



## California Responds to Drought, Mandates Cuts

Millions of Californians are making necessary lifestyle changes as a severe four-year drought persists. Following the State's emergency declaration, new rules have been implemented to protect scarce water supplies. The State Water Resources Control Board will impose stiff penalties for non-compliance with mandates for reduced use as compared to 2013. As a community, Brea is required to achieve a 24% overall reduction.

Local restrictions are defined under Brea's water conservation ordinance. Recently, Phase 2 went into effect to eliminate waste and encourage ongoing diligence about water practices. Because most of a typical home's water consumption relates to outdoor irrigation, this becomes a prime target for cuts. However, each individual is also responsible for careful habits in household routines for cooking, grooming and cleaning.

At any price, the scarcity of water makes it an increasingly valuable commodity. In recent years, through diversification of supply sources and integration of solar energy to power distribution pumps, the City has built a slight buffer against ever escalating costs. As Brea strives for continued leadership with additional efficiency projects, the public is invited to share in this important effort.

This Drought Response Extra section overviews various aspects of the current situation. Please become familiar with new guidelines and join our community-wide campaign to save water.

## Responsible Actions Stretch Brea Water Supply

The City of Brea passed a comprehensive water ordinance in 2009 and since that time operated under Phase 1, which prescribes common sense limits to avoid waste. Businesses and residents are appreciated for working cooperatively for positive results.

The Brea City Council implemented Phase 2 of its ordinance at its June 16 meeting. Brea's water utility will closely monitor operations to eliminate all waste and reduce system demands. Local oversight will also be stepped up to achieve additional savings of 24% compared to 2013 usage.

## Important Phase 2 outdoor rules:

- > **Outdoor irrigation is allowed no more than two days weekly specified as follows: residential and commercial customers – Mondays and/or Thursdays.** Alternative watering schedules may be permitted if a significant reason exists and is approved by the Water Distribution Superintendent.  
*(Public property will be irrigated on Sundays and/or Wednesdays.)*
- > **Sprinklers cannot operate between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and sprinklers may never run longer than a 15-minute per station cycle.**
- > **No water runoff may flow onto paved surfaces or into storm drains.**
- > **When a property owner is notified of leaks or runoff, it must be fixed within 48 hours.**
- > **No outdoor irrigation is permitted during measurable rain or for 48 hours after the rain event.**
- > **Commercial car washes are best. Home car washing may only be done using a bucket and sponge with a fast final rinse from an automatic shut-off nozzle. Fundraiser car washes are permitted only with a recapture process.**
- > **No more than one foot of water per month may be added to pools. Covers are required for any new pools or spas.**

*(Please alert Public Works if you are undertaking repairs to correct a leak.)*

Find complete details on Brea's water conservation ordinance at [cityofbrea.net](http://cityofbrea.net).

## City Operations Lead Local Efforts

The Public Works Department, which operates Brea's water utility, incorporates best practices into its operations. Efforts are multiplying to assure long-term stability through drought conditions.

Projects in 2013 replaced plantings at the Brea Community Center and re-landscaped Fire Station 3 with low water plants. Other facility landscape is gradually being converted with California-friendly palates. An ongoing practice retrofits plumbing with low-flow sprinklers and high-tech irrigation controllers for the highest efficiency at public parks and sports fields. Currently, watering street medians and park edges has ceased as these areas are ornamental turf. Alternative irrigation will be provided to maintain parkway trees since they are not a dispensable landscape element.

Public facility plumbing retrofits have included hands-free faucets to turn off water automatically. At the city maintenance yard, pint-flush urinals were installed. Opportunities for future fixture replacements will result in even more high-efficiency components elsewhere.

Less obvious for much of the public are golf-course best practices. The Brea Creek Golf Course is irrigated using an underground well of non-potable water, NOT drinking

water from the utility system. Although following a four-year closure, the Birch Hills Golf Course re-opened at a most difficult time, it now uses the newest irrigation technologies to minimize water demand. It also was constructed with California-friendly plants and a "purple pipe" system ready to accept reclaimed water that otherwise would be diverted into the sewer system. A consultant team will be evaluating such a treatment plan for when the course is turned over to the City. Updates on the reclamation progress will follow later.

Brea's Public Works Department will continue to pursue the highest efficiencies possible as they work hard to protect the community's shared recreational spaces in public parks.

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## Conservation Education, Customer Service Is a Priority



Educational items are distributed at open houses and special events to reinforce recycling and conservation. A recent emphasis has been promotion of programs to boost water efficiency. By applying through regional water agencies, residents can qualify for rebates which offset costs for low-flow toilets, low-water use washing machines, irrigation equipment and turf removal projects. But this money is going fast!

Brea's Public Works staff has been proactive in visiting high consumption water users. They offer strategies to help businesses identify waste and add efficiency. Even small adjustments in some commercial applications can result in significant savings.

Recently, it's been challenging to keep up with ever increasing calls for service. Brea's Public Works Department appreciates consumer interest and is working hard to offer good suggestions. In addition, they are often conducting field inspections to qualify customers for certain rebate programs.

Brea representatives are also fielding many troubleshooting questions. Sometimes a request is initiated in a call to self-report a mystery leak and request help in detecting the source. At other times contact originates with a "water waster" report when a violation is observed. Either way, the goal is to respond with sound advice about correcting problems.

