

Water/Utilities Report:

Remember that we continue in drought with added temperature extremes. Residents are limited to watering with sprinkler systems to 2 days per week.

Predictions of an El Niño effect for next year are strengthening; hopefully there will be increased rainfall. However, it is difficult to predict the amounts ahead of time. Conditions of water temperatures both off our shores and in the Northern Pacific control how much rain we will receive. Storms produced during the record El Niño of 1997-98 occurred when waters over the northwestern Pacific were cool. However, warmer waters are now present in that area. Such warmer-than-average waters in the northern Pacific tend to pull storm tracks farther north; that would reduce the rainfall Southern California could receive next year.

Planning for the coming rains:

The Metropolitan Water District offers \$75 rebate towards purchase of a rainbarrel to collect rain water for residential landscape use. This water is better for your garden than is tap water since it is not treated with chlorine. The following information is important when choosing your rain barrel:

1. The minimum size is 50 gallons
2. Rain barrel must be designed for the intended purpose of rain capture
3. Should have a cover to prevent mosquitos, rodents and debris from entering
4. The rain barrel must be mounted in a way that allows the barrel to receive water unimpeded from a rain gutter.
5. Should not block or restrict access to walkways or pathways
6. Rain barrel must not be connected to the irrigation system and must be distributed through a hose or bucket
7. Should be elevated 6 inches off the ground on a solid foundation
8. Should be strapped to your home for safety if the height of the barrel is two times greater than the width
9. Maximum of four rain barrel rebates allowed per home

The rain barrel must be purchased as an entire rain barrel. Homemade rain barrels do not qualify for rebates. It might be a good idea to get your barrel now, before so many are purchased that the rebate funding is exhausted.

Download a Tip Sheet on Maintaining Your Rain Barrel

How to take care of your trees during the drought:

Cities have become concerned that as residents eliminate lawns from their parking strips, the trees in those areas are deprived of water to the point some are dying. There is great cost in removing such trees and they are valuable for shade, habitat, CO₂ recycling. The following advice is offered on care of trees during the drought.

- How do you determine if your trees need water:
 - Check with a screwdriver or water sensing tool and stick 6-8 inches into the ground. If the soil is dry and crumbly it is time to water again. A water sensor that can be purchased at a garden shop or places like Home Depot, the dryness will be indicated. For young trees, water 1-2 times per week. For mature trees water 1-2 times per month.
- If the tree needs water, soak slow and low. Soak so the soil is wet 12-18 inches below the surface. Limit watering to between before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m.
- Mulch around base of tree. This will limit evaporation and protect the tree roots from intense heat. Mulch to a depth of about 4 inches but maintain 6 inches of bare soil around the trunk of the tree.

The turf removal rebate has ended.

Turf removal incentives are no longer available because funds for this program have been exhausted.

Quemetco Inc. meeting:

A community meeting of the Clean Air Coalition will be held on Wed. Aug. 19th between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. at Wallen Andrews Elementary School located at 1010 S. Caraway Dr., Whittier CA. The meeting will have representatives from Supervisor Solis, the California Dept. of Toxic Substances Control as well as a status report on toxic testing outside of Quemetco.

There has been concern about the expansion and extension of permits requested by this battery recycling plant. This plant is located in the City of Industry but borders on Hacienda Heights. There has been anxiety for many years about air, water and soil pollution that includes lead and arsenic around the plant that possibly could affect the health of local residents in the Heights. Concern has been increased as a result of recently completed studies of contamination near the Exide battery recycling plant in Vernon. California toxic waste regulators blame air pollution from the Exide Technologies plant for the elevated levels of lead detected last fall at 39 homes and a preschool in Maywood and Boyle Heights, prompting officials to issue health warnings for pregnant women and children, and require additional testing.

Landfill Planning meeting:

Residents are invited to attend a community meeting to indicate elements of the master plan for our new Puente Hills Regional Park to be developed on the site of the now-closed Puente Hills Landfill. It will be held At the Don Julian Elementary School in La Puente from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Mon. Aug. 24th. Don Julian Elementary School is located at: 13855 Don Julian Rd, La Puente, CA 91746. Residents can tell planners what types of facilities, activities, trails they want included in the design. This is the first of a series of 3 community meetings to be held during the planning process.

