

Metallic Helium Balloons:

SCE advises the public about problems associated with metallic helium-filled balloons. These balloons caused 583 electrical outages in 2012. California law requires that such balloons be individually weighted to prevent drifting away and coming in contact with high voltage lines.

SoCal Gas Warning

SoCal Gas is warning their customers to beware of a payment scam involving utility imposters. They demand they pay their energy bills with pre-paid dddd cash cards or face immediate termination of service. The fraudulent actions have been reported in Los Angeles but so far have not affected SoCal Gas customers. SoCal gas customers may pay online, direct debit, by mail or in person at an authorized payment location. If a customer is past due, the company sends a past due notice before service is shut off.

Water:

This year has been particularly dry. This means we should all conserve water. Your garden is a good place to begin to help since **approximately 70% of residential water use is in the garden.**

The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) offers the following tips to reduce water needs in your garden:

- Keep your sprinkler system up to date by adjusting your timer for seasons and timing. Install a rain sensor to shut off sprinklers automatically. Repair and clean sprinkler heads.
- Use a rotating sprinkler heads and convert to drip, bubblers, and microsprays for shrubs and flower beds.
- Get rid of lawn areas.
- Repair leaks, check for blocked spay areas and runoff to avoid water waste.
- Choose water-wise plants and match plant water needs to shade or sun in your garden.
- Mow high and mulch deep (2-3 inches of mulch) helps lower evaporation rates. You can use leaf litter from your own garden as mulch to save money and reduce weeding.
- Deep water encourages healthy root systems as does good soil preparation when planting.

MWD has also launched a service that provides a no-cost irrigation efficiency survey for property owners of commercial, industrial, institutional and common area landscapes one acre or larger. A certified landscape irrigation auditor will provide written recommendations for qualifying properties in Metropolitan's 5,200 square-mile service area. Eligible landscapes include commercial and industrial sites, homeowner association common areas, and

institutional locations like schools, parks and government facilities. Surveys will include a review of the irrigation system including system pressure; controllers; site conditions and irrigation scheduling; and issues that cause high water use such as valve malfunctions, high or low pressure, sprinkler misalignment, poor drainage, breaks, leaks and runoff.