

Manager's Column

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When It Comes to Water Conservation – We Can ALL Do Better

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.

My name is Michael LeBrun, and I am (was) a water waster!

You would think a person who has dedicated his professional career to water resources management would know all the 'tricks' of water conservation frontwards and backwards. However, I recently discovered I was watering my lawn excessively.

I have the high efficiency rotor heads on my sprinklers. I carefully adjust the spray. I water at dawn and was watering the lawn just twice a week for twenty minutes. I *thought* I was using the minimum amount needed – then I tried an experiment.

The weeds in my Bermuda lawn were winning out and I wanted to see if I could kill off the weeds by drying them out while keeping my lawn alive enough to recover. I shut my sprinkler clock off in mid-April. It was hot and dry. I left it off for a week – I saw no change. Another week went by – two weeks with zero applied water. A few dry patches showed, the weeds were definitely stressed. I mowed my lawn (again – Bermuda lawn) very low and kept the water off. After three weeks with no water, the lawn was still mostly green.

I realized I had been overwatering this very drought tolerant lawn. I readjusted my sprinklers to water just once a week for twenty minutes. It has been over a month now and my lawn has never looked better. An added bonus; it is growing slower and needs less frequent mowing!

Most homeowners have long-blade lawns or 'fescue'. The water needs of lawn depend on the type, health, and age of the lawn and soils at your home – among other things. To really find out how much water your lawn *needs*, consider experimenting. Cut the water back – less time and fewer times per week – and watch your lawn. If you step on the lawn and it does not spring back up – or if it has excessive yellow/brown dry spots, give a bit more water.

When it comes to water conservation – we can all do better.

DROUGHT UPDATE: We remain in a Stage II drought condition and all Nipomo residents and businesses are encouraged to reduce water use by at least 20%. Last month, the District pumped nearly 77 Million gallons of groundwater to meet customer demand. This is a 10% improvement (reduction) compared to the five year average for May. With a long, hot summer ahead – please do your best to cut back on that landscape irrigation. And never forget – saving water is its own reward because saving water, saves money.

The District's website provides helpful tips on how to reduce use both inside and outside. Visit us at www.ncsd.ca.gov.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback, we want to hear from you. Feel free to contact us at info@ncsd.ca.gov. If you have questions on water quality, please call us at 929-1133.

Until next time...

Michael S. LeBrun, General Manager