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A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT



## OTAY WATER DISTRICT REMAINS AT LEVEL 1 – DROUGHT WATCH

*Thank You for Saving Water!*

The Otay Water District remains at a Level 1 – Drought Watch and its customers are not facing mandatory water conservation restrictions thanks to their water conservation efforts.

**Due to the ongoing supply shortages, water prices at the wholesale level will continue to increase. Water conservation not only saves this precious resource, but equally important, it saves your family money.**

Water conservation remains voluntary for water customers residing within the district’s service area, which includes portions of Spring Valley, Rancho San Diego, Jamul, eastern Chula Vista, and eastern Otay Mesa.

In May, the Otay Water District’s Board of Directors voted to stay at a Level 1 – Drought Watch because of the already high water conservation levels demonstrated by the district’s customers. However, the Board announced it would declare a higher-level alert and impose mandatory water conservation should it become necessary.

In addition to high conservation levels, past investments in recycled water infrastructure are greatly contributing to the district achieving its conservation goals. The Otay Water District operates one of the largest recycled water networks in San Diego County

and is one of a handful of water districts that utilizes drought-proof recycled water for landscape irrigation.

While the Board thanks you for conserving water, we encourage you to continue saving water as we enter the warmest months of the year.

### Continue to save water by:

- Avoiding irrigating during the heat of the day. Instead, irrigate before 10:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m. to minimize water lost to evaporation.
- When irrigating, stop water waste from runoff, over spray, broken or misdirected sprinkler heads.
- Irrigate no more than three days per week, 15 minutes per standard sprinkler valve.
- Repair all water leaks, broken or misdirected sprinkler heads promptly.
- Wash vehicles using a bucket and a hose with a positive shut-off nozzle, or use a commercial car wash that recycles water on site.
- Use a broom to clean paved surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways, or patios.

## Otay Water District SUPPLY STATUS

### LEVEL 1 - DROUGHT WATCH

Voluntary measures to stop waste. Repair leaks promptly. Wash cars with a bucket and shut-off nozzle.

### LEVEL 2 - DROUGHT ALERT

Mandatory water use restrictions.

### LEVEL 3 - DROUGHT CRITICAL

No new construction, annexations or development. Strict limits on water used for irrigation and non-public health purposes.

### LEVEL 4 - DROUGHT EMERGENCY

Stop all landscape irrigation. No new construction, annexations or development.

**The Otay Water District continues a Level 1 Drought Watch for its service area.**

**The Otay Water District thanks its customers for conserving water and their support of recycled water. Because of your strong efforts to conserve water and investments in recycled water infrastructure, Otay customers are avoiding strict mandatory conservation measures. Thank you for your support and keep up the good work!**

# PAYMENT OPTIONS:

## *The Otay Water District offers fast and convenient ways to pay your bill*

**Pay by Phone:** Debit and credit card customers can pay their bill by phone, 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. Call us at 619-670-2777. Have your Otay account number when using this feature. In addition to VISA and MasterCard debit/credit card payments, our credit card service accepts Discover and American Express. A \$4.80 fee is applied to credit card transactions.

**Web Payments:** Web payments can be made online 24/7 at no charge. Visit our website at [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov) and click on Pay Your Bill Online. We accept VISA and MasterCard debit and credit cards.

**Auto-Payment:** Using the automatic payment service, your bank account is debited each month on a pre-arranged date. Customers using this service still receive their monthly statement to verify consumption, calculations and amount to

be deducted. This option eliminates the possibility of late payments, and alleviates concerns when taking vacations. An Auto-Payment application form is available online at [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov) and click on Customer Service.

**Secure 24-Hour Drop Box:** A 24-hour drop box is available to our customers at our business office located at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd., Spring Valley.

**Postal Annex:** Payments can also be made at the Postal Annex in the Terra Nova Shopping Center, 374 East H Street, off I-805 in Chula Vista. Call 619-585-7400 for business hours. There is a \$1.00 fee for this service.

