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WaterLines

October 2011

www.MNWD.com

Change in Seasons Means Change in Water Use Reduce watering to remain within your fall-time water budgets.

Fall is now officially in full swing, and that means it's time to adjust the way we use water. Most plants go dormant in fall and winter and require far less water than in spring and summer when they are active. So even as warm weather continues, now is the time to save water and money by reducing your irrigation.



Plants require up to 70 percent less water in the fall even though temperatures often remain warm.

The months of October, November and December are when Southern Californians typically waste the most water. That is because plants require roughly 70 percent less water during this period, but many mistake the seemingly summertime weather as a call to continue their summertime watering schedules. Overwatering is common in fall not just because of the warm weather, but also because many plants will look wilted or brown as they enter their dormancy. But beware, dormant plants should not be overwatered.

Simple steps to use less water this fall

Adjusting your water use with the seasons is a great way to ensure you stay within the personalized water budget for your property. Before watering your lawn or plants this fall, dig a hole two to three inches deep and check for moisture. If the soil is damp, turn off your sprinklers or put away your hose. Continue to check every few days until you find dry soil. Frequently checking the soil will help you reset your sprinkler schedule. As the rains start, the frequency should be changed again as Mother Nature will be doing the bulk of the watering for you. You can also replace your standard sprinkler timer with a smart timer that automatically adjusts your watering schedule with changing weather conditions.

MNWD is here to help, so call us at (949) 831-2500 or visit www.MNWD.com for more ways to become water-efficient.

Water Efficiency Update

Last month

77%

of MNWD customers remained within their water budgets.

Are you using more than you need?

Calculate Your Water Budget

Visit www.MNWD.com or call (949) 831-2500 to learn more about Water-Budget-Based Rates and to calculate the personalized water budget for your home.

MNWD Fleet Services Crew Kept Water Flowing During Power Outage



The two members of MNWD's Fleet Services Department may not be as familiar to our customers as the 100 District vehicles they regularly maintain, but they play an important role that was on full display during last month's power outage.

The Fleet Services Department oversees the task of maintaining the District's cars, trucks, tractors and also makes sure MNWD's 32 emergency generators are in top working order. When an error in Arizona caused much of San Diego and south Orange counties to lose power on September 8, 2011, MNWD's back-up generators immediately started, allowing our customers to continue receiving quality water and

wastewater service without any interruption. **It's important to note that MNWD did not experience any sewer spills during the power outage.**

The District works hard to remain prepared for emergencies such as this recent power outage, and other potential situations. Thanks to the efforts of the District's staff, and especially the Fleet Services Department, the lights may have gone out, but the water kept flowing, and that's how we plan to keep it.

Emergency Preparedness Starts at Home

Register with AlertOC today!

All of us in Orange County know how quickly disaster can strike, and how fast "too late" can arrive. That's why MNWD has partnered with the County of Orange, local cities and water providers across the region on a notification system to keep those who live and work in our community aware of important information during emergency events.

The AlertOC program quickly sends large volumes of messages through phone, email and texts in the event of an imminent situation requiring community action, such as wildfire evacuations or a public health threat. All landline telephone numbers are automatically registered into the system, but residents who would like to receive emergency updates via cell phone, email or text message must register at www.AlertOC.com.

MNWD customers are also encouraged to visit www.ReadyOC.org for simple steps to prepare before an emergency strikes.



Your Water Travels a Long Way

MNWD, like most south Orange County water providers, does not have the benefit of access to local supplies of water, so the majority of the District's water is imported from the Colorado River and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, via the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. This water travels hundreds of miles and is pumped thousands of feet in elevation over the Tehachapi and Eagle mountains before it reaches homes and businesses in South County. In fact, the movement of water from where it falls to where it is needed is one of the largest uses of energy in California, and is a contributor to the high cost difference between imported water and locally produced supplies.



Metropolitan sets the price of imported water, but MNWD is working to reduce our reliance on this source to ensure a reliable and low-cost supply for our customers. The District has expanded our treatment and delivery of recycled water for irrigation purposes, which now meets 25 percent of local demand. MNWD is also working with other South County water providers to explore the potential use of desalinated seawater to meet local needs.

For more information on MNWD's water supply, please visit www.MNWD.com



California-Friendly Plant of the Month: *Purple Fountain Grass*

Purple fountain grass is a great way to add some colorful fun to your California-Friendly garden this fall season. This popular perennial resembles a bronzed fox tail and grows great in both pots and in gardens. It requires full sun and a little water to get started, and then thrives in dry soil or gravel beds.

Purple Fountain Grass *Pennisetum Setaceum* "Rubrum"

Season:	Summer - Fall
Size:	4-5 ft. tall and wide
Color:	Purple
Water:	Low
Sun:	Full sun

Purple fountain grass is often preferred over other fountain grass varieties because it doesn't drop seeds, which makes it easier to prune and shape into groupings. Purple fountain grass will flourish through the fall, but will go dormant during the winter and spring months, only to reappear just in time to show off for next summer.

Reprogram Your Sprinkler Timers Following the Power Outage

Have you reprogrammed your sprinkler timer since the September 8, 2011 power outage? Most sprinkler timers revert to the manufacturer's default settings when power is lost, which in many cases leads to excessive watering. Please reset sprinkler timers to water two to three days per week at four to six minutes per station, which is what most lawns and gardens require this time of year. Doing so will keep your plants healthy, maximize our water resources and help ensure customers receive the lowest possible water bills. Customers are also encouraged to regularly replace the nine-volt back-up battery on models that include the feature. If you need assistance reprogramming your sprinkler timer, please contact MNWD at (949) 831-2500 and a member of our conservation team will be happy to help.

Please visit to www.MNWD.com to view your recommended watering schedule.

California-Friendly Landscape Workshops

Please join us for a FREE landscape workshop to learn the California-Friendly way to a beautiful landscape that uses less water and saves you money.

You'll learn:

- ✿ How to pick the right plants
- ✿ How to manage your sprinkler system for efficient irrigation
- ✿ The proper way to fertilize and maintain your water-wise garden

Wednesday, October 19, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

MNWD Main Office
27500 La Paz Rd., Laguna Niguel

COST: Free

These workshops include refreshments. Space is limited and the reservations fill quickly. For more information or to RSVP, please call (949) 831-2500.

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For meeting dates and agendas, visit www.MNWD.com.

WaterLines is a monthly publication to keep water users in the Moulton Niguel Water District informed about water-related issues and events. Please send any comments or suggestions to MNWD, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA, 92677, or call us at (949) 831-2500. www.MNWD.com.

Get Involved

MNWD Citizens Advisory Committee

MNWD is accepting applications for our Citizens Advisory Committee, which will assist the District in addressing the current and future water-supply challenges facing California.

- 💧 **Learn the issues first-hand**
- 💧 **Provide valuable input**
- 💧 **Help us spread the word on conservation and water quality**
- 💧 **Play a valuable role in our region's water future**

For more information and application materials, please call us at (949) 831-2500 or visit www.MNWD.com.

Texas Ranger

To learn more about this and other attractive California-Friendly plants, visit www.MNWD.com.

**Conserve Today: Save Water. Save Money.
Protect the Environment.**