Helpful information is readily available at [ocwatersmart.com](http://ocwatersmart.com). You will find rebate details and checklists to evaluate your water use. The online **Water Smart Home program** includes a free survey to score your residence's water efficiency and identify actions for more savings.

Visit [OCWaterSmart.com](http://OCWaterSmart.com) for tips and rebates.



# Doing More with Less: Brea Success Stories

## Suzuki Scores Major Savings with Turf Removal Project

The media couldn't miss it: a prominent company on a prominent corner. Suzuki Motors of America began ripping out the 300,000 square foot lawn at their national headquarters and local newspaper and television outlets took note. But it was all good! Suzuki is underway with a major turf replacement project to realize significant future savings.

By acting early and decisively Suzuki qualified for rebate incentives offered through the Municipal Water District of Orange County and offset much of their project cost. The company will place drought tolerant plants, add shade structures and a walking path for an inviting new landscape. Most significantly, they will cut water consumption by a dramatic 700,000 gallons each month. Ongoing savings will be reflected in both their water bill and in reduced maintenance expenses for lawn mowing and irrigation system upkeep.

As more businesses get smart about water, everyone within Brea's utility area benefits. The community thanks Suzuki for their bold initiative that inspires others to act too!



## New Plants Modernize Established Businesses

Even small touches make a big difference. Just look at the new plant framework around the Brea Heights Center to appreciate how a transition into California-friendly plants can add a fresh and modern touch to an established retail center. On west Lambert, the drive-thru area of Farmer Boys was replanted with drought tolerant, low-maintenance plants. In addition to gaining a new look, small businesses can reduce expenses by using less water and doing less frequent landscape maintenance too.



## Smart Resource Design Creates Plush Effect Throughout La Floresta

The master plan for the La Floresta mixed use community incorporated sustainability from its original concept. As new neighborhoods are welcoming residents, it shows how beautiful a California-friendly landscape can become.

Those who are familiar with a more traditional mix of landscaping elements may first think of a monochromatic desert look associated with drought tolerant plants. However, this isn't the case. La Floresta proves otherwise by featuring plenty of color, texture and contrast that invites people to enjoy a vibrant environment. Older homeowners associations will want to consider such possibilities as they seek efficiency when refreshing landscape treatments.



## Residential Superstars Bring Water Savings Home

There are some Brea homes that are looking good while saving water too. Who are the trendsetters in your neighborhood? Please thank them for making a difference with a California friendly landscape.

Have you made a landscaping change that you'd like to share? Email a photo to [BreaPIO@cityofbrea.net](mailto:BreaPIO@cityofbrea.net) and we might post it to the City's social media.



# Understand Your Billing and Monitor Water Use

Your monthly City of Brea utility bill indicates how many units of water were used. There is also a comparison to the same time period in the prior year. But, what do those numbers really mean?

Each billing unit of water equals 748 gallons. The average Brea household uses 14 units per month. But of course, there is a huge difference between households. A studio condo or single family home with a large yard? A single person or a family of five? These are obvious factors affecting consumption. So how does one evaluate if they are "water smart" or a "water waster?"

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) issued use reduction targets considering a metric known as Residential Gallons Per Capita, Per Day, or R-GPCD. An accepted standard for indoor use is 55 gallons per person per day. The new SWRCB emergency regulations do not strictly limit households to only this amount. However, the City of Brea was imposed with a 24 percent reduction mandate due to a baseline measurement taken from July through September 2014 which indicated use at 125.9 gallons R-GPCD.

For most residential customers that higher amount also includes outdoor irrigation use. Since the State has now established strict prohibitions against wasteful practices and has required percentage reductions, landscaping becomes the most obvious target for making meaningful reductions.

**When you examine your next water bill, go ahead and do the math:**

**Units × 748 = gallons consumed**

**Gallons consumed ÷ persons in household ÷ days in month = R-GPCD**

Hopefully, your number goes lower by 24% this summer. Remember, there are many things you can do as everyone works together responding to drought. Please make some changes with real impact: start outdoors!

## Water Wasters

Everyone needs help with saving water. Sometimes people don't know waste is occurring on their property and may appreciate a polite alert. When you observe a problem, please kindly inform your neighbor. If you are uncertain about who is the property owner, you can report water waste online. Make this selection from the pull-down menu under the **How Do I?** circle in the upper right corner at [cityofbrea.net](http://cityofbrea.net). Or, you may leave a message with **Public Works at 714-990-7691**.

## Quick Tips

### DO:

- > Check for leaks and fix them promptly.
- > Install low-flow nozzles, fixtures, and faucet aerators.
- > Turn water off while brushing teeth or soaping up hands.
- > Shorten showers. Save 12 gallons with five minutes less!
- > Only run full loads in the laundry or dishwasher.
- > Scrape waste from dishes into the garbage. Stack for a quick rinse if you must. Or, better, load directly to the dishwasher.

### DO NOT:

- > Allow overspray onto paved surfaces.
- > Irrigate landscape outside of prescribed time limits.
- > Launder outerwear, towels or linens more often than necessary.
- > Wash vehicles at home without bucket, sponge and an automatic shut-off nozzle.

