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PWD Helps to Keep Palmdale Clean

City's Desert Dazzle Clean-Up Event Worth Its Weight

Illegal dumping in Palmdale has been both an eyesore and a public health concern for sometime. With a vast landscape and open sky, our desert community is an easy target for illegal dumping. Everything from tires, TV's, used diapers, car parts, furniture, clothing, paperwork, sports equipment, and household items can be found in different locations throughout our community.

The Water District supplied bottled water to all of the participants, and several of the Board of Director's showed up to pick up the litter alongside City personnel and over 120 volunteers. Eleven dumpsters supplied by Waste Management were quickly filled with debris littered across Avenue R and 70th Street East. It was a strong day for wind, but all of the volunteers persevered picking the unwanted belongings from tumbleweeds and other desert vegetation.

The event was scheduled for three hours but lasted about two and a half due to all of the dumpsters being completely filled. City crew workers used heavy machinery to lift large awkward pieces into the trash bins and helped deliver water and additional trash bags to the volunteer staff. It was a good day for the community; one that will hopefully resonate and deter others from discarding their waste illegally.



Water Usage Update

The State of California enacted a law in 2009 requiring a 20% reduction of water use by the year 2020. The average water use in California was 192 gallons per person per day (GPCD). Therefore, the statewide 2020 goal is 154 GPCD. The District's baseline per capita water use is 220 GPCD. Therefore, the District's 2020 goal is 176 GPCD. The amount of billed water in 2014 was 18,127 acre-feet or 5.9 billion gallons of water. This reduction of 4.6% from 2013 reflects a per capita water usage by District customers of 154 GPCD and is a reduction of 30% from the baseline. That means that we are already below what the State is asking for!

Great job Palmdale!



Palmdale Water District

February 2015

the PIPELINE



Diversifying Our "Water Portfolio:" Preparing Palmdale for the Future

Palmdale receives our water supply from 3 sources: One. The State Water Project, Two. Litterlock Reservoir, and Three. The pumping of groundwater. Each year the reliability of water from snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains is a gamble. The need to ensure that our community has enough water to function and thrive is the reason why the PWD exists. Planning for the future is an everyday discussion that requires embracing new approaches and ideas that will increase our independence from relying on water from other parts of the State. Using recycled water, along with a blend of raw water, to recharge our groundwater supply is one idea that is beginning to gain traction throughout the Antelope Valley.

A new project is beginning to take shape that will help replenish the water being extracted from deep beneath the desert floor: The Litterlock Creek Groundwater Recharge and Recovery Project is entering the planning phase which will consist of determining the best alternative engineering option to create an effective, reliable, and sustainable method to continually put water back into the ground.

Recycled water is a phrase that describes the reuse of used water from our homes, businesses, and industries that has been treated 3 times to remove contaminants and impurities to ensure its safety and any concerns revolving around public health. As of now, recycled water is used, locally, primarily for irrigating fields and parks but has a high ceiling for use in other ways. However, a growing number of recharge projects are operating throughout California.

It's a little known fact that all of the water on earth was created millions of years ago and that the planet does not create more water. Rather it simply recycles it through its own process called the water cycle. So, all of the water that we consume has been around since the beginnings of planet earth. Unfortunately, the vast majority of water is salt water which is incredibly expensive to desalinate. Only 2.5% of all water on earth is freshwater but most is either frozen, or underground. Only 1.2% of all water on earth (surface water) is readily available to use to meet the needs of a global population that now exceeds 7 billion people.

Since we live in a desert community, the availability of surface water is virtually non-existent. As our climate continues to change, where longer periods of drought may exist, the need for expanding our supply of water is crucial to our long-term commitment to Palmdale.

Storing water underground is a management practice that removes water waste because there is no evaporation. We can keep everything we put in. The ground also acts as an additional natural filtration system which is like adding a 4th treatment process to the recycled water component.

