

## ***Water Use Restrictions and New Water-Saving tools***

Written by Robert McDonald, General Manager

It is hard to believe we are quickly approaching the Thanksgiving holiday and have only received 0.98 inches of rain since October. After two consecutive dry winters starting in December 2019, Carpinteria Valley Water District's Board of Directors approved of ordinance 21-1 on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 which declared a Stage Two Drought Condition and implemented water use restrictions to conserve water and calling for a 20% water use reduction. The County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution in July of 2021 declaring a Local Drought Emergency and the Governor has declared all counties in the State to be in a Drought Emergency. California is severely dry and it is incredibly important to make water-conserving habits a part of our daily routines. It is uncertain when we are going to receive sufficient rainfall to replenish the Carpinteria Groundwater Basin and Lake Cachuma. In addition, our State Water Project allocation for 2021 is 5% with similarly low allocations expected in 2022. The water use restrictions implemented during this Stage Two Drought Condition are integral to protect our water supplies for human consumption, sanitation, and fire protection during these dry periods.

The following water-use restrictions are in place to help us meet our goal to use 20% less water over the next 12 to 24 months. By adapting to these changes, our customers can help to stretch our resources and prevent further strain on our groundwater basin.

1. If you plan to use water to clean buildings, driveways, or sidewalks you must receive approval from the District. This activity should be limited to health & safety-related cleaning.
2. Irrigation on landscaping shall not runoff onto patios, decks or driveways, walkways, roadways, parking lots, or other non-landscaped areas.
3. Irrigation by hose or movable sprinkler may not occur between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for yards, parks, recreation areas, or other landscaped areas.
4. Irrigation through fixed systems (sprinkler systems), either manually or by timer controller, is prohibited between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., although exceptions can be made if customers are testing their water system or repairing leaks.
5. Customers shall not irrigate turf or ornamental landscapes during or within twenty-four hours of measurable rainfall – please let the rain replenish your landscapes naturally and be aware of weather changes to promptly adjust your irrigation controllers.
6. Residential, commercial, public authority, and industrial customers shall not irrigate landscape more than 3 days a week.
7. Free-flowing hoses for all uses are prohibited, including while washing boats and vehicles; we ask that you use self-closing shut off valves.
8. There are additional requirements for irrigation systems on new development.
9. Hotels, motels, and restaurants are required to display notices of drought conditions and provide suggested actions for saving water at their facilities. If your business is in need of drought notice signage, please e-mail [conservation@cvwd.net](mailto:conservation@cvwd.net).

For additional information, including rules regarding draining and filling of pools, please refer to ordinance 21-1 located in the document section of our website. We appreciate your help with these water-saving measures to help sustain us through this unpredictable winter.

The District is also working on finalizing its automated metered infrastructure (AMI) project with our endpoint exchange program. This will ultimately allow us to view hourly water consumption data and read our meters remotely. This can help District staff and customers detect leaks when they first

start and save water. You may see vans that say PMI (Professional Meters Inc.) driving around town or technicians with wagons or buckets carrying equipment through your neighborhood. The program is underway with 35% of our AMI system completed as of this writing. Our staff may be reaching out to you by phone, e-mail, or letter if we see suspicious, abnormal water consumption patterns.

We have already helped several customers save water and avoid hefty water bills with our new system. One of our residential customers accidentally left a hose running at 10 gallons per minute watering a fruit tree for several days. We were able to notify them about the high consumption and help them find the source. Over the course of a month this would have been over 430,000 gallons used and over 500 units of water that the customer would have been billed for. In addition, we caught a toilet leak that had used over 3,000 gallons of water in just 2 days, amounting to 4 additional units of water in this short period of time. When this project is completed early in 2022, this new technology will be a great tool for helping us save water. CVWD customers will have access to an online portal and mobile application which will provide them with the same water-consumption data that we are able to see on our end including leak and high usage warnings.

To further assist you in conserving water, the District continues to offer rebates to residential and commercial customers for water conservation fixtures and appliances as well as rebates on WaterWise Landscape upgrades. For District updates, please visit our website [cvwd.net](http://cvwd.net), follow us on Twitter @CarpWater, or Carpinteria Valley Water District on Facebook and Nextdoor.