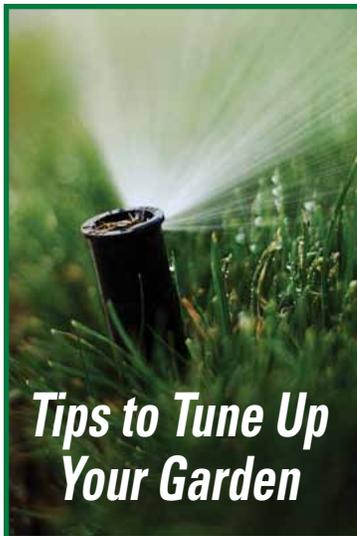
**Pay by Mail:** You can mail your payment directly to the Otay Water District at P. O. Box 51375, Los Angeles, CA 90051-5675.

## *RECYCLED WATER Drought-Proof, Reliable Source of Water*

As the arid Southwest's water supplies become increasingly scarce due to drought, climate change, and environmental pumping restrictions, recycled water is vital to maintaining our quality of life.

The Otay Water District is proud to be a leader in water recycling. We operate one of the largest recycled water networks in San Diego County. Each day millions of gallons of recycled water are used to irrigate playing fields, golf courses, open space, and roadside parkways in eastern Chula Vista through a dedicated "purple-pipe" network. Recycled water is a reliable source of new, drought-proof water for our region.

State law recognizes that it is in the public interest to maximize the reuse of highly treated wastewater. Historically, the Otay Water District was 100% dependent on imported water. Today, 12% to 15% of the district's total water demand is met using recycled water for irrigation.



## **CONSERVATION BEGINS OUTDOORS**

Sixty percent of all residential water use occurs outdoors. When thinking of ways to save water, updating your irrigation practices will provide the greatest return on your landscape investment. Here are a few tips to tune up your garden:

Replace or redirect sprinkler heads, and cutback turf or plant material to allow precious water to reach your lawn and plant materials.

Adjust your irrigation clock to water during the cooler times of day, such as in the evening

or the early morning hours. Avoid irrigating midday when much of your water could be lost to evaporation.

Use shorter irrigation cycles to avoid runoff, especially on slopes. Shorter cycles allow water to soak in, and promote a deeper, healthier root system.

Replace mulch or bark. A 2-4 inch bed of mulch or bark helps your soil maintain moisture, and will help minimize annoying weeds.

### **OTAY WATER DISTRICT - Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm in the Board meeting room. The public is encouraged to attend at 2554 Sweetwater Spring Blvd., Spring Valley, CA.

**President**  
Gary Croucher, Division 3  
[gcroucher@otaywater.gov](mailto:gcroucher@otaywater.gov)

**Vice-President**  
Jose Lopez, Division 4  
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**Boardmember**  
Mark Robak, Division 5  
[OtayWater@cox.net](mailto:OtayWater@cox.net)



## FREE HOTLINE FOR GARDENERS

Concerned about how to garden in these water-challenging times? Nan Sterman, author of California Gardener's Guide Vol. 2, host of the gardening show "A Growing Passion", and instructor of the Water Conservation Garden's popular "Bye Bye Grass" class will answer your questions about water smart landscaping when you call The Water Smart Pipeline at 866-962-7021 x 17. The hotline is available:

**Tuesdays 8:30 a.m. – Noon**  
**Thursdays 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

***This free service is available  
through the end of 2009.***

For more class information and prices  
visit [www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org)

**Saturday, Aug. 16, 9:30 am - 10:30 am**  
**OR**

**Saturday, Sept. 20, 9:30 am - 10:30 am**

**Special Access Tour**—This special tour is offered monthly for individuals who may have difficulty navigating the terrain of the Garden. You will explore the Garden from the comfort of the Verbeck Shuttle with David Yetz, Garden Horticulturist. This tour seats 4-5 people. Advance reservations are required, no exceptions please. Phone 619-660-6841 to schedule.

