

IN THIS ISSUE

- Water budgets made easy
- Conservation team helps you save
- Inner Coastal Clean-Up Day Sept. 17
- Is a leaky toilet costing you money?
- e.Bill customers must re-enroll
- Get involved with the CAC



WaterLines

September 2011

www.MNWD.com

Water Budgets Made Easy

Three simple ways to save.

Moulton Niguel Water District's new Water-Budget-Based Rate Structure began July 1, 2011, and as our customers adjust to living with water budgets, the District is available to help make this transition as easy as possible.

Most MNWD customers already use water efficiently and should have no trouble remaining within their water budget given their current water-use practices. As a result, they will be billed at the lowest available rates. If you're finding that your water use exceeds your water budget, here are some steps to help:



MNWD customers can save water and money by requesting a home survey at (949) 831-2500.

✓ Look for Leaks

Leaks are the most common source of wasted water. Check your toilets to make sure they're working properly (see page two) and make sure your sprinkler system is free of leaks. If you find wet patches on your lawn when the sprinklers aren't running, you likely have a leak in your sewer line.

✓ Water to Meet Your Plants' Needs

Most plants, including your lawn, require far less water than the average homeowner

typically gives them. Lawns only need eight to ten minutes of watering three days per week. If you see water running off your lawn onto the sidewalk and curb, you're watering too much.

✓ Request a Home Savings Survey

MNWD's conservation team is available to visit your home, review your outdoor watering practices, discuss your indoor use and recommend easy ways to save water and money by becoming more efficient. Call (949) 831-2500 to schedule an appointment. Home Savings Surveys only take about 30 minutes to complete.

There are lots of ways to become water-efficient, and we are here to help. If you have any questions about water budgets or becoming more water-efficient, please call us at (949) 831-2500 or visit www.MNWD.com.

Water Conservation Tip of the Month

Upgrade your bathrooms with water-efficient showerheads. They're inexpensive, easy to install and can save up to 750 gallons per month.

Visit www.MNWD.com or call (949) 831-2500 to learn other easy ways to save.

Calculate Your Water Budget

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

Conservation Team Helps Customers Become Water-Efficient

Using less water is easy, and MNWD has a dedicated team of conservation professionals that works one-on-one with our customers all year round to help them save money by becoming more water-efficient and reducing water waste.



MNWD's Customer Service Department includes a team of customer service representatives and conservation experts that educate customers about how to use water wisely. Together, the group leads MNWD's gardening workshops, attends community events, coordinates regional rebate programs and responds to customer phone calls and emails about water budgets and water use. The group also conducts Home Savings Surveys upon request to review customers' water-use practices and identify steps to reduce waste and increase efficiencies.

The conservation team recently hand-measured all city parks, median strips and hillsides in the District's service area to determine water budgets for our municipal customers, and conducted more than 125,000 reviews of residential accounts to identify customers who may be at risk of exceeding their water budgets. The team then launched a comprehensive outreach campaign to work with those customers to help reduce their water use and lower their water bills.

The conservation team also practices water-efficiency outside of work. In addition to holding a number of certifications, our staff regularly experiments with different native plants and irrigation and water-conservation devices in their homes so they can make recommendations to our customers. Their understanding of gardening, plant types and plumbing make the conservation team a great asset to our customers, and one you should call upon if you're looking at ways to become more water wise. To contact the conservation team, please call (949) 831-2500.

Efficient Toilets Provide Water Savings

Toilets are one of the biggest water users in your home, and a leaky toilet can waste enough water to fill several swimming pools over the course of a year! That's money literally going right down the drain.

Finding a Leak

Checking for a leaky toilet is easy. First use your ears. Does your toilet tank take a long time to refill? Does it always sound like your toilet is running? Odds are you may have a leak. Add a toilet tab or a few drops of food coloring to your toilet tank. If color appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Contact the District at (949) 831-2500 to request complimentary toilet tabs.

Fixing a Leak

Most toilet leaks are simple and inexpensive to fix. Worn out rubber flappers are the primary culprits, and replacements are readily available at your nearest home improvement store. If the problem is more serious and requires a new toilet, be sure to select a water-efficient model. It will save hundreds of gallons of water per month, and that equates to lower water bills.



Keep an eye and ear on your toilets moving forward and you're sure to start using less water in no time.

15th Annual Inner Coastal and Neighborhood Clean-Up Day

Enjoy a fun day in the sun with friends and family as we help to clean our local creeks, hiking trails and neighborhoods.

Saturday, September 17

8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Aliso Viejo Ranch Trailhead

100 Park Avenue, Aliso Viejo

Complimentary refreshments will be available.

Be sure to wear appropriate clothes and remember to bring sunscreen, work gloves and a hat.

For more information, please contact Moy Yahya with the City of Aliso Viejo at (949) 425-2538 or myahya@cityofalisoviejo.com.



California-Friendly Plant of the Month: *Stonecrop*

It appears California-Friendly landscaping is growing in popularity, as this month's plant, stonecrop, has become one of the most common succulent perennials found in American gardens. Its colorful blooms, easy care and low water needs make it a winner no matter what climate you live in.

Stonecrop blooms clusters of small star-shaped flowers in a variety of sizes and colors. The plant's name means "sprouting from the stone," which refers to its ability to thrive in dry and rocky soil.

Stonecrop requires little maintenance, so it's perfect for the hard-to-reach hillside, but it also grows well in pots or in gardens. Just make sure not to water it too much, and your garden will become the shining star of the neighborhood.

Stonecrop *Sedum*

Season:	Year-round
Size:	4"- 24" tall, 18"- 24" wide
Color:	Varies by plant
Water:	Low
Sun:	Full sun with partial shade

MNWD Upgrading Electronic Billing System

e.Bill customers must re-enroll at www.MNWD.com.

MNWD is excited to announce our **NEW** electronic billing program (e.Bill). The **NEW** more cost-efficient, user-friendly e.Bill program replaced the prior electronic billing option effective **August 1, 2011**. e.Bill provides you with an easy way to receive paperless statements, view statement history and pay your bill online. If you select the e.Bill autopay feature, it will replace the recurring payment option in the previous program. With e.Bill autopay, your payment will be posted to your account on the due date. No automatic payments will be made to your account unless this option is completed.

If you were previously enrolled in the District's e.Bill program, it will be necessary for you to re-enroll in the new program. If you do not complete a new enrollment, you will receive paper bills until you re-enroll. To enroll, log on to www.MNWD.com.

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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.



Wild Lilac

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

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