ALLIANCE FOR WATER EFFICIENCY



WATER EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM 2025

AUGUST 6-8, 2025 | CHICAGO, IL

CII Opportunities Part 1: Scaling Smart: Managing Water Across Commercial Landscapes

Room 300 10:00

10:00 – 11:00pm



This Session is Brought to You By

Gold-Level Sponsor:





Scaling Smart: Managing Water Across Commercial Landscapes

Sponsored by: The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California





SANTA MONICA LEGEND Nater Project's California Aqueduct Metropolitan's Water Treatment Plants

ABOUT METROPOLITAN

Nation's largest wholesale water provider

Service area: Nearly **19 million** people, **5,200** square miles, parts of **six counties**

26 member agencies, **38-member** board of directors

Supports **\$1.6 trillion** regional economy (ranks 11th in the world)

Provides imported water from Northern Sierras and Colorado River Basin

Invest in local projects and conservation

Outdoor Conservation Initiatives

Regional Rebate Program

Turf Replacement- \$5/sq. ft. for CII customers

Commercial Devices

Water Savings Incentive Program

Customer Commercial Site Upgrades

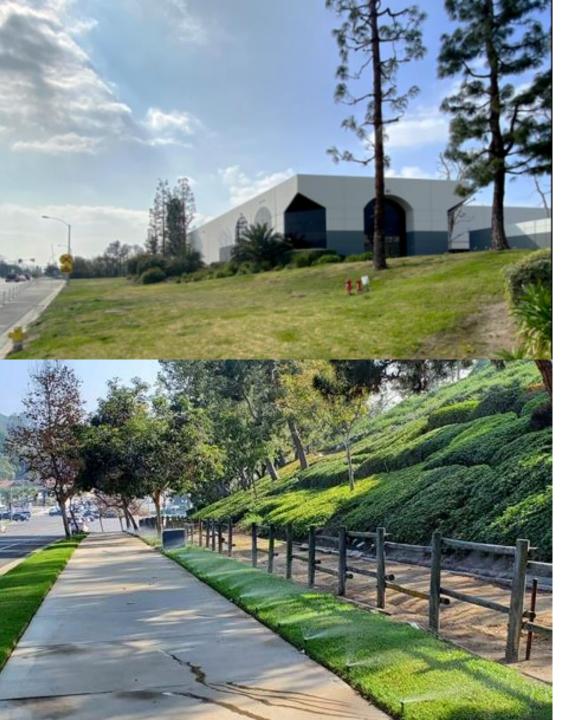
Member Agency Administered Program

Supports local conservation efforts

Education and Outreach

Water Use Efficiency Legislation and Policy Development





CA - AB 1572

Sponsored by Metropolitan

Effectively bans irrigation of non-functional turf (NFT) in commercial settings with potable water beginning in 2027

Does not apply to the residential sector or commercial areas irrigated with recycled water

Phased approach:

- 2027- NFT at State and Local Government buildings
- 2028- CII sites and properties not located in disadvantaged communities
- 3. 2029- NFT areas at HOA's and Common Interest Developments
- 2031- NFT at Local Government buildings in DAC (contingent on state funding being made available to fund costs)

Strategies and Funding for Success

Encouraging Early Adoption

October 2022 – Board adopted resolution recommending ordinances prohibiting installation and irrigation of NFT

November 2022 – Joined 30 agencies across Colorado River Basin on MOU committing to reduce NFT in our service area by 30%

External Funding and Enhanced Incentives for Customers

July 2024- \$30M Urban Community Drought Relief Grant implemented into turf replacement program

September 2025- \$95M System Conservation Implementation Agreement with the United States Bureau of Reclamation to remove 30 million square feet of turf through 2031

Increased incentives for CII customers from \$2/sq. ft. to \$5/sq. ft.

Research and Marketing

Finalizing scope to launch our largest CII research study to date Surveys/Focus Groups/Community Discussion Groups







Setting the Stage – California's Ban on Non-Functional Turf Melissa Matlock

Deputy Director, California Water Efficiency Partnership



Setting the Stage – California's Ban on Non-Functional Turf



A Chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency



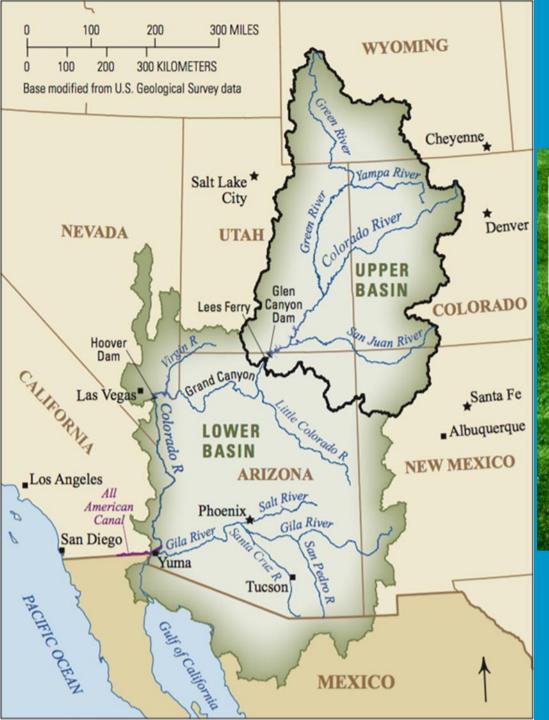


A Chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency

CalWEP's Mission

Maximize urban water efficiency and conservation by:

- Advancing research, training, and public education
- Building collaborative approaches and partnerships
- Supporting and integrating innovative technologies and practices
- Encouraging effective public policies



Western states turn to homeowners to deflect drought

As Colorado River Basin supplies shrink, drought-stricken states follow southern Nevada's lead in a push to swap out thirsty lawns for other landscapes.

First-in-the-nation ban targets grass at office parks, street medians and housing development entrances that no one uses

Las Vegas's new strategy for tackling

Nonfunctional turf to be cut

drought - banning 'useless grass'

City of Santa Fe looking at replacing turf to reduce water usage

Turf wars: 'Non-functional' landscaping a big pain in the grass for water-saving initiatives

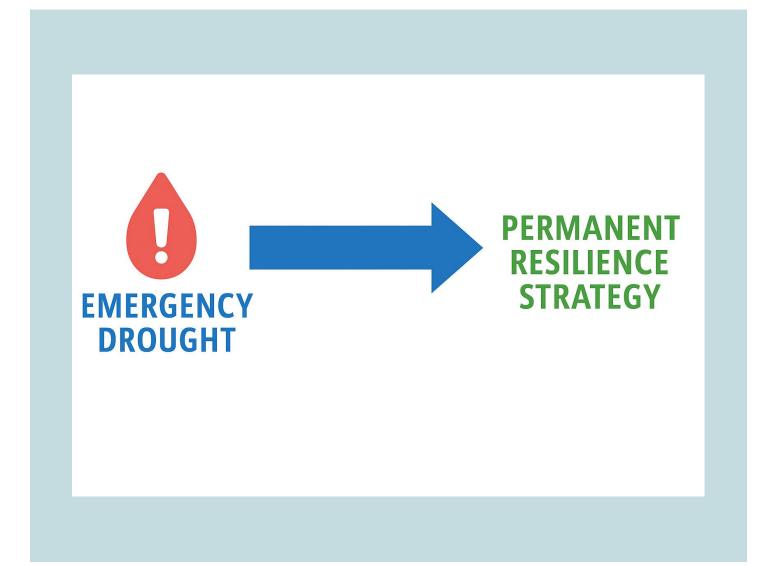
A Colorado city considers state's first-ever nonfunctional grass ban for new development

Editorial: Say goodbye to grass that's only there for looks. California can't afford to waste water

Water Conservation as a Supply

Governor's Vision

- Conservation is a key pillar in CA's Water Supply Strategy (2022)
- Marks a shift from drought response to long-term water resilience
- Agencies must treat water efficiency as a permanent tool



History of Conservation Regulation

Policies

2009 - SBx7-7: 20x2020

- •First major state mandate to reduce urban per capita water use by 20% by 2020.
- Established a foundation for supplier-specific baselines and targets.
- •Required agencies to prepare Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) with conservation elements.

2015 - MWELO Update

- •Revised Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance after severe drought.
- •Lowered allowed water budget from 0.7 to 0.55 ETAF for new landscapes.
- •Applied to projects with 500+ square feet of landscape.
- •Required weather-based irrigation controllers and soil management plans.

2018 – AB 1668 / SB 606 → Becomes UWUO

- •Passed in 2018 but leads to Urban Water Use Objective (UWUO) framework.
- •Requires supplier-specific targets for indoor, outdoor, and CII use.
- Agencies must classify CII accounts and prepare implementation strategies.

History of Conservation Regulation

Policies

2022 - AB 1572: Turf Ban for CII

- •Prohibits use of potable water on nonfunctional turf at commercial, industrial, and institutional (CII) properties.
- Applies to decorative turf that is not used for recreation or community purpose.
- •Requires local agencies to develop compliance programs and outreach.

2024 – Urban Water Use Objective (UWUO) Adopted

- •SWRCB finalized UWUO methodology, targets, and compliance guidelines.
- •Urban suppliers receive their customized targets based on climate, population, and landscape area.
- •Enforcement provisions begin moving into place.

2027 - UWUO Compliance Required

- •Urban suppliers must meet performance benchmarks annually starting 2027.
- •Required to report indoor use, outdoor landscape compliance, and CII classifications.
- Noncompliance may result in enforcement action by the SWRCB.

