



Zone 7 Water Agency
 100 North Canyons Parkway
 Livermore, CA 94551
 925/454-5000
 www.zone7water.com

Prsrt Std
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Pleasanton, CA
 Permit #284



Waterways

A Newsletter from *Zone 7 Water Agency*

Issue No. 7

September 2008

Water Rate Proposal on Tap

See inside for more information on a proposed increase in wholesale water rates for 2009, and check out our website at www.zone7water.com. Join us at our next Board of Directors meeting:

Date: Wednesday, September 17

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: 100 North Canyons Parkway, Livermore

Who to Contact

For Questions Regarding Your Water

California Water Service Company • 925-447-4900
 City of Livermore • 925-960-8100
 City of Pleasanton • 925-931-5520
 Dublin San Ramon Services District • 925-828-0515

For Questions Regarding Your Storm Drains

Alameda County Public Works • 510-670-5480
 City of Dublin Public Works • 925-833-6630
 City of Livermore • 925-960-8100
 City of Pleasanton Public Works • 925-931-5500

Local Water-Saving Heroes

Water-Wise Gardeners Show Us How

Paul and Ann Kasameyer of Livermore were among several Valley residents who this year opened their drought-tolerant gardens to public tours that have become annual events in the East Bay. Both the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour and the Bay-Friendly Garden Tour spotlight ways that environmentally minded people – right here in our own communities – can create water-conserving and pesticide-free gardens that are beautiful and easy to maintain.

“We hardly use any water,” Paul Kasameyer said of his colorful yard, established with drip irrigation and now thriving with native iris, verbena, ceanothus, desert plants, deer grass and fuchsia, along with red fescue ground cover as a lawn alternative. Not only are the plants accustomed to California’s naturally arid weather, “They attract a lot of butterflies and hummingbirds; it’s so fun!”

Eric Renger of Dublin had his yard included in the Bay-Friendly Garden Tour after four years ago replacing his front lawn with perennial drought-tolerant plants. Grouping by water need, also known as “hydrozoning,” is central to his garden’s success.

“Probably the biggest water-saving feature in my yards is a drip-irrigation system with four separate valves – two for the front and two for the back,” he said.

continued



Kathryn McClelland



The Renger Garden



Paul Kasameyer

Do Your Part: Be Water Smart!!!

Drought conditions, along with a court-ordered reduction in State Water Project deliveries via the ecologically fragile Bay Delta, mean we all must do our part to avoid wasting water. Through wise water management, Zone 7 has enough stored groundwater and other emergency reserve supplies to meet projected demands this year. But because these water-supply reductions could carry forward into future years, we are urging customers now to cut back water use by at least 10 percent.

The average family of three in the Valley uses from 375 to 450 gallons of water per day. This reflects average use over the course of a year and can double during peak summer months due to outdoor water use.

Here are some ways you and your family can save water:

Outdoors	Water Savings
Water your lawn only when needed (2-3 times a week is plenty in summer; less often in fall and winter)	36 gallons per day
Water before 7 a.m. to reduce evaporation.....	20-25 gallons per day
Put a layer of mulch around trees & plants	20-30 gallons per day
Set lawn mower blades a notch higher (longer grass reduces evaporation)	16 gallons per day
Don't leave the hose running while washing your car; use a shutoff nozzle.....	8-18 gallons per minute
Go to a car wash that recycles its water.....	100 gallons per wash
Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation.....	32 gallons per day
Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways & sidewalks	150 gallons each time
Indoors	
Shorten showers	2-6 gallons per minute
Get a rebate for a high-efficiency toilet*	3.8 gallons per flush
Get a rebate for a high-efficiency clothes washer*.....	20-30 gallons per load
Install water-saving shower heads	4 gallons per minute
Run only full loads of laundry	15-50 gallons per load
Don't leave water running while rinsing dishes	2.5 gallons per minute
Fix leaky faucets	20 gallons/day per leak
Fix toilet leaks. Put dye tabs or food coloring in the tank; if color appears in the bowl without flushing, there's a leak	13 gallons per day

*Visit zone7water.com or contact your water retailer for rebate information and forms.

▶▶ Water-Wise Gardening Workshop

Autumn is California's second Spring and one of the best times to plant. A workshop on drought-tolerant gardening, co-sponsored by Zone 7 and Alden Lane Nursery, will be held on September 30 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Livermore's Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave.

Water Rate Increase Proposed

Unprecedented water-reliability challenges related to the ecological crisis in the Delta, along with reduced water sales due both to the drought and to court-imposed Delta pumping restrictions, are key factors pressuring our wholesale water rates for 2009.

Zone 7's Board of Directors on September 17 will be presented with a proposed increase in wholesale rates of at least 16 percent. Nearly half of that would come in the form of a special Delta charge to cover costs in working with the state and other stakeholders to evaluate and develop alternatives for a long-term fix to the Delta, through which most of our water supply is conveyed.

In addition to water conservation, which reduces the revenue needed to cover our largely fixed costs of operations, the most significant other pressure on rates is the cost to operate a new facility to help soften our groundwater supplies. That's followed by escalating costs of water-treatment chemicals due to higher gas prices, budgeted salary and benefit increases for personnel, higher utility rates and higher cost of water we buy from the state. Fiscal pressures are being experienced by water agencies statewide.

A 16 percent increase would boost the monthly bill for the typical household by \$4.79, if fully passed on to customers by retailers – Pleasanton, Livermore, the California Water Service Company or the Dublin San Ramon Services District.

The Board will also review options that could increase rates by up to 30 percent if the agency does not dip into drought and other reserves or defer facilities maintenance and improvement projects.

The **September 17 meeting** will begin at 7 p.m. at 100 North Canyons Parkway, Livermore. For more detailed information or updates on the proposal, which will go to the Board for final approval October 15, go to www.zone7water.com.

Local Water-Saving Heroes (cont'd from page 1)

"It means we've been able to group thirstier plants in some areas and the more drought-tolerant plants in other areas and give them all the right amount of water."

Kathryn McClelland and Greg Trott of Pleasanton have a variety of succulents, ceanothus, fuchsia and other plants lining the front entrance of their home. When the drought-tolerant plants do need to be irrigated, they are hand-watered with buckets of reclaimed water that McClelland and Trott capture while washing vegetables in the kitchen sink or while heating up the bathroom shower.

Although their homeowners association requires them to have a front lawn, they conserve water by top dressing with compost, using a mulching mower to disperse clippings back onto the ground, and leaving the grass a little taller than they used to. Now, their grassy areas need a weekly watering – at most.

"When you go with native plants that are acclimated to the area, they're easier to take care of, the water needs are low, and they're beautiful," McClelland said.

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour:
www.bringingbackthenatives.net

Bay Friendly Garden Tour:
www.stopwaste.org