**Saturday, Aug. 29, 9:00 am – Noon**

**Toss Your Turf: Less Water, Less Grass, More Fun!** - Join Vickie Driver for a short course in turf removal. Get tips for evaluating your soil, tuning up your irrigation system, and creative ideas for a beautiful low-water-use landscape in lieu of lawn! Pre-registration is required. Special stimulus pricing! Two registrations for the price of one (same household only please). When registering online, please leave quantity at 1 for the Stimulus Pricing of 2 for 1. Members: \$20, non-Members: \$30

**Sunday, Sept. 6, 1:30 pm**

**FREE! Ask the Horticulturist Tour - First Sunday of the month**—Enjoy an informative walk through the Garden with Horticulturist Dave Yetz. Bring your questions and prepare for this interesting tour from the perspective of those who know the Garden so well! Tour will take 45-60 minutes. No reservations required. FREE!

## Irrigation—Part I

One question I am often asked is this: ***How often should I water?***

It seems a simple enough question, always asked with the expectation that I'll say "twice a week" or "once a week" or "every third day."

The answer however, isn't any of those. ***The answer is, "it depends."***

It depends on where you live, the time of year, what kind of soil you have, the water needs of the plants, and the type of irrigation system you have.

Overwhelmed? I hope not, because figuring out how much, how often, and how to water isn't that hard.

Let's start with why we water. The goal of watering is to wet plant roots. Roots are the plant parts that take up water from the soil and deliver them to trunks, branches, leaves, and so on. With few exceptions, leaves don't take up water, nor do branches or trunks. Only roots.

If the plants in your garden are native to where you live (and I mean native to your particular community, not to elsewhere in California), then chances are, once those plants survive their first year in the ground, they can live on rainfall alone.

But plants native to other parts of California, other states, or even other countries probably need more water than they get from rainfall alone. That's why we irrigate.

Most gardens are irrigated with overhead sprinklers, spray heads that emit a stream or a mist of water "over the head" of plants. The idea is for the water to "rain" onto the plants, fall onto the leaves, drip down to the ground, and find its way to plant roots. In the meantime, however, about half the sprayed water evaporates into the air or runs off into the gutter.

Newer technology spray heads spray bigger drops that don't evaporate quite as readily. They also adjust the amount of water sprayed to the distance of the spray. Both help reduce the amount of water wasted.

If you have a flat lawn with an even surface, these overhead sprinklers work as intended. But if your garden includes plants of different sizes—shrubs, trees, perennials, etc. — it is nearly impossible to wet all the plants' roots using overhead sprinklers.

Think about it. Pop up sprinklers and permanent risers are set at particular heights — say six or ten inches tall (some taller). Whatever the height, what happens when, over the years, the plant in front of that sprinkler head grows ten feet tall and wide? That plant will block the spray. It will get watered, but what about the surrounding plants? What happens when their water source can no longer reach them?

In these kinds of situations, drip irrigation and micro sprays work far better. These technologies use tubes and emitters to deliver water exactly where it is needed, to the soil above plant roots. Because they deliver water slowly and at low pressure, the water absorbs into the soil and none runs off. In other words, no more wet sidewalks, driveways or slimy green gutters to deal with. Virtually no water is lost to evaporation either. Drip and microsprays are about as close as you can come to no-waste watering. And that translates to happy plants and lower water bills.

Some landscapers shun drip and microspray irrigation, saying they are hard to manage. It does take a sharper eye to recognize a line that has popped off or a head that needs to be screwed back on, but what a small price to pay for saving hundreds if not thousands of gallons of water each year! And if you are a do-it-yourselfer, maintaining a drip and/or micro spray system is easier than maintaining an overhead system. I've been doing it for years!

**Next time: how much and how often to water.**

# EL DISTRITO DE AGUA DE OTAY SE MANTIENE EN UN ESTADO DE VIGILANCIA DE SEQUIA - NIVEL 1

*¡Gracias por ahorrar agua!*

El Distrito de Agua de Otay se mantiene en un Estado de Vigilancia de sequia - Nivel 1 y sus clientes no se han tenido que enfrentar a restricciones obligatorias de la conservación de agua gracias a sus esfuerzos por conservar agua.

La conservación del agua sigue siendo voluntaria para los clientes que residen en el área de servicio del distrito, que incluye porciones de Spring Valley, Rancho San Diego, Jamul, y el este de Chula Vista y Otay Mesa.