BILL NO. 1572: GOAL AND INTENT

Enacted on January 1, 2024

Goal:

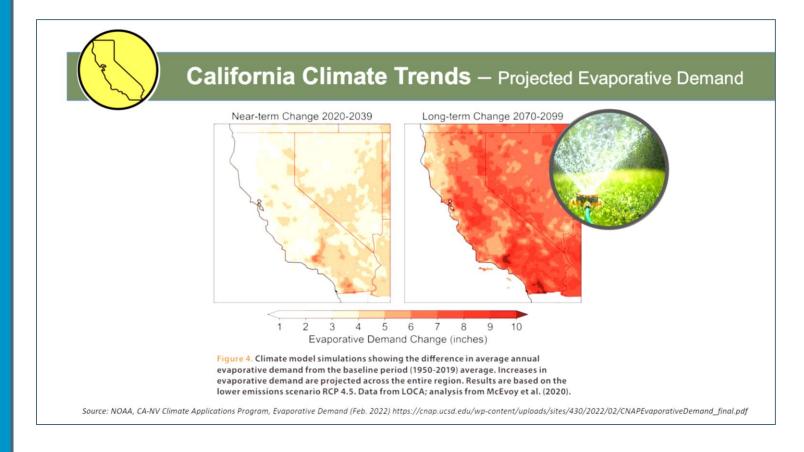
Conserve California Water Supply:
Reduce usage on Colorado Basin and
build local supply resilience.

Intent: "Use What You Need"

Reduce potable water use by prohibiting irrigation of nonfunctional turf in specific property types.

Promote sustainable water use practices to enhance drought resilience.

Support adaption to climate change by transitioning to low water use landscapes.



Public water systems (PWS) by no later than January 1, 2027, would be revising policies to include the requirements of the bill and communicate the requirements to their customers.

BILL NO. 1572

Implementation schedule is as follows:

January 1, 2027: Properties owned by the California Department of General Services and local government agencies.

January 1, 2028: Commercial, industrial, and institutional properties.

January 1, 2029: Common areas of homeowners' associations, common interest developments, and community service organizations.

January 1, 2031: Local government facilities in disadvantaged communities, contingent upon available state financial assistance.

CII properties include, but are not limited to:



Homeowner association owned properties, common areas of mobile home parks, and apartment, condominium, and townhouse complexes.



Restaurants



Manufacturing plants and facilities



Grocery stores



Industrial and commercial construction sites



Educational institutions



Retail and shopping malls



Sporting arenas



Hospitals



Office buildings



Religious institutions



Government facilities (including parks but not sports fields).



Sporting arenas

- Does not apply to residential lawns
- Does not ban the irrigation of trees or other non-turf plantings.

Thank you!

Melissa Matlock melissa@calwep.org



Green Spaces, Great Savings: Tackling Water Use in Commercial Landscapes Devin Foster Smith

Researcher, Alliance for Water Efficiency





GREEN SPACES, GREAT SAVINGS: TACKLING WATER USE IN COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPES

Devin Foster Smith

Water Efficiency and Conservation Symposium

August 7, 2025

Alliance for Water Efficiency



PATHWAYS TO INFLUENCE LANDSCAPES AND OUTDOOR WATER USE

Regulation

Limit or ban on installing **new** high water use turfgrass

Limit or ban on irrigating **existing** high water use turfgrass

Programs & Rates

Through irrigationfocused programs and policies

Development fees and water rates

Incentives & Education

Incentive programs to encourage landscape change

Education and demonstration projects



OUTDOOR WATER SAVINGS RESEARCH INITIATIVE









































































RESEARCH FOCUS

Program
Design
&
Delivery

Effectiveness & Impact

Multiple Benefits Resources & Capacity

Policy Context

Driving Questions

- 1. How are utilities implementing efforts to transform or optimize large landscapes?
- 2. How effective are these programs? What influences participation and water savings?
- 3. Are programs delivering co-benefits like habitat, cooling, education, and stormwater capture?
- 4. What does it take—funding, time, skilled labor—for both utilities and participants?
- 5. What policies support or hinder these efforts? What unintended consequences may arise?



RESEARCH APPROACH











| Information Provision Programs | Audits Landscape water budget reports | | |
|---------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|
| Irrigation Controller Retrofits | Clock-based irrigation controller Weather-based irrigation controller | | |
| Irrigation Equipment Retrofits | Spray Roto Rotary Bubblers | Drip irrigation Mix | |
| Landscape Change | Turfgrass (cool, Alterative grou | | Low-to-no water use zone Hardscaping |

Moderate water use zone



| Information Provision Programs | Audits Landscape water budget reports | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Irrigation Controller Retrofits | Clock-based irrigation controller Weather-based irrigation controller | |
| Irrigation Equipment Retrofits | Spray Dri Roto Miz Rotary Bubblers | p irrigation x |
| Landscape Change | Turfgrass (cool/war Alterative ground co Moderate water use | over Hardscaping |



