

Water Watch

www.amwc.us

Atascadero Mutual Water Company

June 2008

High Peak Demand Stresses Our Water Resources

Just like electricity, water demand peaks in the hot summer months, stressing the water supply and delivery systems to their limits. However, unlike electricity, a rolling blackout of the water system is not a viable option on those days when demand exceeds supply.

In July 2007, the peak daily water demand was nearly 11 million gallons, compared to January's peak daily demand of 3 million gallons. Unfortunately, when water demand is at its highest, water levels are typically low, causing well pumps to work harder to pull water out of the ground, resulting in higher energy usage and more frequent maintenance, replacement, and potential system outages.

How you can help make a change!

While the prospect of the community reducing water demand enough to eliminate shortages may seem daunting, if each of us takes small steps, we can all reap large rewards. Remember, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

What steps can you take? Closer monitoring of your irrigation system to make sure water is not running off onto paved areas. Closer monitoring of soil moisture to make sure you're not overwatering. Not watering in the heat of the day or when the wind is blowing. Replacing some or all of your thirsty lawn with native and Mediterranean plants more suited to the North County. Certainly the challenge to reducing peak summer water use should not be underestimated, but through individual effort, we can make a difference.

Free Home Water Survey

You are invited to participate in our highly successful **Home Water Survey Program**. The program is free and is designed to help our customers conserve water and manage their landscape irrigation more efficiently.

During your **Home Water Survey**, AMWC's water conservation staff will:

- ◆ Inspect each irrigation station
- ◆ Create a site-specific irrigation schedule
- ◆ Provide you with a checklist of improvements for your irrigation system

- ◆ Check toilets for leaks
- ◆ Show you how to read your water meter
- ◆ Provide other water conservation tips

Each appointment is tailored to meet your needs; a typical appointment takes between 60 and 90 minutes. We encourage you to take advantage of this free program by calling 461-7217, ext.17, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sustainable Landscape Workshop Series

Once again, the Atascadero Mutual Water Company and the North County Partners in Water Conservation will offer a free summer workshop series designed to maximize outdoor water efficiency and prevent high summer water bills.

Seating is limited. Visit www.amwc.us for additional information and to register or call 461-7217 x17.

Home Sprinkler Systems & Landscape Irrigation

Over 50% of the water used in the North County is used for landscape irrigation, which places significant stress on our limited water resources. This workshop focuses on the design and maintenance principles of overhead sprinklers and irrigation controller programming, and provides you with the information you need to more efficiently operate your landscape irrigation system.

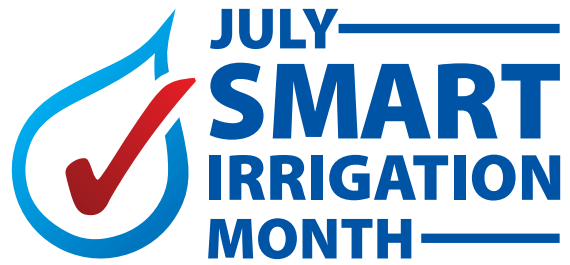
*July 12th, 9:30-11:30 am
Paso Robles Library, Paso Robles*

Plant Selection for North County Landscapes

See and learn about 75 plants that once established will survive without water. Choosing the right plants will help reduce ongoing maintenance and the use of water, fertilizers, and pesticides and help make your landscape a place you can continually enjoy.

*August 12th, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
AMWC Office, 5005 El Camino Real*

*August 16th, 9:30 - 11:00 am
Paso Robles Library, Paso Robles*



Landscape Tune-Up Tips

Did you know that the average household uses 350% more water in the summer time compared to the wintertime? Follow these tips for a more efficient irrigation system to help conserve our natural resources and cut your bills at home:

- ❑ Regularly inspect irrigation equipment in operation and repair leaks quickly.
- ❑ When brown spots occur in your lawn, check first for coverage problems before turning up the irrigation run time.
- ❑ Trim plants that prevent spray from getting to its intended targets.
- ❑ Look for geysers from broken sprinkler heads and reposition out-of-adjustment sprinklers that water pavement instead of plants.
- ❑ **Mulch, mulch, mulch!** Mulch provides protection from erosive elements and it helps to hold moisture in your soil; it can also reduce the amount of weeds you have growing in your garden.

Applying the right amount of water to your garden improves plant health and appearance and reduces the need to apply fertilizers and pesticides. Plants are more likely to succumb to disease from too much water rather than too little. When we water too much, runoff into gutters and storm drains can carry fertilizers, oils, and other chemicals into groundwater,

Tip!



Look for plants blocking your sprinklers.

