



THE WATER LINE

NOVATO'S WATER CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 10 ISSUE 21 SPRING 2009

Russian River Water Withdrawals Reduced 25%

This summer the competing interests using Russian River water have again come to a head resulting in a "Regulatory" drought or water shortage. Lake Mendocino, which collects runoff from the upper Russian River watershed and water diverted from the Eel River through the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project (PVP), is part of a system that makes up 80% of NMWD's water supply. Water stored in Lake Mendocino is released into the Russian River to support recreation, urban and agricultural water supply and fisheries. Currently Lake Mendocino is at 66% of capacity. To keep Lake Mendocino from going dry this summer, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) requested and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) approved reduced in-stream flows to preserve water in Lake Mendocino for the fall Chinook salmon run, but also placed mandatory requirements to reduce Russian River withdrawals for Sonoma and Marin urban uses by 25% through September 2009.

Chinook salmon, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), migrate up the Russian River in the fall of the year and spawn in the upper Russian River. Cold water releases from Lake Mendocino are needed in the fall of the year to support the Chinook salmon migration and spawning. The water level in Lake Mendocino is low this year due to below normal rainfall during the last three winters and reduced water diversions through the PVP ordered by the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to protect fisheries in the Eel River. The SWRCB has authorized reduced in-stream flows in the Russian River to preserve storage in Lake Mendocino and urban water users, including North Marin Water District (NMWD), are required to reduce water use, also to preserve storage in Lake Mendocino.

Meanwhile, Lake Sonoma's water supply pool is currently 92% full and ample for the region's needs. Releases from Lake Sonoma flow down Dry Creek to

the Russian River to the location where SCWA water withdrawals are made. Coho salmon, which are listed as endangered under the ESA, use Dry Creek as rearing habitat in the summer months to grow before out-migration to the ocean in the fall. Increasing releases from Lake Sonoma into Dry Creek runs the risk of washing out an entire population of coho salmon and NMFS won't allow that to happen.

In preparation for the 25% reduction in SCWA water deliveries, NMWD will operate the Stafford Treatment Plant to treat our local Stafford Lake source of supply in the summer months at full capacity and deliver recycled water from Novato Sanitary District to Stone Tree Golf Course. Reliance on local supply will help, but it won't be enough. NMWD has declared a water shortage emergency requiring customers to reduce water usage by 25%. This can be achieved by eliminating water waste and non-essential uses of water and reducing water applied to your landscaped areas. NMWD hopes to avoid any individual customer water rationing. Page three of this "Water Line" contains a summary of the water use restrictions now in effect.

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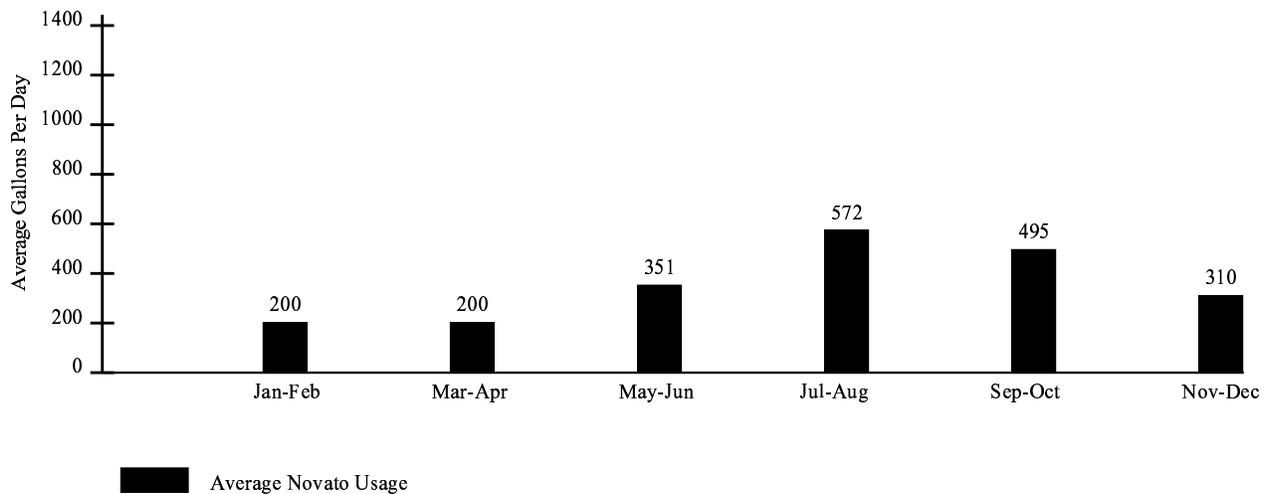
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Your Personal Water Use Graph



