

Water Features

Goleta Water District News – Summer 2015



After four dry years we are in a

Stage III Water Shortage Emergency

Thank you for being a water saver!

Another Summer of Drought

The Stage III Declaration Calls for New Mandatory Restrictions and 35% District-Wide Reduction

After four years of severe drought and an historic lack of rainfall, water conservation is critical to ensure adequate supplies for drinking, health and public safety. The District is targeting a 35% district-wide reduction in water usage.

Plus: *Working With Your Gardener to be Water Wise.*



[Cover Photo: Drought Tolerant Landscape at the District Edible Demonstration Garden]



Drought Status Update

The Goleta Valley is suffering from the worst drought in our recorded history—even worse than the devastating droughts so many of us remember from the late 1970s and early 1990s.

Beginning this fall, our community can no longer depend on Lake Cachuma as a reliable source of supply, as the District has been informed by the federal government that we will receive zero percent of next year's entitlement for the first time in the lake's history. For the first time in twenty years the

Goleta Groundwater Basin will serve as the primary source of water for customers. Even with the ability to rely on the Basin, conservation is critical to ensure there is enough water for public health and safety.

Due to our diminishing water supplies, the District recently declared a Stage III Water Shortage Emergency with increased mandatory water use restrictions, including new watering time restrictions. Irrigation with sprinklers and installed systems is now limited to before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays for residential customers, Tuesdays and Fridays for businesses. Manual irrigation, including with a hose attached to a sprinkler, is restricted to before 8 a.m. or after 8 p.m., any two days. Public parks, athletic fields, and golf courses may water no more than two days per week, before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. A full list of restrictions is available at www.GoletaWater.com.

We can't predict the weather, but we do know that without rain and significant conservation severe water use restrictions will be required to maintain adequate supplies for our public health and safety needs. Every drop of water we can save this summer delays additional restrictions that would ban the use of outdoor sprinklers and the watering of lawns altogether. Please consider sharply reducing or eliminating your outdoor irrigation now to delay or even avoid stricter measures. Inside you'll find an article featuring the removal of two of the District's small lawns, with tips for doing it yourself.

The Goleta Valley community depends on each of us doing our part. Thank you for your conservation efforts to date which have contributed to putting us in a better position than if we had not conserved. We appreciate your help as additional future savings must be realized to preserve adequate supplies for public health and safety needs. Let's all save water together.

John McInnes

General Manager

Stage III Water Shortage Emergency Restrictions Reminder

NEW Stage III water use restrictions include:

- ◆ Outdoor landscape irrigation **remains** limited to no more than two times per week during early morning or late evening hours, and no irrigation is allowed for 48 hours after it rains:
 - Manual watering (including with a sprinkler attached to a hose) is **now** only allowed before 8 a.m. or after 8 p.m., any two days per week.
 - Use of fixed (i.e. installed) sprinkler systems must comply with the following updated schedule:
 - Residential properties may water Wednesdays and Saturdays, before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m.
 - Commercial and institutional properties may water Tuesdays and Fridays, before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m.
 - Public parks, athletic fields, and golf courses may **now** water no more than two days per week, before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m.
- ◆ Hotels, motels, and other lodging are **now** required to post water shortage notices, and refrain from daily linen washing unless specifically requested by the patron.
- ◆ Agricultural customers using overhead spray irrigation outdoors are **now** restricted to before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.

For a complete list of restrictions, information on conservation, tips, and rebates visit www.GoletaWater.com.

Van Horne Hydroelectric Generator Completed

This fall, a progress report on the District's **Sustainability Plan** will be available with updates on a number of projects completed over the past two years. Many of these projects provide not only environmental and social benefits, but cost savings as well. For example, the recently completed Van Horne Hydroelectric Generator produces sustainable energy and provides revenue to the District from the sale of electricity generated.



Q&A

Recent Customer Questions & Answers

Q: What is the drought surcharge? How can I keep my bill from going up?

A: The drought surcharge is a temporary charge to ensure the District continues to have sufficient operating capital to cover the decreased revenues and increased costs associated with the drought and to encourage increased customer conservation. The easiest way to reduce the impact of the temporary drought surcharge is to use less water. For example, the average use by Single Family Residential (SFR) customers is 14 HCF per month, which results in a current bill of \$113.02. Customers who conserve approximately 21% to reduce water use to 11 HCF per month will have a monthly bill of \$112.77 inclusive of the proposed Stage 3 drought surcharge. By making a few changes in outdoor water use, the average District customer can maintain approximately the same monthly bill, while those who do not conserve will pay more.

