

# MANDATORY DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS WILL AFFECT APARTMENT COMMUNITIES' PRESENTATIONS

*by Greg Vasileff, Western Gardens Landscaping, Inc.*

*Editors Note: Our County is facing a water shortage and is currently in a Level One drought watch, which includes a voluntary 10 percent water cutback. As of the writing of this article, cities and agencies around the county have not the policiess that they will employ within each jurisdiction once Level 2 Drought Alert is declared. In the coming weeks the SDCAA will keep you informed as changes occur that affect the management of your rental investment. For breaking news on this issue, please go to [www.sdcaa.com](http://www.sdcaa.com) and join our e-mail list to receive The Advisor our monthly e-newsletter.*

**A**t the San Diego County Water Authority's April Board meeting the agency is expected to declare a Level 2 drought alert, which will mandate a mandatory 20 percent reduction of water usage. This type of water a reduction will affect the presentation and curb appeal of every apartment community in San Diego County.

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM A 20 PERCENT WATER REDUCTION?

With possibility of a Level 2 drought alert in the near future, owners and property managers will be faced with difficulty maintaining their property's curb appeal. It is likely that a Level 2 alert will include the following restrictions:

- No fountain or decorative water features
- No residents washing their cars
- Irrigation in the winter will be limited to 1 day per week.
- Irrigation in the summer will be limited to 3 days per week.

As you can imagine, every apartment community's curb appeal and presentation will suffer.

As a rental property owner or manager you should take the following immediate steps to keep your community beautiful during the coming months.

1. Have your landscaper present to you a location of all the on-site irrigation controllers and a list of each valve on each controller and what and where that valve waters.
2. Have your landscaper immediately inspect every piece of irrigation at your apartment

*Continued on page 10*

## MANDATORY DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS

*Continued from page 9*

community, and list all pieces of broken or faulty irrigation with a cost to repair. Water leaks will cost you money.

3. Begin a program of aerating all the lawns at your apartment community every two months. Aeration creates an immediate 30% irrigation reduction to your lawns.
4. Only irrigate your property between 12 am and 6 am.
5. Fertilize all hillsides in the springtime to promote thicker and healthier landscape foliage that will retain the moisture of the soil.

### CREATING A LONG-TERM WATER SAVING STRATEGY

The latest development in water saving technologies is the use of evapotranspiration (ET) These types of irrigation controllers measure the amount of water loss from the soil and plants and the irrigation controllers use a weather station to decide how much water to apply to the landscape.

The San Diego County Water Authority decided these controllers save so much water that they are offering rebates of

up to \$5,000 if any property installed these ET. irrigation controllers. Currently more HOA's are taking advantage of this opportunity than rental properties. The good news for apartment communities is the Smart Landscape Program will be extended past June 2009, therefore, apartment communities can take advantage of the \$5,000 rebate program and voucher program that allows the apartment community to buy the newest technology weather based irrigation controllers that are proven to reduce irrigation usage and keep your apartment community beautiful.

Given climate changes and our limited access to water sources, we could come out of this drought with permanent restrictions on water use, so now is the perfect time to take advantage of this program.

If you are considering installing an ET Irrigation Controlled System, here are some simple steps:

1. a proposal for the installation of ET Irrigation Controllers for your apartment community. These controllers installed properly and programmed professionally will reduce the irrigation by 25% to 55%.

*Continued on page 15*

**Quality Service**

# Low Rates!

**ONLY Plumbing \$75/hr**

**Plumbing**

- Water Heaters
- Drain Cleaning
- Back Flow Preventor
- Slab Leaks
- Plumbing Fixtures

**ONLY Electrical \$65/hr**

**Electrical**

- Panel Change Outs
- Breakers & Fuses
- Trouble Shooting
- New Wiring
- Lighting Replacement
- Service Upgrades, and More

**No Job Too Big... No Job Too Small**

GENERAL LIC. # B-819549 PLUMBING C-36-819549 ELECTRIC C-10-819549

**workright**  
property services

Call Now for Fast Professional Service

# 858.751.6312

Ask About Our Low Cost Jetting Services!

## MANDATORY DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS

Continued from page 9

*Note: Research your irrigation installer to make sure that they have a proven track record of irrigation reduction installing ET irrigation controllers. Ask for references to verify that the installer has saved their clients money and has reduced irrigation usage.*

2. Make sure you have an on-site weather station with your new or existing ET irrigation controllers. **Do not use a satellite system.** On-site irrigation controllers give your irrigation controller the microclimate weather information of your apartment community's landscape and a satellite system only gives the weather information for a zip code and not the microclimate of your apartment community.

There are many brand names of ET irrigation controllers. The brand that has the most proven irrigation reduction is Weather-matic. Of the more than 100 documented installations of these irrigation systems in San Diego County, the properties reduced their irrigation usage between 25% and 55%. This brand is recommended for its on-site weather station and microprocessor,

which allows multi-function programming of soil type, irrigation application type, plant material, turf type, and many advanced programming features that measure the amount of water loss through evaporation and transpiration at the microclimate of the different San Diego County apartment communities. There are other brands of controllers providing similar functions, check with the manufacturer and your landscaper to choose the option that best fits your needs and budget.

An ET irrigation controller with an on-site weather monitor will reduce the irrigation at your apartment community dramatically and keep your apartment community looking good through the Level 2 drought alert and beyond.



*Greg Vasilieff, President, Western Gardens Landscaping, Inc received the CLCA 2007 Water Conservation Irrigation Award. Greg is currently a Water Manager with the CLCA and was featured in Sunset Magazine, Greg@westerngardens.net.*



# Renew Your Rentals

with Our Bathtub & Kitchen Resurfacing

## 1-800-516-7299

Always FREE Estimates

**Refinish & Repair:**  
Bathtubs, Showers & Sink  
Vanity Tops & Kitchen Counter Top  
Ceramic Tile  
Fiberglass  
Porcelain

- \* Work Expertly Around Your Property's Constraints
- \* Accommodate Your Time-Table & Occupancy Patterns
- \* Ready For Use After 24 Hours
- \* No Mess Left Behind
- \* Competitive Commercial Pricing

**Apartment-Commercial Office-Hotel-Restaurants-Rental Property**

Is your tub or sink leaching lead? **FREE INSTANT LEAD TESTING** Concerned about possible liability?  
Visit [www.3in1Refinishing.com](http://www.3in1Refinishing.com) for ALL OF OUR SERVICES!



We've GONE GREEN with ECO Friendly Materials