The State requires a blend of raw water and recycled water to be used in recharging ground water supplies. The planning phase will include a review of the proposed project by a "Blue Ribbon" panel comprised of scientists and health experts to ensure it will meet all health and safety regulations.

Once the Planning phase is complete, the Board will have the option to approve moving forward with the implementation phase of the project.



Courson Clean & Green Event
March 28, 2015

Call 661-267-5665 for more info



Board Meetings

February 11 & 25, 2015 @ 7 pm



Our Water Footprint (December 2014)

Water Used District Wide – 5,907,088 gallons

Water consumed per person per day – 154 gallons

Water Available in Littlerock Reservoir - 150 acre/feet

All 2014 YTD Cash for Grass Dollars – \$72,831.50

All 2014 YTD Total Square Feet of Grass Removed – 41,753 sq. ft.

All YTD 2014 Water saved through the Cash for Grass Program – 2,705,516 gallons

All 2014 YTD other Rebate Programs Total Dollars Paid Out – \$25,272

Its Time to Think About getting Your Lawn Ready!

Thatch and Aerate

Thatching is the removal of old, tired grass. With thatch removed, air, water and nutrients can do their job more efficiently. Turf becomes healthier and more resistant to insect damage and disease.

A problem with a thick thatch is that the grass roots are rooting within the grass itself, rather than into the soil.

Thatch is a layer of grass stems, roots, clipping and debris that settle on the ground and either slowly decompose and/or accumulates over time.

Lawn thatching can be done using a lawn thatcher, or a thatch rake. It is best to mow your lawn down about a half inch shorter than usual before thatching. Thatch when grass is dry.

Aerating

Why aerate? Aerating saves you money by reducing the amount you need to water. Lawn aeration builds a thicker turf. Water helps roots to penetrate tough soils and makes it easier for roots to grow thicker and deeper.

Aerating helps in the same way as a rototiller helps your garden. It loosens the dirt and circulates air. The many benefits of aeration keeps your lawn greener reducing the cost of watering by:

- 1-Improving drainage and reducing runoff
- 2-Reduces soil compaction
- 3-Controls thatch development
- 4-Reduces drought damage
- 5-Allows water, air and nutrients direct access to the root system.

To get the best results when aerating your lawn, you want to use a core aerator. This method allows you to pull plugs out of the lawn and allows for deeper water penetration. As the water seeps deeper into the soil, it encourages the roots to grow deeper. As the roots grow deeper, this will also thicken the turf and naturally breaks up clay underneath the soil.

The best time to thatch and aerate is spring or fall, after the rainy season and before hot weather. Aerating works well with over seeding and fertilizing.



Antelope Valley Transit Authority AVTA Leads the Way with Water Conservation Efforts

The Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) is well on its way to becoming a nationally recognized leader in the public transportation industry for its commitment to water conservation. California's historic drought has prompted AVTA to take extreme measures to reduce its water consumption by 82 percent. In recent years, the design and implementation of innovative water conservation processes have played a key role in ensuring that AVTA's operations are eco-friendly.

AVTA's efforts at reducing water consumption have paid off in a big way, saving taxpayer dollars as well as water. Their annual water usage has dropped from 3.8 million gallons to 684,000 gallons per year, and their monthly water bill dropped from \$5,000 to approximately \$1,200. Earlier this year, the agency received a prestigious award from the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District for its environmentally friendly efforts. As a recipient of the William J. "Pete" Knight AIRE Award, the agency was applauded by state and local officials for demonstrating environmental responsibility.

In 2011, plans for a major construction project at AVTA were underway, and the transit agency broke ground on an \$11 million Phase 2 expansion of the existing facility. It was during the beginning stages of construction that AVTA realized how much water was being used in everyday operations. Officials from the Los Angeles County Industrial Waste Water Division notified AVTA that an Industrial Waste Water Permit, at a staggering \$219,000 fee per year, could be required, due to the fact that the agency was consuming 3.8 million gallons of water annually. The exorbitant cost and the agency's commitment to the environment prompted AVTA's staff to take immediate action to drastically reduce its water usage.