Your personal water use is not shown above either because you were not a customer during the year 2008 or your water use data was incomplete for 2008. All customers are expected to reduce water use by following the water use restrictions (see page 3) enforced through Ordinance 22, aimed at the elimination of water waste and non-essential use. Customers who irrigate with drip and/or irrigate with a hand held hose with automatic shut-off, or customers using below 200 gallons per day are not subject to the section of the Ordinance requiring a 25% reduction. If a community wide water conservation goal of 25% is not met, NMWD will consider further water use restrictions. Customers are encouraged to look at their water usage for each billing period and find ways to reduce.

Landscape Drought Tips

Maintaining your landscape during a drought can be challenging. Here are some helpful hints to keep your landscape alive during the water shortage period. More tips can be found on our Website at www.nmwd.com.

Mulch heavily around trees, shrubs and other plant areas. Mulching is essential to the survival of your landscape during a water shortage. Mulch reduces the amount of water that evaporates from your soil and creates an insulating layer, which greatly reduces the need to water your plants, trees and shrubs during the drought period. Apply a minimum of 2 to 3 inches of mulch over exposed soil. See coupon on page 3 for mulch discounts at Marin Landscape Materials or visit the City of Novato Corporation Yard at 550 Davidson Street for free mulch.

Keep your grass taller. Avoid trimming off more than the top 25% of the grass per mow. Mow your lawn to 3

to 3.5 inches tall to promote deeper root growth and shade the soil. Keep your mower blades sharp to prevent shredding the tips of the grass.

Defer fertilizing your lawn or plants. Fertilizer encourages growth and actively growing plants use more water.

Reduce your watering schedule. During the water shortage, lawns can survive on considerably less water. Reduce the number of watering days per week; reduce the number of minutes per watering day; or reduce both. The lawn may not look its best, but it should survive. A brown lawn will be the "green" symbol of water conservation in Novato.

Eliminate run-off and water waste. Use the cycle and soak method of watering. For spray head sprinklers, water in three cycles, 3 to 5 minutes per cycle. For rotor heads, water in three cycles, 10 to 12 minutes per cycle. Space each watering cycle about an hour apart to allow the water to soak into the soil.

To determine your own cycle times, measure the time it takes for runoff to occur by running the sprinklers until water starts to run off. Round that time down to the nearest minute and use that for your cycle run time. Our typical clay soils can only absorb so much water and anything beyond full absorption becomes wasted water.

EMERGENCY Water Conservation Ordinance

North Marin Water District has adopted an Emergency Water Conservation Ordinance, which prohibits waste of water and non-essential uses and enacts enforcement procedures for violations.

THE PROHIBITIONS INCLUDE:

Effective June 1, 2009 until Ordinance is Rescinded

- Gutter flooding (i.e. unreasonable irrigation overspray or irrigation run-off onto pavement).
- Failure to repair a controllable leak of water within a reasonable time.
- Using water for non-recycling decorative fountains or single pass cooling systems.
- Washing down exterior paved areas.
- Refilling a swimming pool drained after March 1, 2009 or initial filling of a swimming pool for which the building permit was issued after March 1, 2009.
- Washing privately-owned motor vehicles, trailers and boats except from a bucket and hose equipped with an automatic shut-off nozzle.
- Landscape watering outside the hours of 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM of the next day except hand-watering from a house with an automatic shut-off nozzle or drip irrigation system will be allowed.
- New or enlarged water service connections to the District's system.
- Use of water from a fire hydrant except for fighting fires, human consumption, essential construction needs or use in connection with animals.
- Use of potable water supply for dust control at construction sites.
- Watering of any lawn, garden, landscape area, tree, shrub or other plant except from a handheld hose equipped with an automatic shut-off nozzle or container or drip irrigation system. Overhead sprinkler irrigation can be used if customer maintains an overall 25% reduction in water use compared to 2004 year's use during the same billing period. (Households using less than 200 gallons per day are permitted to water their landscapes without a required 25% reduction if compliant with Waste of Water Prohibitions, see ordinance at www.nmwd.com)
- Any non-residential use in excess of 75% of the amount used by the customer during the corresponding billing period in year 2004.

