](#), which has been conducting public meetings since August to

Continued on next page • ➤



Free Water Surveys Offered to Residential Customers

Ventura Water is helping residential customers find ways to save water by offering free on-site water surveys. The [Residential Water Survey program](#) is a free service to help single-family customers save water inside and outside the home. The survey, generally about one hour long and conducted by a Water Conservation Specialist, includes:

A review of your water bill

Instructions on how to read your water meter

An indoor survey of toilets, showers and faucets for leaks

An outdoor survey of grass type and identifying irrigation system leaks

Free water-saving devices like low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators

Water-saving advice based on your home results

Customers will receive a summary checklist at the end of the survey. To schedule a survey, contact Customer Care at (805) 667-6500 or myvtawater@city-ofventura.net.

consider conservation options and help Ventura meet state water-use reduction requirements. The **City Council** also confirmed the Task Force's preference to retain the current penalty structure for noncompliance of the water prohibitions as well as violations of the new outdoor watering limits. An educational notice and letter will be presented to customers for the first offense, to ensure understanding of the requirements and prohibitions. A violation letter will be issued for the second offense with a \$25 fine on the water bill for the third offense. The fourth offense will result in a \$50 fine for most customers. In all cases, fines are capped at \$500.

For more information, visit www.cityofventura.net/water/shortage.

One-Stop Gardening at VenturaCountyGardening.com



www.venturacountygardening.com

California's drought is a growing crisis that has us all rethinking how we use water. Since 40-60 percent of water is used outdoors, replacing your grass with a beautiful, native garden makes good sense. But, where do we begin?

Have no fear, venturacountygardening.com is here!

This easy-to-navigate, interactive website is specifically designed to assist Ventura County residents with helpful information about

what to plant, when and where to plant, and how to best irrigate, care and maintain landscaped areas. The site offers beautiful garden tours and impressive landscape galleries to help users plan and select from a variety of trees, shrubs, plants, and ground cover which they can then "Add" to their own personal ("My List") online garden list. For more navigation tips, [Read More Here](#).

Water Shortage Task Force Discusses Conservation, Water Allocations and Water Emergency Stages

Public Outreach Efforts Shared



The **Water Shortage Task Force** is helping Ventura Water explore new ideas and future policies regarding additional conservation measures for customers, the possibility of issuing water allocations, and the defined stages of a water shortage emergency.

At its **Sept. 23 meeting**, Task Force members broke into three small groups to brainstorm ideas

for Ventura Water officials to consider. The groups then shared their ideas with the full Task Force, Ventura Water staff and the public. No action was taken at the meeting.



Dear Valued Customer,

On Saturday, October 25, the City is co-sponsoring a special **"Summit on Water Conservation"** with State Assemblymember Das Williams and the Ventura Chamber of Commerce. The summit, to be held at Ventura City Hall, will kick off at 10 a.m. with a call to our community to discover, "What's your 20?" While it might sound like a diet to lose 20 pounds, the focus of this day is to learn how your household or business may lose (or reduce) 20 percent of your typical water use as we work together to save our water in the face of the growing drought.

The free event will offer something for everyone from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: an opening session with a panel of water practitioners and officials discussing the "big picture" of our water situation, and mini-sessions with practical information such as "Turf Alternatives" and "Controlling Your Controller" from noon to 2 p.m. And, don't forget to swing by the exhibitor area for valuable resources and a chance to ask the experts your burning water-related questions.

How can you find your 20 percent of water savings at your home or business? As you know, the City **declared a water shortage emergency** last week and is requiring all customers to reduce outdoor watering to two days a week and to not water between the hours of 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Most landscapes

Continued on next page • ➤

Continued on next page • ➤

“We want to keep this as user-friendly as possible and enlist the public’s voluntary compliance so we don’t have to go to the next stage,” said Task Force member Don Mills. Task Force member Ed McCombs added that many residents remain “in denial” about the severity of the drought and water shortage, so water allocations may be necessary in the future.

Allocating water to customers – and the best, most fair way to do this - is an option. Task Force members discussed two options for developing an allocation system: using a tiered system of water usage or a baseline method, whereby customers’ water history would be considered and then reduced to meet water reduction goals. Task Force members suggested the system has to be universal, equitable and humane; include few exemptions; emphasize conservation, and not punish customers already conserving.

As for additional conservation measures that could be taken, Task Force members suggested increased targeting of commercial/industrial users and larger users; reaching out more to landscapers and gardeners; using more reclaimed water; locking outside water spigots; painting lawns green and promoting shorter showers.

