



July 2010

Keep Conserving Water This Summer

Just because summer temperatures are rising doesn't mean that water use at home has to skyrocket. Conserving water during the hot summer months is more important than ever.

Years of record-low rainfall and pumping restrictions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta have reduced Southern California's water supply. In fact, our reserves are about 50% of what they should be. And, while the snowy and wet winter was a welcome break from three dry years, it did not solve the state's ongoing water supply problem.

After many water agencies, including Metropolitan, called for mandatory conservation last year in response to the water supply problem, Southern Californians responded by taking their water-saving habits to a whole new level. Many cities including Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Ana, Pasadena, Beverly Hills and Long Beach, among others, reported double-digit water savings last year as residents cut back on their water use. This included watering their yards and using a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks. By doing these things and more, residents and businesses saved enough water to stretch our remaining supplies as much as possible for future dry years and in case of an emergency such as a catastrophic earthquake.

So as summer heats up, look for ways to squeeze more water savings out of your daily routine. Check your sprinkler system for leaks, over-spray and broken sprinkler heads and save 500 gallons a month. Mulch your garden with a layer of bark, gravel, compost, sawdust or low-growing groundcover and save hundreds of gallons a year. Save water and money by replacing your old clothes washer with a high-efficiency model and you could be eligible for \$135 or more in rebates. Check with your local water agency about watering restrictions in your city or community. You'll find more ways to save water and more information about California's water supply problems at bewaterwise.com.

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