To eliminate the need for a permit, AVTA had to reduce its water consumption to less than one million gallons annually. A daunting challenge, to be sure, but the AVTA Fleet Maintenance team, led by Manager Mark Perry, was equal to the task. They began by analyzing the facility operations that used the most water and found that one of the major areas was bus washing. Perry and his staff first reduced the frequency of washing buses from daily to weekly and used just 40 gallons per bus wash as opposed to 400 gallons, which they had been consuming previously. This effort alone reduced water consumption by 68 percent. Perry then worked with

the manufacturer of the bus washing equipment to design a water recycling system. The improved system catches and funnels used water from eight of nine wash stations through a series of filtration and water treatment components and then stores it in a holding tank for future washes.

Another area Perry examined was the facility landscaping. Approximately one acre of the 18-acre AVTA site was landscaped, but at that time the landscape consisted of grass and non-native plants and took 23,000 gallons of water annually to maintain a healthy appearance. The maintenance staff replaced the existing landscaping with a combination of veriscaping and vegetation native to the high desert climate, which needed little watering beyond normal rainfall. Additionally, all domestic plumbing fixtures within the facility were converted to low-flow.

Each of these measures are representative of a greater shift to more sustainable practices in the transportation industry. AVTA will continue to implement environmentally sound strategies that are in the best interest of the residents we serve.



Desert Gardening Highlights How to Save Water and Have a Colorful Yard



Sweet Acacia, or *Acacia farnesiana*, is actually a large deciduous shrub that can grow up to almost 30 ft. in height. It blooms in the late winter to early spring with golden yellow puffsballs which

are known to be quite fragrant. This ornamental decorative addition to your landscape prefers well-drained soil and can still grow well even in nutritionally deprived areas. This shrub/tree does not like shade and prefers full sun, dry to moist soils, and can tolerate drought. Sweet Acacia has a unique relationship with certain soil bacteria where nodules form on the roots and can "fix" atmospheric nitrogen. This helps not only the plant grow but can also assist other nearby vegetation by adding nitrogen to the soil.



Cordia parvifolia, is a beautiful shrub for any yard or landscape, in the High Desert. With its moderate size and semi-evergreen characteristics, the **Little-Leaf Cordia** is a hearty and majestic plant.

The leaves are small and oval with a gray-olive color, and the plant grows in an open, arching, circular manner. This beautiful shrub blooms in the Spring and Fall in small clusters of white flowers. From a distance, they can look like popcorn. Watering this shrub frequently will enhance the rate of growth but is not necessary. This shrub requires little water to live and prosper and can handle intense heat and direct sun even if it is close to structures such as walls or pavement.



For those of us who like groundcover or adding green to a brown ground, look no further than ***Baccharis X 'Starn Thompson'***. This fast growing evergreen plant spreads and mounds as it

spreads across its area creating a dense thick foliage cover. The leaves are bright green and quite small but adds wonderful color to any landscape. The **Trailing Desert Broom** has non-showy, white flowers that bloom in the Fall. When choosing this particular plant, keep in mind that the male version does not produce seedheads, which allows growth to be more uniform with less maintenance. It requires little water and does well in full sun.

Rate Assistance Program for Low-Income Seniors District Now Accepting Applications!

Low income seniors aged 62 and older are getting an opportunity to receive assistance on their water bill. The Palmdale Water District is now accepting applications for qualified households to receive up to 50% off their monthly service fee. Households must have a 5/8" or 3/4" meter and be enrolled in either the Southern California Edison or Southern California Gas Company CARE program to be eligible.

The program is funded through existing lease agreements between the District and cell phone companies that have towers located on District owned property. Initially, up to \$150,000 annually will be available in rate assistance, with any remaining available funds rolling over to the next year.

Applications will be accepted year around or until funds for the program run out. Applicants must reapply each year or anytime a move is made. Additional information on program requirements can be found on the District website.