Q: What does the targeted 35% reduction under Stage III mean? How much water do I need to save?

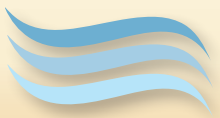
A: The District is targeting a collective district-wide water savings of 35%. There is no set amount by which individual customers must reduce their use. The daily usage of Goleta Water District customers is among the lowest in the state, so some customers who only use water for indoor use may not be able to reduce much more. The easiest place to save water is outdoors as watering your yard typically accounts for up to 50% of water use. By reducing or eliminating outdoor watering you can save thousands of gallons of water a month. By comparison, switching from a 20 minute to a 5 minute shower will save an estimated 37 gallons per shower.

Q: How is the drought affecting our agricultural community?

A: Hot, windy weather and reduced rainfall early in the year have resulted in increased water usage by agricultural customers. Given the varying business models and practices of area farmers, the District has attempted to minimize economic harm to the community by limiting mandatory water use restrictions on agricultural customers. Instead, the District is relying on a temporary drought surcharge for all customers to cover the increased costs associated with the drought and encourage conservation. The temporary drought surcharge gives customers, including agricultural users, a financial incentive to reduce water use. While some customers may decide to pay the increased costs, the District anticipates that many users will reduce usage.

Q: I heard the federal government may take additional water away from Lake Cachuma for fish releases. How will that affect available water?

A: The United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) is currently in consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service on modified critical drought operations that may affect local water supplies for drinking, health and public safety. If USBR decides to account for water released for fish out of Cachuma members' Project water, it could reduce Cachuma supplies by approximately 500 AF. The loss of that water to the USBR would make a Stage IV declaration imminent, and put a Stage V declaration on the horizon. A Stage IV declaration would ban the use of sprinklers for ornamental landscaping, while a Stage V would prohibit all outdoor irrigation, including for agriculture. The decision to take away Project water for fish and further diminish the remaining supply is in the hands of the federal government.



Another Summer of Drought

Four years of below average rainfall have led to the worst drought in the recorded history of California and the Goleta Valley.

The drought has devastated Lake Cachuma, which is now below 26% capacity. Beginning this fall, the District has been told by the United States Bureau of Reclamation to expect to receive no new entitlement water from the Lake. Instead the District will carefully conserve stored water left in the lake from prior years. The community will rely increasingly on the Goleta Groundwater Basin to make up the difference. Even with the ability to shift supplies, water conservation is critical. That's why the District implemented a temporary drought surcharge and declared a Stage III drought on May 12, 2015, setting a targeted reduction of 35% district-wide, and further restricting outdoor irrigation.

Saving water now protects the local community, economy and environment against the drought. Without rain and significant conservation more severe water use restrictions will be needed. Every drop of water we can save this summer delays Stage IV which would ban outdoor sprinklers and watering of lawns.

Delaying Drought Impacts

Thus far the District has been able to delay more severe restrictions, but the lack of rainfall last winter means significant drought impacts on residential, commercial, and agricultural customers are coming. Without significant savings the remaining water being stored in Lake Cachuma from last year can run out as early as October, meaning that Goleta West Conduit agricultural customers will no longer have access to water for agricultural irrigation. While water will continue to be served to them for residential use, this represents a significant impact to the Goleta West Conduit portion of our community. A ban on the irrigation of lawns and outdoor irrigation with sprinklers will similarly affect all customers throughout the District.

What You Can Do

Decide which plants are the most important and dedicate limited water to them first. Consider eliminating or sharply reducing your outdoor irrigation now. By reducing your lawn, or mulching over it, you can dramatically decrease the water used for outdoor landscaping while saving money at the same time. When determining what to water this summer, realize future restrictions will prioritize water for trees and plants, while banning the irrigation of turf. Consider whether investing money and water in lawns now makes sense if future restrictions will prohibit their irrigation.

Rebates are available under the **Smart Landscape Rebate Program** for home owners, condos, apartment buildings, and businesses that want to replace current landscaping with a waterwise alternative. The simplest way to save money and water is to stop watering or mulch over landscaping in areas like parking areas and along street fronts.