The Great Flapper Giveaway

Replace your leaking toilet flapper and receive the full purchase price as a credit on your next water bill!

NMWD will credit your account for up to \$5 per flapper replaced, up to three flappers per household per two year period. Rebate amount based on purchase price, excluding tax and labor. Complete this form, clip and mail with **original sales receipt** by December 31, 2009 to:
North Marin Water District, PO Box 146, Novato, CA 94948.

Number of toilets in household _____ Customer Name _____

Number of flappers replaced _____ Address _____

Total purchase price _____ Phone _____

Date _____ Customer No. (from your water bill) _____

Mulch and save!

Get \$10 off mulch. NMWD and Marin Landscapes are partnering to help you save water and money on your landscape.

Add a new layer of mulch to your landscape to give it that fresh, newly planted look while helping the soil retain moisture during the hot, dry summer. Mulch helps shade the soil, keeping it cool and adds nutrients and organic matter to the soil as it breaks down.

Take advantage of this offer today!

\$10 OFF

Your next purchase of

MULCH

at

Marin Landscape Materials

7596 Redwood Boulevard, Novato

Shredded redwood, single or double grind. One yard minimum purchase. Good for one purchase only. Limit one coupon per NMWD customer. Coupon valid until July 31, 2009.

\$5 Courtesy of Marin Landscape Materials
\$5 Courtesy of North Marin Water District

Water Smart Savings Program

More water saving programs at www.nmwd.com

North Marin Water District wants to help customers conserve water and reduce water waste. That's why we've put all of our water saving promotions under one umbrella. The *Water Smart Savings Program* encompasses all you need to get started on saving water and saving money.

Cash for Grass

Lawns require a tremendous amount of water to keep healthy. As part of the *Water Smart Savings Program*, you can get cash back when you remove your lawn and re-landscape with California native low water use plants or District approved synthetic turf. See Web site or call for complete program details and requirements.

Rebate Amount: Up to \$1.00 per square foot of lawn removed depending on project scope, max. rebate of \$1,000. Rebates available until funds are depleted.

How to Participate: Develop a qualifying landscape plan and plant list and call NMWD at 415-897-4133, ext. 8711, to schedule a brief pre-inspection.

Water Smart Home Survey

NMWD offers free *Water Smart Home Surveys* as the corner stone of the *Water Smart Savings Program*. This free service includes indoor and outdoor water efficiency checks, a landscape irrigation system efficiency test and a leak detection test.

Our friendly, knowledgeable survey technicians can show how you can easily conserve more water and save money. Best of all, your appointment can be scheduled at a time that is convenient for you.

How to Participate: Call (415) 897-4133 ext. 8711 to set up free your appointment.

Water Smart Landscape Efficiency Rebate

Efficient landscapes can be achieved through a number of strategies including efficient irrigation devices and equipment, and soil maintenance. You may be eligible for rebates when you install District-qualified water-efficient landscape equipment including:

- Drip irrigation systems
- Water pressure-regulating device
- Check valves
- Multi-stream rotating sprinkler nozzles (for lawn areas only)
- Rain shut-off devices
- Mulch
- Soil conditioner/amendment

Rebate Amount: 50% of the actual cost of District-approved items, up to a maximum of \$200 for residential customers. Rebates available until funds are depleted.

How to Participate: Confirm eligibility during your *Water Smart Home Survey* to identify water-efficient landscape actions to be taken.

High-Efficiency Toilet Rebate

Don't flush money away. Now you can get a rebate of up to \$150 per High-Efficiency Toilet (HET) when you replace your non-water-conserving toilets. HETs use 20% less water than standard ultra-low flush toilets, so not only will you save water, but you'll save money, too. HETs eligible for rebate must be on the District Approved List of Qualified Models.

Rebate Amount: Up to \$150 for each qualifying HET. Rebate amount for HET good through the end of each calendar year (December 31), or until funds are depleted.

How to Participate: During your *Water Smart Home Survey*, your NMWD representative can conduct the simple pre-inspection.

www.nmwd.com

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PO Box 146
Novato, CA 94948
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IMPORTANT DROUGHT
INFORMATION

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STRAHMAN.COM