

Manager's Column

Adobe Press; Inside the NCSD

February 28, 2014 Issue

Drought Do's and Don'ts

The mission of the Nipomo Community Services District is to provide its customers with reliable, quality, and cost-effective services now and in the future.

With just enough rain to knock down the dust, our State and Region remain in serious drought conditions. As February comes to a close, it seems inevitable that this rain year will be as dry as last and may be the driest in 120 years.

Rain recharges local groundwater, and local groundwater provides 100% of the Nipomo area's water supply. The pumping demand for local groundwater has increased steadily over the past thirty years. The increase is mostly attributable to growth in the area's residential (including schools, parks, and golf) agricultural and commercial water users.

The increase in water demand over time, coupled with low rain fall in recent years, has resulted in the area's groundwater dropping to the lowest level in our 30-year record.

What YOU can do:

- Re-think your landscaping choices, consider converting your lawn to native shrub garden.
- If you have drought-tolerant landscape already, don't water it from September – May and water once a month June – August.
- Redouble your efforts on stopping water waste in the home; shorter showers, fix that leaky faucet/toilet, capture 'warming' water to use on plants.
- Learn how to use the water meter on your supply line to track water use.
- Talk it up with your neighbors and friends, share ideas on how to save water.

Some things to avoid:

- "Wasting" water

I quoted wasting above because the term means different things to different people. The District has a list of what is considered wasting water (see front page of our Winter 2014 newsletter or District website for the list) and I am sure most of our customers agree with the list and likely follow them already. I am also sure that some of our customers do not.

The District is currently in Drought Stage II (of five stages). This means conservation is strongly encouraged. The encouragement is done mainly through rate structure. If you are an NCSD customer, the amount you pay for water increases as your use increases. If the drought worsens, the District's elected Board will consider 'drought premiums' that would make it substantially more expensive to use water in the highest volume categories.

Remember, saving water is its own reward – because saving water, saves money!

Until next time...

Michael S. LeBrun, General Manager, info@ncsd.ca.gov