



Drought FAQs

Are we in a drought emergency now?

Yes, in October 2021, Gov. Newsom declared a statewide drought emergency, including Orange County. From 2020-22, California experienced its driest three-year period on record.

What restrictions are in effect with the statewide drought emergency?

In March 2022, Gov. Newsom ordered every water agency in the state, including Moulton Niguel, to implement conservation actions.

In May 2022, the State Board implemented the Governor's order by adopting State Water Board's Emergency Conservation Regulations. The Emergency Conservation Regulations require every water agency in the state, including Moulton Niguel, to enact Stage 2 of our Water Shortage Contingency Plan. The State Water Board's Emergency Conservation Regulations also banned irrigation of non-functional, ornamental turf (i.e., grass not used for any purpose) with drinking water in commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors (not recycled water).

What does the Governor's statewide order mean for our area?

Gov. Gavin Newsom's order requires Moulton Niguel to implement mandatory conservation penalties and conservation actions.

If you use 125% or more of your monthly water budget, under the governor's order, you will see penalties and higher bills in the future.

How will my bill be impacted during Stage 2?

Moulton Niguel is proud to maintain the lowest average bill in south Orange County. If you stay within your monthly water budget, expect no major changes to your bill. If you use 125% or more of your monthly water budget, you will see penalties and higher bills for water.

We're doing everything possible to help customers avoid the governor's penalties and higher bills. We offer cashback rebates for installing water-efficient devices and host educational workshops to help customers find ways to conserve water. We can also setup a call with our water efficiency team to help you develop a personalized plan for lowering your bill.

HOSE DOWN: Can we hose down the driveway or patio?

No. This is only permitted for health and safety hazards.

CAR WASH: Can we wash our cars in our driveway?

You may wash your car in your driveway, but you must use a shutoff nozzle on your hose. We recommend using a commercial carwash, which have systems designed to conserve water.

Are we going to have days when we can/can't water plants/yard?

Right now, we do **NOT** have watering days in our service area. Unlike other agencies, Moulton Niguel has found other conservation measures more effective.

However, this could change. The Governor and State Water Board have the power to order watering days for all agencies, including Moulton Niguel.



Is there an increased penalty for going over budget?

Yes, under the Governor's order, you will pay increased penalties. Customers are now charged a penalty resulting in Tier 5 rates if you use 125% or more of your monthly water budget.

What are Moulton Niguel's plans regarding the drought?

As the state faces ongoing drought conditions, we're continuing to do our part to conserve water. In recent years, we've upgraded to smart meters that identify water leaks, expanded our money-saving water rebates, and organized one of the most successful turf replacement programs in California.

The results have been truly remarkable. Together, we've replaced nearly 6 million square feet of turf, saving more than 250 million gallons of water every year.

We're grateful for how much our customers have done to use water efficiently. Over the last 15 years, thanks to your conservation actions, Moulton Niguel customers have reduced our water use by 40 percent - despite an increase to our local population.

Are there water restrictions now?

To comply with Governor Newsom's order, customers are **NOT** allowed to:

- Water landscaping within 48 hours of measurable rainfall.
- Water in ways that allow excessive runoff onto the driveway or street.
- Wash cars without an automatic shutoff nozzle.
- Use a hose to wash down hard or paved surfaces, except for health and safety reasons.
- Turn on decorative fountains that use drinking water.

How can I help?

Here are a few ways that you can help conserve water:

- Stay within your budget.
- Only run the dishes when your dish washer is full.
- Avoid outdoor watering between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- Replace high water need vegetation, like turf, with drought-tolerant plants.
- Get up to \$4 cashback for every square foot of turf you replace.
- Sign up for a personalized in-person or virtual home savings survey from one of our experts. These surveys take just 45 minutes to complete and can help you find ways to reduce water waste.
- Visit mnwd.com/watersavingtips to learn how to conserve.

Where does Moulton Niguel get its water?

Moulton Niguel imports 100% of its drinking water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Our water comes from the Colorado River and Northern California through the State Water Project.

We also work to reduce our water needs by using recycled water. More than 20% of our total water demands are met with locally produced recycled water. This water goes to dedicated irrigation accounts, such as homeowner associations, golf courses, street medians, commercial shopping centers, schools, and parks.