Este pasado mes de mayo, la Junta Directiva del Distrito de Agua de Otay votó a favor de permanecer en un Estado de Vigilancia de sequia - Nivel 1, debido a los altos niveles de conservación del agua demostrado por los clientes del distrito. Sin embargo, la Junta Directiva anunció la posibilidad de declarar un alto nivel de alerta e imponer medidas obligatorias de conservación del agua si fuera necesario.

Además de los niveles elevados de conservación, inversiones anteriores en la infraestructura de agua reciclada también están contribuyendo a las metas de conservación de agua del Distrito. El Distrito de Agua Otay opera una de las mayores redes de agua reciclada en el condado de San Diego y es uno de los pocos distritos de agua que utilizan agua reciclada, como un suministro de agua para el riego de paisajes.

La Junta Directiva agradeció los esfuerzos de sus clientes por conservar agua y los alentó a continuar su alto nivel de conservación al entrar en los meses más cálidos del año.

### Los clientes pueden seguir ahorrando agua haciendo lo siguiente:

- Evitar el riego durante el calor del día. En lugar de ello, es importante regar antes de las 10:00 am y después de las 6:00 horas para minimizar la pérdida de agua a la evaporación.
- Durante la irrigación, evite el desperdicio de agua por goteo, o por cabezas de riego rotas o desalineadas
- Irrigar no más de tres días a la semana y 15 minutos por válvula.
- Reparar las fugas de agua, cabezas de riego rotas o desalineadas con prontitud.
- Lavar su auto usando una cubeta y manguera con boquilla de cierre automático, o use un túnel de lavado comercial que cuentan con un sistema de reciclaje de agua.
- Usar una escoba para limpiar superficies pavimentadas como aceras, vías de entradas, o patios.

## Distrito de agua de Otay Estado del Suministro de Agua

### SEQUIA – NIVEL 1 ESTADO DE VIGILANCIA

Medidas voluntarias para detener los residuos. Reparar las fugas rápidamente. Lavar su auto con una cubeta y una manguera con boquilla de cierre automático.

### SEQUIA – NIVEL 2 ESTADO DE ALERTA

Restricciones obligatorias del uso del agua.

### SEQUIA – NIVEL 3 ESTADO CRITICO

Ninguna construcción de anexos o desarrollos nuevos. Límites estrictos de la cantidad de agua utilizada para el riego y otros usos que no incluyen proyectos de salud pública.

### SEQUIA – NIVEL 4 ESTADO DE EMERGENCIA

Alto al riego de jardines Ninguna construcción de anexos o desarrollos nuevos.

## El Distrito de Agua Otay continúa en Estado de Vigilancia de Sequia-Nivel 1 para su área de servicio.

El Distrito de Agua Otay agradece a sus clientes por conservar agua y por su apoyo del uso de agua reciclada. Debido a sus esfuerzos por conservar agua e inversiones en la infraestructura de agua reciclada, los clientes de Otay están evitando medidas estrictas y obligatorias para la conservación del agua.

Gracias por su apoyo y continúen con el buen trabajo!

## La Conservación del Agua Empieza al Aire Libre Consejos para el mantenimiento de su Jardín

El sesenta por ciento del uso del agua residencial sucede en el jardín. Cuando pensamos en cómo ahorrar agua, practicando maneras más modernas de riego, puede darnos mejores resultados maximizando así su inversión de jardinería. Aquí le damos unos consejos para mejorar su jardín:

Reponga o corrija las cabezas de riego, y recorte el sacate o las plantas excesivas para que permita que el agua le llegue a todo el sacate y a todas las plantas.

Ajuste el reloj de irrigación para regar durante el tiempo más fresco del día, por ejemplo en las noches o muy temprano en la mañana. Evite regar a medio día cuando el agua se puede evaporar.

Use ciclos de irrigación más cortos para evitar desperdicio especialmente en las áreas más altas. Ciclos más cortos permitirán que el agua penetre y promueva un sistema de raíces más sano.

Reemplace el estiércol o embono. Una capa de 2 a 4 pulgadas de estiércol o embono ayudara a que la tierra mantenga la humedad, y minimizará el crecimiento de yerbas no deseadas.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT CALL 619.670.2222 OR GO TO [WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV](http://WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV)