



May 13, 2008

EBMUD Adopts Drought Management Program

Mandatory rationing goals effective immediately. The drought program approved by the Board prohibits the following:

- **Using water for decorative ponds, lakes and fountains except those that recycle the water**
- **Irrigating outdoors on consecutive days or more than three days a week.**
- **Lawn and garden watering that results in excessive runoff.**

The Board discussed the implementation of drought rates, which will be considered for approval at its July 8th Board meeting and public hearing.



EBMUD Practical Tips for saving water, improving plant health, and lowering your water costs for your commercial sites. How to save water for your Homeowner Associations, Business Parks, and City Roadside and Median Planter Areas.

1. Have your *existing* sprinkler system checked. Optimize the efficiency of your existing irrigation system.

- Make necessary repairs to broken sprinklers, pipes, and fittings.
- Add or move sprinklers to improve how evenly water is applied to the plant material.
- Adjust sprinkler nozzles spray pattern and radius. Be sure to use the right nozzle for the right area.
- Straighten leaning sprinklers and raise sprinklers that no longer spray above the plant material.
- Check for leaks in the system. Read irrigation meter on a regular basis.
- Maintain irrigation system to its potential throughout the year.



2. Check irrigation meter for leaks. If meter indicates leaks, make necessary repairs.

3. Improve Scheduling on Irrigation Controllers can lead to significant water savings.

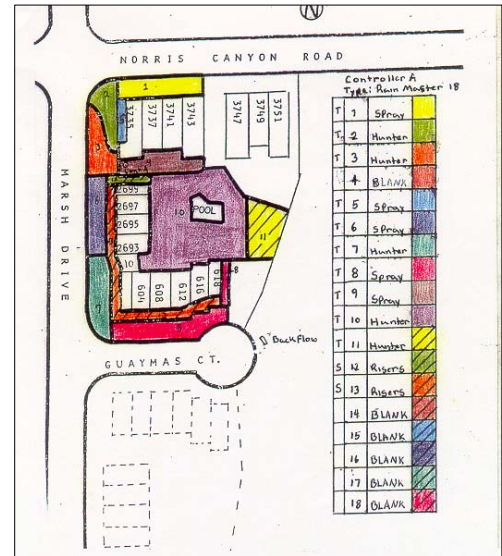
Use all features on the controller. Most controllers have:

- *Multiple Programs Feature* to irrigate lawns separately from established shrubs and groundcovers, newly planted areas, etc.
- *Multiple Starts Feature* to minimize irrigation run-off and help keep water at the root zone of the plant material.



- Use 3-4 short run times for spray type sprinklers that apply water faster than the soil can accept it. This helps to keep water at the root zone of the plant material.
- *Water Budget Feature (%)* used to quickly adjust sprinkler run times (+/-) during the irrigation season. This very useful feature can be used to reduce sprinkler run times, particularly after July, when the water need of the plant has peaked for the summer.
- Typically, most soils in the EBMUD service area are clay. For the summer peak season, deep-less frequent (2-3 days a week) irrigation cycles are preferred instead of daily, short run times. Deep irrigation cycles encourage deep rooting, and increase soil moisture for turf and plants.

4. **Create irrigation controller maps.** This map shows the person responsible for programming the controller what landscape area is controlled by what valve. Maps should also indicate the type of sprinkler equipment is used in the field (Rotor, Drip or Spray). **Copies of the map should be made for management in case the maps are lost or damaged.**



5. To make scheduling and adjusting the controllers more efficient, produce a **base schedule**. How much to water (minutes, starts per day, and program #) is a fixed setting determined by the plant material and type of sprinkler (spray, rotor, drip, etc.). Adjust for seasonal changes by adding or deleting water days or by using the % adjustment feature that is available on most controllers. Use 100% for July and adjust down through August and September (70% - 90%) of base July schedule. Remove days by October.

6. Contact EBMUD for a FREE Irrigation Site Survey

Receive water consumption histories for each account (meter). Compare consumption to the sites actual water needs. 5,500 gpd (gallons per day) is the water requirement for coastal zones with 1-acre of grass during the peak summer month of July. 6,800 gpd for inland zones.

- o Prioritize sites to determine where water savings are.
- o Evaluate irrigation systems for eligibility in the EBMUD Irrigation Upgrade (Rebates) Program.
- o Sprinkler uniformity tests.



7. You may already have **“Water Budget”** information printed on your bill. EBMUD offers FREE water budgets to irrigation only accounts (meters). Check your bill, if water consumption exceeds the recommended budget, contact your landscape manager to check for possible leaks and the irrigation schedule.
8. **REBATES!** Do you have an old, in-efficient sprinkler system? EBMUD offers an Irrigation Upgrade Program designed to help commercial large-landscape irrigators improve the efficiency of existing irrigation systems. Customers who participate in an irrigation survey may qualify for rebates of 50 percent of the costs of water-efficient irrigation equipment.



Rotating nozzles that can be used on *existing* sprinklers are a very cost effective way to improve existing sprinkler uniformity and deliver water at a much slower rate, which is ideal for the clay soils in the EBMUD service area.

Sprinklers equipped with pressure regulators and checkvalves, irrigation submeters, moisture sensors, rain shut-off devices, and drip irrigation may qualify for the rebate program.

9. Consider using new, weather based irrigation controller technologies that now exist. These controllers adjust themselves throughout the year automatically based on the **information it receives from the person who schedules** the controller. To work to their potential, the correct information needs to be programmed into these controllers (*like any irrigation controllers*).

Local weather information history, plant type, soil type, and precipitation rates (PR) of the sprinklers on site are some of the information used to implement an irrigation schedule. Some of these systems have communication fees. Contact our office at 1-866-403-2683 or our web site at www.ebmud.com for our WaterSmart Irrigation Controller (WSIC) program details.

10. Using colorful, low water use plant material can help reduce your water consumption. In some areas, grass is not a logical choice. Grass planted in narrow difficult to irrigate areas can lead to excessive water bills and irrigation run-off. Consider using drip irrigation in place of existing overhead spray sprinklers.



11. Over the years, grass areas may be performing poorly due to excessive shade. Consider replacing the grass with a colorful, low maintenance, and less thirsty plant material which is more suited for the area. Be sure to check sprinkler coverage and make necessary changes to the sprinkler system.

12. Mulch bare dirt areas of the landscape. This will help soil moisture, reduce weed populations, protect the drip irrigation systems from the harmful rays of the sun, help to amend the soil, and improve the overall appearance of the site.



13. Contact the local UC Extension office or web-site for tips on lawn watering, aeration, fertilization, mowing, and disease and weed control. Go to ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irr.html for lawn watering tips.

Call EBMUD to schedule a free irrigation survey and request current program information.

Or visit www.ebmud.com for additional information.

1-866-403-2683
East Bay Municipal Utility District