Agricultural customers should contact the District about rebates that are now available for temporarily taking permanent crops out of production. Additionally, the District continues to offer the **Water Saving Incentives Program (WSIP)** through which Commercial customers can receive rebates for proposed water efficiency programs and retrofits appropriate to their business.

Contact the District for more information on water saving rebate programs for all customers at www.GoletaWater.com, or by calling (805) 964-6761.

Goleta Valley
faces significant
DROUGHT IMPACTS.

Conservation is Critical NOW

Potential Future Drought Impacts

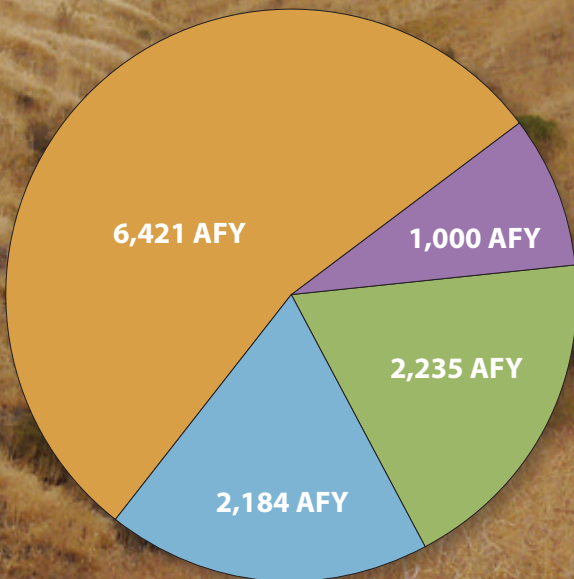
- Ban on outdoor irrigation with sprinklers.
- Prohibition on the watering of lawns.
- Prioritization of water for domestic use for public health and safety.

Without significant conservation, the District will not have any available water remaining from Lake Cachuma.

Projected Water Year (WY) 2015-16 Supply Portfolio

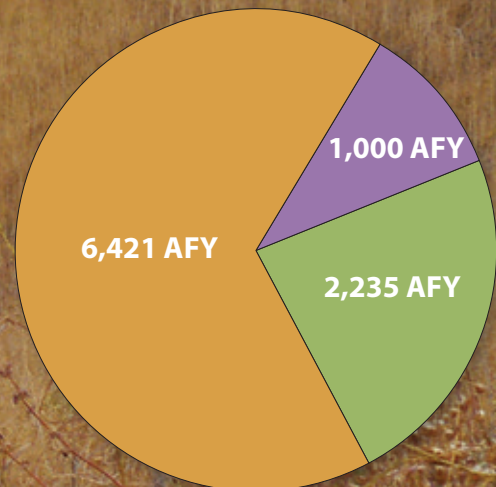
Projected WY 2015-16 Water Supplies *with* Water Savings

Total Supply = 11,840 AFY



Projected WY 2015-16 Water Supplies *without* Water Savings

Total Supply = 9,656 AFY



Legend: Lake Cachuma* (light blue), Groundwater (orange), Recycled Water (purple), State Water (green)

AFY denotes Acre-Feet per Year – An Acre Foot = 325,853 gallons of water.

**Carryover water saved from WY 2014-15.*

Typical customer demand in a normal year is 13,900 AF. Given the supplies noted above, along with customer conservation efforts, the District can meet the projected demand for the next 12 months.

Save Water by Reducing or Eliminating Your Lawn

As the drought worsens, many customers have significantly reduced outdoor water use. One of the easiest ways to do this is by removing or reducing the size of your lawn. On average as much as half of residential water use is outdoor irrigation, so removing turf is one of the best options to significantly reduce water use. While the District does not currently prohibit lawns, more severe restrictions banning the use of outdoor sprinklers and the watering of lawns may become necessary as early as fall.

This month, the District proactively removed two of the lawns at its offices by mulching over them. The process was documented by staff and instructions are available for customers interested in taking out their own lawn. The District used two mulching techniques: including a traditional direct mulching, and a layered technique (often called the "lasagna" approach).

The District recommends delaying planting even water-wise plants until the fall: establishing new plants is water intensive and more difficult over the long, dry summer months. Note that turf removal is an eligible activity that can qualify customers for a rebate under the District's Smart Landscape Incentive Program. Join the over three hundred District customers who have removed water thirsty lawns and landscaping over the past year.

To learn more about the reducing or eliminating your lawn, visit www.GoletaWater.com/conservation.



Cross-section of layered mulching technique used in the District Demonstration Garden.



Layered mulch technique applied to replace the lawn.

Announcing Cash for Crops – New Rebate Program for Agricultural Customers



The Goleta Water District Cash for Crops Program is an incentive-based program modeled after popular "Cash for Grass" programs, but targeted specifically to agricultural customers. The program helps agricultural customers reduce water use by temporarily taking permanent crops out of production where deemed appropriate by the customer. Stumping (which lets trees temporarily go dormant) or complete removal of avocado trees, orchard crops, or vegetation is typically performed.

The Cash for Crops program provides immediate, temporary water savings at a time of extreme drought to ensure adequate water remains available for drinking, health, and public safety.

To learn more about the Cash for Crops Program, or other rebate programs for District customers, visit www.GoletaWater.com/conservation.



Working with Your Gardener to be Water Wise

Outdoor watering accounts for a significant percentage of residential water use. Help us save water by telling your gardener about Stage III requirements.

Make sure your gardener is aware a Stage III Water Shortage Emergency is in effect, with mandatory outdoor watering restrictions, including fines. The District has a handy downloadable checklist in English and Spanish with the mandatory restrictions already marked. Give it to your gardener and share these tips:

- ◆ Fixed irrigation (i.e. installed) sprinkler systems are limited to before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m., Wednesdays and Saturdays for residential customers, Tuesdays and Fridays for commercial customers.
- ◆ Manual watering is restricted to before 8 a.m. and after 8 p.m., any two days per week.
- ◆ Direct washing of pavement, open ground, and hard surfaces is generally prohibited. Make sure no water runs onto the pavement or sidewalk.
- ◆ If you use a fixed irrigation system or automatic timers, routinely check for leaks and re-program the system to comply with new watering times.
- ◆ Add a 3-inch layer of mulch or wood chips in gardens. Mulch is available for free from the County of Santa Barbara at 4430 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, CA.

To learn more about the working with your gardener to be water wise, visit www.GoletaWater.com/conservation.

Summer Outdoor Water Saving Tips

- Decide which plants are the most important and dedicate limited water to them first.
- Consider cutting your irrigation in half or even eliminating outdoor irrigation by mulching over lawns or letting them go brown.
- Check for and fix leaks in your irrigation system. Visit www.WaterWiseSB.org for video tutorials.
- Consider replacing older, less water efficient equipment. District rebate programs are available to help fund these replacements.
- Install a Laundry to Landscape graywater system to reuse water for sustainable landscape irrigation.
- Use a bucket to catch water in your shower while the water warms up for use on your plants.
- Direct your gardener to implement water wise landscaping practices.
- Mulch plants to reduce evaporation.

For more water saving tips and information visit www.WaterWiseSB.org and follow the **Goleta Water District** on **Twitter** and **Facebook**!

facebook.com/GoletaWaterDistrict twitter.com/GoletaWater



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Help Save Water by Reporting Leaks and Water Waste



Do you see water on paved areas in your neighborhood?

Help save water by reporting possible leaks, runoff, or overspray of sprinklers. Call (805) 964-6761 and press 2 to leave a message, or email info@goletawater.com for District staff. All reports will be investigated. Please include the address and location of the leak or runoff.

For more information on leaks and runoff visit
www.GoletaWater.com/conservation/report-a-leak.

You Have Enough to Keep Track of – Sign up for Convenient E-Billing!

Have you taken advantage of the District's e-billing program? Sign up to take advantage of flexible and convenient payment options including online billing, the ability to make credit card payments, improved access to account information, water use history, and other online tools. Payments are safe and secure, and can even be automatic.



To learn more about our e-billing system, visit www.GoletaWater.com/pay-your-bill-online/billing-information.

Contact us:

Call us:
(805) 964-6761
Press 1 for drought information

Visit our office:
4699 Hollister Avenue
8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri.

Send us an email:
eNews@GoletaWater.com

Visit our website:
www.GoletaWater.com

The District Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at the District office. The public is always welcome.