



Resilient Together FAQs

Are we in a drought emergency now?

Governor Newsom has declared a drought state of emergency for 50 of 58 counties in California. While Orange County is not among those counties, we do rely on water from the Colorado River Basin and Northern California water systems, which are experiencing drought conditions. We are asking our customers to do their part by staying within their water budget.

What are MNWD's plans regarding the drought?

Moulton Niguel has partnered with you, our customers, to boost our drought resilience. We work to ensure a clean and reliable water supply and are monitoring the drought conditions in our state carefully.

While we can't predict supply issues or future mandates the state may impose, we are confident that we will be able to provide a reliable water supply for our customers to carry out daily activities.

We encourage you to stay within your water budget and take actions such as learning about our NatureScape program to ensure your landscape is drought resilient.

Here are a few examples of how we've prepared and built resilience:

- Moulton Niguel promotes the use of recycled water, which meets 25% of the District's peak supply needs.
- We've made investments to ensure reliability of the water supply and developed regional partnerships for emergency interties with neighboring water agencies.
- Implemented water-budget based rates
- Provided education to residents, commercial customers and HOAs on water efficiency
- Removed nearly 6 million square feet of turf, representing more than 500 million gallons of water. This accounts for more than 25% of all turf removed in Orange County during the last drought.
- Upgraded to smart meters, which help identify leaks
- Provided customers with rebates for replacing inefficient water appliances

Are there water restrictions now?

Governor Newsom has asked Californians to voluntarily reduce water use by 15 percent. There are no mandatory restrictions at this time. However, we do encourage customers to continue to use water efficiently and stay within their water budget.

Are we going to have days when we can/can't water plants/yard? What will my watering days be during the drought?

The District does not require customers to limit watering to specific days during the week. We don't know what actions the state may take in the future; however, during the last drought, the state allowed Moulton Niguel to rely on its own water efficiency methods rather than being subjected to restrictions imposed in other areas.

What stage of our Water Shortage Contingency Plan are we in?

Moulton Niguel's Water Shortage Contingency Plan has six stages. The plan has not been activated at this time.



How can I help?

Here are a few ways that you can help conserve:

- Avoid watering between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Evaporation peaks during daylight hours, so watering when it's cool and not as bright will help your soil and plants retain moisture.
- Replace high water need vegetation, like turf, with California native and drought-tolerant plants to reduce the overall water needs of your landscape.
- Take advantage of the NatureScape Turf-to-Native Garden Program or the Turf Replacement Program to update your landscape. The rebate for both programs just increased from \$2 per sq. foot to \$4 per sq. foot.
- Pair the turf removal incentive with other outdoor rebates, such as the weather-based irrigation controller rebate, to upgrade your irrigation system and start managing water according to the weather.
- Visit mnwd.com/watersavingtips to learn how to conserve
- Receive a personalized in-person or virtual home savings survey from one of our experts. These surveys take just 45 minutes to complete.

We thank you for all you have already done to help conserve water. We encourage you to stay within your water budget and heed the governor's request to cut water use where possible.

A few additional ideas:

- Use a "Smart Irrigation Controller"
- Only run your clothes and dish washer when full.
- Sign up for Leak Alerts at mywatermnd.com

How will my bill be impacted during the drought?

As of today, bills will remain the same. Moulton Niguel is proud to maintain the lowest average water bill in south Orange County.

Customers who use water efficiently and stay within their water budget will continue to pay the District's lowest water rates.

This fall, the District will review its rates, as we are required by law to evaluate the cost of providing service and account for any increased costs. This typically happens on a 4-year cycle. All rate changes must be approved in a public board meeting by the Board of Directors. Every customer will receive a notice in the mail before that meeting takes place. You will also have the opportunity to share your comments with the District prior to that meeting.

Can we hose-down (power wash) our hardscape such as driveways, patios, etc.? Is this allowed during a drought period?

No. The District's water conservation best practices are in effect at all times. This is only permitted to alleviate safety or sanitary hazards. If needed for safety reasons, use

- a hand-held bucket or similar container
- a hand-held hose equipped with a functioning, positive self-closing shut-off device or
- a low-volume, high-pressure cleaning machine equipped to recycle any water used.

Can we wash our cars in our driveway? What are the restrictions? Do we have to go to a commercial car wash?

Yes, you may wash your car in your driveway provided you have a shutoff nozzle to ensure water is not running continuously. Customers are encouraged to be aware of their water budget for all water use activity. Information on your water budget is available on your bill. It is recommended that customers use a commercial carwash to wash their vehicles so the wash water will not run off their property and into the storm drain. The dirty water used at car washes is recycled and reused numerous times, making it a more efficient way to clean a dirty vehicle.

Will I be charged the Tier 5 (highest) rate if I go over my water budget? Is there an increased penalty for going over budget?

Right now, customers are charged at Tier 5 if they exceed 150% of the monthly water budget. Any change to that threshold must be approved at a public meeting by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