Information Provision Programs

Audits

Landscape water budget reports

Irrigation Controller Retrofits

Clock-based irrigation controller Weather-based irrigation controller

Irrigation Equipment Retrofits

Spray

Drip irrigation

Roto

Mix

Rotary

Bubblers

Landscape Change

Turfgrass (cool/warm season) Low-to-no water use zone

Alterative ground cover

Moderate water use zone

Hardscaping



Information Provision Programs

Audits Landscape water budget reports

Irrigation Controller Retrofits

Clock-based irrigation controller Weather-based irrigation controller

Irrigation Equipment Retrofits

Drip irrigation Spray

Mix Roto

Rotary

Bubblers

Landscape Change

Turfgrass (cool/warm season) Low-to-no water use zone Alterative ground cover Moderate water use zone

Hardscaping



| Information Provision Programs | Audits Landscape water budget reports | | |
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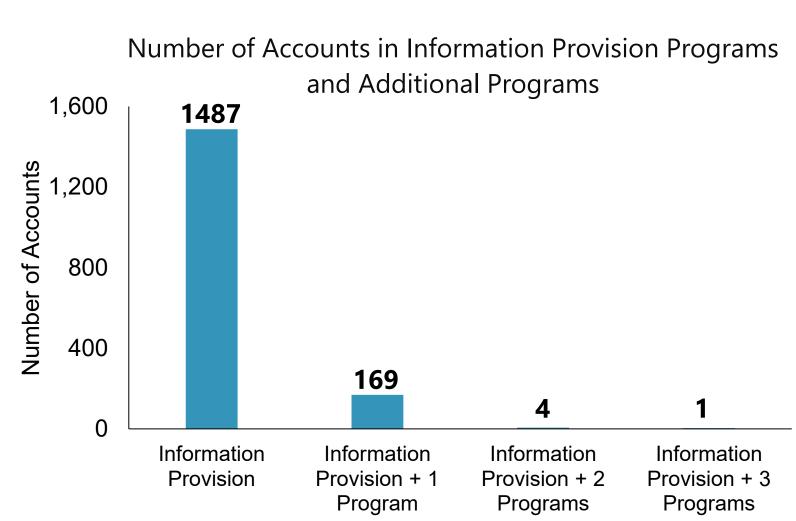
Moderate water use zone



INFORMATION PROVISION PROGRAMS

Audits
Landscape water budget

- 1,661 accounts participated in an audit or landscape water budget program across 7 utilities
 - Some programs are automatic enrollment

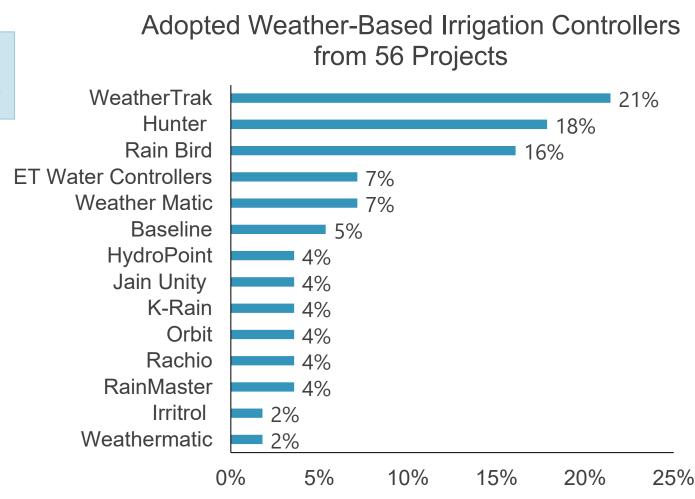




IRRIGATION CONTROLLER RETROFITS

Clock-based irrigation controller Weather-based irrigation controller

- 229 accounts from 11 utilities
- 222 accounts upgraded from clock-based irrigation controller to weather-based irrigation controller



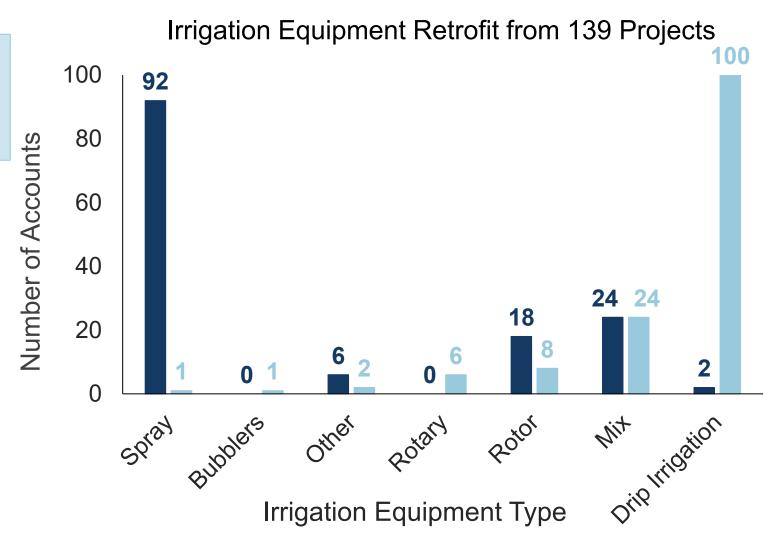


IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT RETROFITS

- Irrigation Equiptment Before Retrofit
- Irrigation Equiptment After Retrofit

| Spray | Drip irrigation |
|-------|-----------------|
| Roto | Rotary |
| Mix | Bubblers |

