

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Edward K. Shikada

SUBJECT: WATER USE REDUCTION
MEASURES

DATE: June 23, 2014

INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the measures that the City of San José has taken to reach the 20% water use reduction target and their projected impacts on the City's properties and facilities.

On January 17, 2014, Governor Brown declared a Drought State of Emergency proclamation, calling on municipalities to implement local water shortage contingency plans immediately, and on February 25, 2014, the Santa Clara Valley Water District adopted a resolution calling for mandatory measures to reach a 20% water use reduction target through December 31, 2014. The City's Departments of Transportation (DOT), Public Works (PW), Environmental Services (ESD), Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), and the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport (Airport) are collaborating on a number of measures to reduce water usage throughout their properties and facilities.

Landscaping and Grounds in Parks, Median Islands, Roadside Parcels and City Facilities

A number of measures are being implemented to reduce the amount of water used to irrigate existing landscaping and grounds, and to minimize future water usage demands by modifying landscaping designs.

- For existing landscaping, potable water irrigation of plant and turf areas will generally be, at a minimum, reduced to meet the 20% water usage reduction target. Additionally, work will continue to assess landscaped areas that are currently being irrigated in an effort to identify locations where the plant material is established or has changed in some way that no longer necessitates irrigation. In such cases, the irrigation systems will be shut off. Landscaping that uses reclaimed water for irrigation or includes recently planted trees and shrubs that require additional water during the establishment period will be exempted from the water reduction efforts. Facilities that provide a specific need or serve a special purpose for the residents of San José will also be exempted from the water conservation efforts. These special facilities include sports fields, Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Guadalupe River Park & Gardens - Discovery Meadow, and the Municipal Rose Garden.

- In order to ensure that irrigation systems are functioning properly and not wasting large amounts of water, staff will proactively observe irrigation system operations and prioritize their response to reports of broken or malfunctioning systems.
- New landscape planting projects and major landscaping renovations that do not reduce overall water consumption, and projects that primarily include turf restoration in non-active recreational areas will be deferred until at least next spring. For all new landscaping and major landscaping renovation projects, Bay Friendly Landscape principles will be utilized. Bay Friendly Landscape principles support the use of drought-tolerant, low maintenance landscape elements, which can thrive in our native climate with very minimal maintenance and water usage. For example, staff from DOTs Special Districts Management program and staff from PRNS, in conjunction with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, are pursuing turf conversion programs resulting in the planting of water-conserving and lower maintenance California native plants, as well as the conversion to irrigation systems and sprinkler heads that reduce water usage. Routine landscape replacement work and safety-related turf restorations on sports fields will continue as planned.

There will be impacts to the City's landscaping and grounds as a result of these water use reduction measures. In general, plant and tree health will decrease and there will be some dieback, especially for water sensitive plants and trees. In parks, large recreational turf areas will become stressed due to the reduced irrigation. These turf areas will thin out and become brown, allowing drought tolerant weeds to begin overtaking the stressed turf. It is likely that additionally one-time funding will be needed to restore and/or replace affected facilities after the drought restrictions are lifted.

City Buildings

To avoid wasting water at City building facilities, all plumbing-related repair work orders will be given priority with a target of completing repairs within one day, and signage will be posted at community centers requesting participants to limit shower use to five minutes or less. Additional efforts will be made to identify and use water conserving hardware, such as low-flow toilets, where feasible and as funding allows. It is not anticipated that these water reduction measures will have a noticeable impact for the operations or utilization of the City's building facilities.

Lakes, Ponds, Interactive Water Features and Fountains

The City owns, operates and maintains a number of water-related facilities that consume a significant amount of water. In order to reduce this consumption, changes in how they are managed and maintained are necessary.

- In general, lakes, ponds and other bodies of water that rely on potable water for replenishment, such as the ponds at Overfelt Gardens, will not be replenished and may become dry. Renovation and repair projects, such as the project to drain and repair Verona Lake in the Evergreen area, will be deferred and reassessed next spring.
- All interactive water features (e.g. press and play features at playgrounds) and fountains that do not use re-circulating water systems will be shut off. Fountains that utilize re-circulated and treated water, such as the fountain in Plaza de Cesar Chavez Park, Pool of Genes in Guadalupe River Park, and the fountain at the Municipal Rose Garden will remain operating.
- Swimming pool conditions and maintenance activities will be modified to reduce or eliminate the need to replenish water levels. For example, water temperatures may be lowered and pools covered during non-use periods to reduce evaporation.

While not managed or controlled by the City, many creeks, streams, rivers, and ponds and associated wildlife that interact with or compliment City facilities will be impacted by reduced water flow from Santa Clara Valley Water District managed reservoirs.

City Construction and Maintenance Activities

Water is often used when performing certain construction, maintenance and repair functions. For all Capital Improvement Program projects, as well as any projects being completed through the City's Development and Utility Permit processes, staff will continue to diligently implement the ordinances set forth in Chapter 15 of the Municipal Code, which generally prohibit the use of potable water for construction purposes unless written exception is granted by the City. Additionally, staff will be updating information included in the written exception process to provide details regarding the availability of recycled water for construction use and instructions for obtaining it from the applicable retailer. Staff from DOT and ESD will explore the use of recycled water for street sweeping and sewer line cleaning activities.

State and Local Information about Current Water Supply and Drought Preparedness

ESD will continue to monitor the current drought conditions in California, water supply outlook for San José, and coordinate drought preparedness efforts by Muni Water and other water providers in San José. Should the drought conditions persist and the water supply forecast change, ESD may issue a separate memorandum which will provide an update to water supply conditions, including a summary of actions to reduce water usage in San José, and any recommended actions for Council consideration.

June 23, 2014

Subject: Water Use Reduction Measures

Page 4

Public Support of Water Conserving Efforts

The public is encouraged to support the City of San José's efforts in meeting the mandated water conservation measures. Incidences of water leaks or problem irrigation systems may be reported to the City of San José's Contact Center at (408) 535-3500, or by email at customerservice@sanjoseca.gov.



EDWARD K. SHIKADA
City Manager

For questions, please contact the following:

Topic	Contact	Phone
Parks and Recreational Facilities	Steve Hammack PRNS Deputy Director	(408) 793-5579
Street Landscaping and Maintenance	Kevin O'Connor DOT Deputy Director	(408) 794-1987
City Building Facilities	Joe Garcia PW Deputy Director	(408) 535-1298
Airport Facilities	Patrick Tonna Airport Deputy Director	(408) 392-6702
Water Supply and Drought Preparedness	Jeff Provenzano ESD Deputy Director	(408) 277-3288