Task Force members also discussed how the triggers for Ventura Water’s five stages of a water emergency might be re-vamped, by possibly making the triggers more specific and aligning them with water demand, among other ideas.

At its previous meeting on Sept. 9, the Task Force learned how Ventura Water is reaching out to educate residents about the drought and share conservation measures to help people meet Ventura’s new 20 percent reduction mandate.

Ventura Water makes community presentations, distributes educational brochures, gives leak kits to residents, shares water-education videos on YouTube, and continues to promote the “Dirty Car” challenge and “Extreme Water Saver Challenge” to raise awareness, promote conservation and inspire others, said Nancy Broschart, management analyst for Ventura Water.

Ventura Water uses all means of communication, including its website, www.venturawater.net, print media, radio and newspaper advertising, social media (Facebook, Twitter and blogs) and its “Pipeline” monthly e-newsletter, she said.

The next **Water Shortage Task Force** meetings are scheduled for Oct. 8 and 22 at 6 p.m. at the City Sanjon Maintenance Yard, 336 Sanjon Road. The public is encouraged to attend and offer their input to the Task Force.



New Customer Assistance Program

As part of its review of Ventura Water’s four-year budgets and customer rate plan, the **2013-14 Ventura Water Rate Advisory Committee** recognized that rate increases may be a financial burden for low- and fixed-income customers. On April 28, 2014, the **City Council approved** a new customer assistance program which will begin offering a 50 percent discount on the water service charge for customers meeting CARE (California Alternate Rates for Energy) requirements starting January 2015. Ventura Water will begin accepting applications for the new program on a first-come, first-served basis beginning on October 15, 2014 for approximately 600 single-family households. Visit

Continued on next page • ➤

do fine with only two days of water, and watering during the cooler part of the day is more efficient. The good news is decreasing to two days a week for outdoor watering will help you meet the 20 percent reduction in a jiffy. If you’ve already swapped your turf for a native or ocean-friendly garden, then you are already experiencing significant water savings and we say “thank you” for taking this huge step toward sustainability.

The other area that can result in big water savings, if everyone is diligent, is **stop wasteful leaks both indoors and outdoors**.

Toilets, which typically use 25 percent of indoor water, are the most common offenders. Statistically speaking, 20 percent of all toilets are leaking at any one time. Those silent and not-so-silent leaks can quickly waste hundreds of gallons, and often it’s because a \$3 flapper needs replacing. Our famous “Leak Detection Kits” will be available for the asking at the summit and they include instructions and dye tabs to help you test your toilet. (Can’t wait until then? Put some food coloring drops into your toilet tank. Wait 10 or 15 minutes without flushing, and if color seeps through to the toilet bowl then you have a leak.)

These and many other ideas and resources will be available at the summit to help you find your 20. The event is free and open to the public, but we ask that you register at the **Chamber of Commerce website** so we’ll know how many people plan to attend. Thanks for your support and we’ll see you there!

Sincerely,



Shana Epstein,
Ventura Water General Manager

cityofventura.net/water/cap for eligibility requirements and application information or contact Customer Care at myvtawater@cityofventura.net or (805) 667-6500. (Para informacion en espanol llame (805) 667-6500 o visite cityofventura.net/water/cap.)

Register Now For Water Wise Classes



Sign-up now for FREE Saturday morning Water Wise classes. Help Ventura become the most water-efficient community in California by learning more about these drought-busting topics:

- **October 18, 2014 ~ Composting and Urban Soils ~**

Cornucopia Gardens (Telephone Road & Ramelli Avenue)

Create healthy backyard mulch, compost and worm castings from your food and yard waste to conserve water, reduce pesticides and revive urban soil.

- **November 15, 2014 ~ Turf Replacement with Water Wise Plants ~ City Sanjon Maintenance Yard**
Remove turf naturally, replace it with native or climate-appropriate plants, convert pop-up spray irrigation to drip irrigation, and re-wild your garden habitats to bring back birds, bees and butterflies.

For more information, visit cityofventura.net/water/landscape or call (805) 652-4501.



Ventura Water



Ventura Water CA



Ventura Water Website



YouTube Channel



Water: Take 1 Website

[Read Our Blog](#)



PO Box 2299
Ventura, CA 93002-2299
805-667-6500

www.venturawater.net

Copyright © 2014 Ventura Water, All rights reserved.

www.saveourh2o.org



www.epa.gov/watersense/



www.home-water-works.org/calculator



www.saveourh2o.org/sprinklers101