- 568 accounts participated in equipment retrofit programs
- 139 records of equipment before and after the retrofit





LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Cool Season Turf Grass
Warm Season Turf Grass
Low-to-no water use zone
Alterative ground cover
Moderate Water Use Zone
Hardscaping

- 580 accounts participated in landscape change programs
- 334 records of landscape change area

Landscape Optimization Commercial Turf to Services Native Incentive Program

Grass Removal Rebate Program

Turf Removal Rebate Program

Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

Landscape Consultants

Landscape Transformation Program

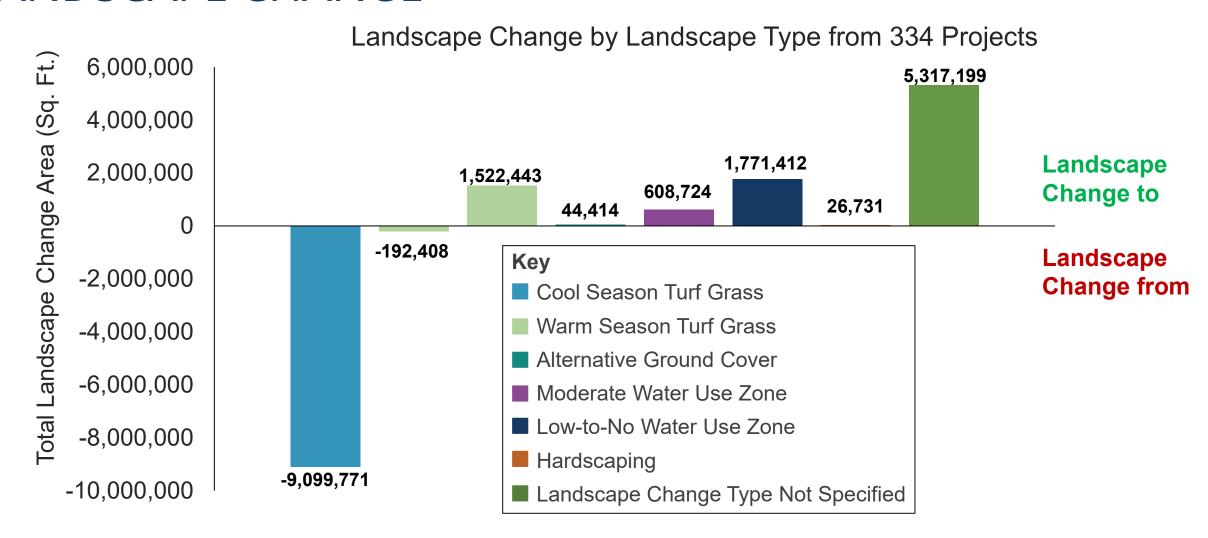
Cash for Grass

Turf to Native Direct Retro-Fit

Water Efficient Landscape Grants



LANDSCAPE CHANGE





LANDSCAPE CHANGE





COMPONENTS & NEXT STEPS

Water Savings Analysis

Quantify water savings by program

Resource Library

- **30** articles
- 26 landscape guides
- 19 laws & certifications
- 13 public datasets & tools

Market Readiness Survey

617 responses representing 38 U.S. States

- ✓ Final Analyses
- ✓ Report Writing
- ✓ Sharing with the community!

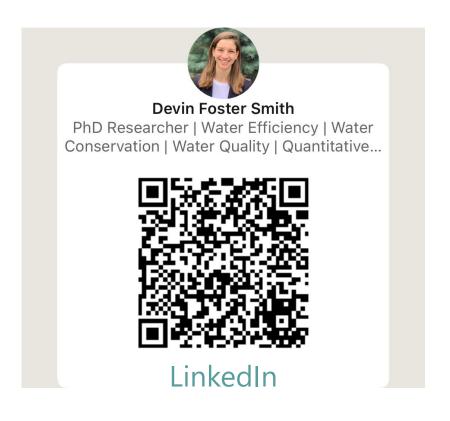


LEARN MORE & STAY IN TOUCH!

Devin Foster Smith Researcher

Email: devin@a4we.org







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OFFICE 773-360-5100

https://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org

Alliance for Water Efficiency

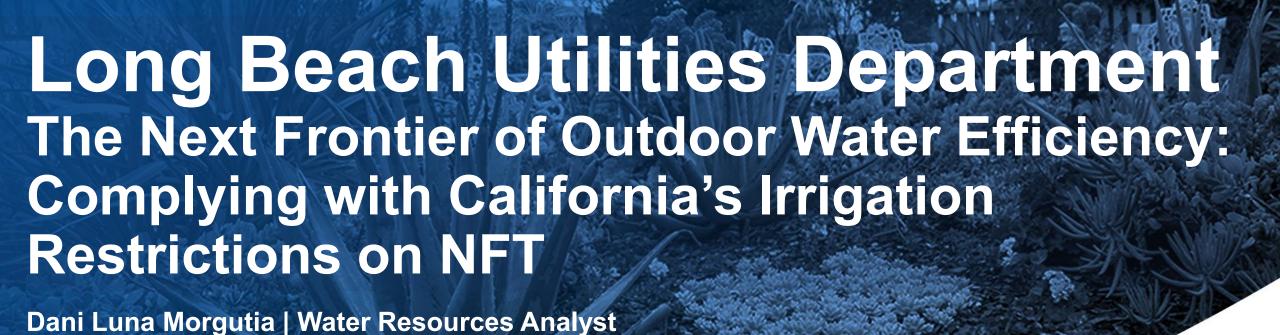
Thank You!

The Next Frontier of Outdoor Water Efficiency: Complying with California's Irrigation Restrictions on Non-Functional Turf

Dani Luna Morgutia

Water Resources Analyst III, Long Beach Utilities Department



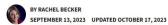


Agenda

LBUD Implementation Strategy

- Scaling programs to better meet the needs of the CII community
- Stakeholder outreach
- CII landscape designs
- Strategic partnership development
- Residential community engagement

California lawmakers move to ban irrigation of some decorative lawns











Legislation that would ban use of drinkable water to irrigate nonfunctional lawns at businesses and institutions has been sent to the governor. Photo by Larry Valenzuela, CalMatters/CatchLight Loca

Long Beach Utilities Department

Water, sewer, and gas services

- Approximately 500 employees
- Serve 500,000 customers
- 90,000 water/sewar customers
- 150,000 gas customers





Conservation Programs















Home Energy Efficiency Rebates









Scaling & Streamlining L2G

Transform thirsty grass to multi-benefit landscapes

- Decrease stormwater runoff
- Promote native plants, biodiversity
- Improve wildlife habitat, air quality

Funding incentive

- \$3 \$5 per square foot
- Up to \$1,500 \$3,000 for a professional landscape design reimbursement
- \$100 per tree installed, 5 trees /meter



Fostering Widespread Awareness









Education

Empowers

Policy

Outcomes

Data Collection & HOA Audits



Evaluation Poll

- 1. Please tell us a bit about who you are:
 - □ Long Beach resident
 - □ Long Beach business or commercial customer
 - □ Other (please specify):
- How would you rate your overall understanding of AB-1572 on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the highest)?

| Low | | Neutral | | High |
|-----|----|---------|----|------|
| 1 🗆 | 2□ | 3□ | 4□ | 5□ |

- What resources would be most useful for Long Beach Utilities District to offer to facilitate compliance with AB-1572?
 - □ Free informational workshops and webinars
 - Long Beach Utilities Department-hosted "office hours" for customer questions
 - □ Assistance estimating the cost and return on investment of landscape conversions
 - Assistance creating landscape designs and selecting waterwise plants
 - Rebates to replace turf with low-water landscapes
 - ☐ Tree Direct Installation Program
 - Roundtable discussions with other commercial, institutional and industrial property owners and managers to share best practices and solutions]
 - ☐ Other (Please specify)
- Where would you like to find additional and resources about AB-1572? Please check all that apply.
 - Presentations and workshops
 - □ Direct mail to my home or business
 - □ Long Beach Utilities District's website
 - □ Email updates/regular e-newsletter
 - □ Local newspaper articles/advertisements
 - □ Radio advertisements
 - □ Local events (farmers markets, community fairs, etc.)
 - □ Social media
 - Other (Please share any additional ideas or suggestions about specific



Cll designs serve as guides to help create a visual identity for coastal Long Beach.

Three broad categories of template, based on plant communities historically found in Long Beach's coastal zone.

The Rocky Coast

- Low, tall, and nearshore sub-variations
- Coastal Sage Scrub
 - Low, tall, and groundcover sub-variations
- Costal Prairie
 - Low, tall, and blue tone sub-variations



Cldesigns Rocky Coast- Tall Shrubs

coastal Lor

Three broadhistorically

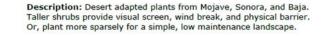
The Rocky

- Low, tall
- Coastal §
 - Low, tall

ECO DESIGN

www.calecodesign.com

- Costal Pr
 - Low, tall



Applications: Tougher sites like medians and utility areas where irrigation is not available, hand watering first year to establish.

nunities

ty for



Height: 4'-6' shrubs with 8'+ Accent Water Use: Very Low

Water Use: Very Low Preferred Irrigation: Drip

Slope/ Drainage: Some slope or Well-

draining soils Required

Mulch: Decomposed Granite, Pea Gravel. Rocks and Boulders may be

interspersed.

Clasge Scrub- Large Scale Groundcovers coastal Lor

www.calecodesign.com

Three broad historically

The Rocky

- Low, tall
- Coastal S
 - Low, tall
- Costal Pr
 - Low, tall

Description: Low, large scale groundcovers give 2 year fill in with 4-5' spacing. Wildflowers or annuals can be used to provide interest in the interim. Trim new growth in late summer to avoid a build-up of thatch and maintain low habit. Taller accents like deergrass as shown are optional. Groundcovers like buckwheat, purple sage, ceanothus, and covote brush make great pollinator habitat. Using a variety prevents one pest or disease from wiping everything out and provides year-round

Applications: An efficient way to cover large areas and easy to maintain. Once established, the groundcovers are good at suppressing weed growth. Effective as a slope stabilizer.

ty for

nunities



Slope/ Drainage: Sloped or well-draining soil Mulch: 3" of Shredded Arborists' Trimminas

Clasigns Coastal Prairie- Blue/Grey Tones coastal Lon

Three broad historically

The Rocky

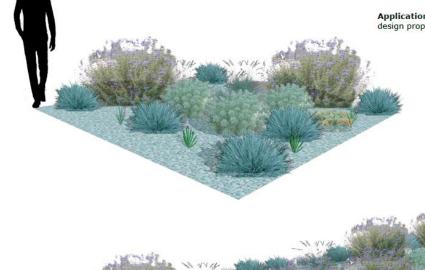
- Low, tall
- Coastal S
 - Low, tall
- Costal Pr

Description: Blue/grey toned groundcovers, perennials, sedges and grasses for a unique theme. Carex glauca spreads to create the blue groundcover. Drought tolerant but if inundation is a problem, put the sages and artemisia on slightly elevated ground.

Applications: Use as an accent or to contrast with greenery. See the design proposal for the Shoreline Village Roundabout for an example.

nunities

y for



Height: 1'-4' Water Use: Low Preferred Irrigation: Rotator Spray Slope/ Drainage: Sloped or well-draining soil Mulch: 1" of shredded arborists' trimmings

• Low, tall, and blue tone sub-variations

www.calecodesian.com

Strategic Partnerships Development





February 27, 2024

Todd Leland, Manager of Marine Operations

Dean Wang, Director of Utility Resources Dean Wang Dignally signal by Dean Wang Dispute State 221 121 442 From:

Memorandum of Understanding for the installation and maintenance of a demonstration garden at Shoreline Village







Collaboration with the Marine Bureau and Surfrider Foundation

AB 1572 Garden Volunteer Workdays

LBUD

- L2G, design, and tree rebates
- Workday logistics
- Landscaping education
- Landscape materials & breakfast!

Marina Bureau

- Up-front funding
- Turf removal & irrigation retrofit

Surfrider Foundation

- Local Long Beach volunteer recruitment
- Promotion
- Landscaping education



AB 1572 Workday Run of Show

Introductions & Safety

- Land acknowledgement
- AB 1572 presentation

Stormwater retention feature development

Grading soil and bolder installation

Planting

Irrigation audit & post inspection



AB 1572 Inaugural Project





AB-1572 Completed Project







AB-1572 Completed Project

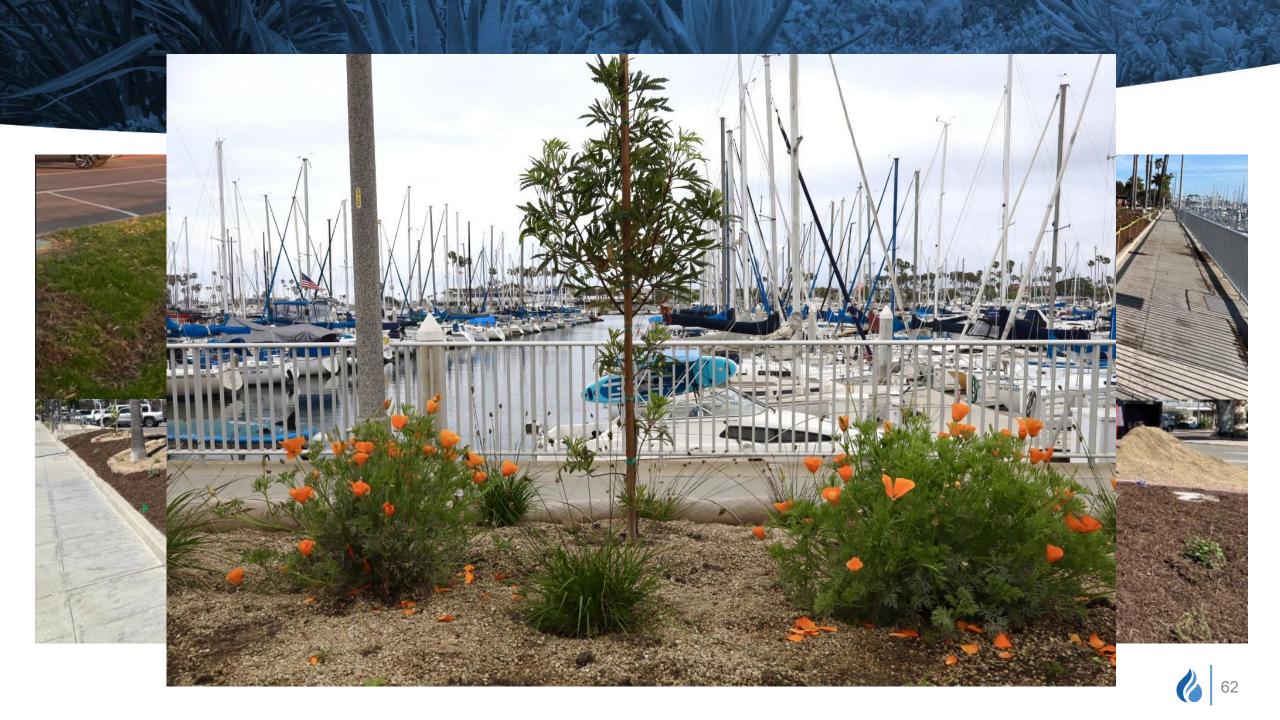


Selecting Sites with High Utility



Alamitos Bay, home to the Congressional Cup, Transpac, and Olympic trials and games

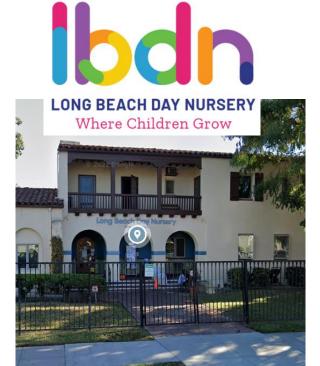




AB-1572 Water Champions



P Bridgeport Homeowners Association



PLong Beach Day Nursery



Sea Isle Homeowners Association

AB-1572 Water Champions



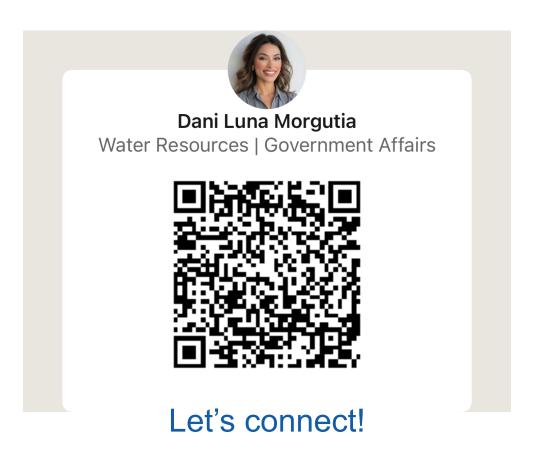


Early Successes

- Lawn to Garden CII participation has increased
- HOA's more likely to participate in the Lawn to Garden Program
 - ♦ Direct and PERSISTENT outreach
 - **♦** Conducting on-site NFT audits
- AB 1572 Workdays increase residential Lawn to Garden participation
 - Volunteerism experience removes participation barriers
 - Inspires personal water stewardship action
- Stakeholder cold calling and outreach WORTH IT
 - Presentations are calendared through stakeholder word of mouth



Thank you!



Dani.Morgutia@LBWater.org



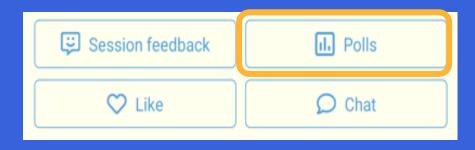
Group Discussion Questions

- What is one challenge or insight you've encountered when working with CII landscapes that helped shift your approach to turf replacement or water savings?
- In your experience, what has been the most effective way to engage property owners or stakeholders in sustainable landscape transformation?
- What is your bold idea for the future of CII outdoor water efficiency?
 If you had no constraints funding, policy, public support what would you try next?

Time to Share

Open your Whova apps to share a short thought from your discussion!

Navigate to the Whova app \rightarrow Go to this session \rightarrow Click on "Polls" \rightarrow Select and respond to the question you see displayed on the screen







Reminders & What's Next

Thank you all for participating in this session!

• CEUs: AWWA CA-NV Water Use Efficiency Practitioner and Irrigation Association

American Water Works Association

California-Nevada Section



- **Next:** Track Sessions (11:15 am 12:30 pm)
 - CII Opportunities Part 2: The Inside Scoop: Tacking Indoor Water Use in CII Facilities (Room 300)
 - Stronger Together: Amplify through Partnerships (Room 400)

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