



# IN FOCUS

An Official Publication of the City of Beverly Hills - August 2015

## Conserve Water and Avoid Penalty Surcharges

The historic drought affecting all of California means ALL Beverly Hills water customers must conserve by at least 30%. Penalty surcharges will go into effect this fall for customers who do not meet the City's mandatory conservation goals.

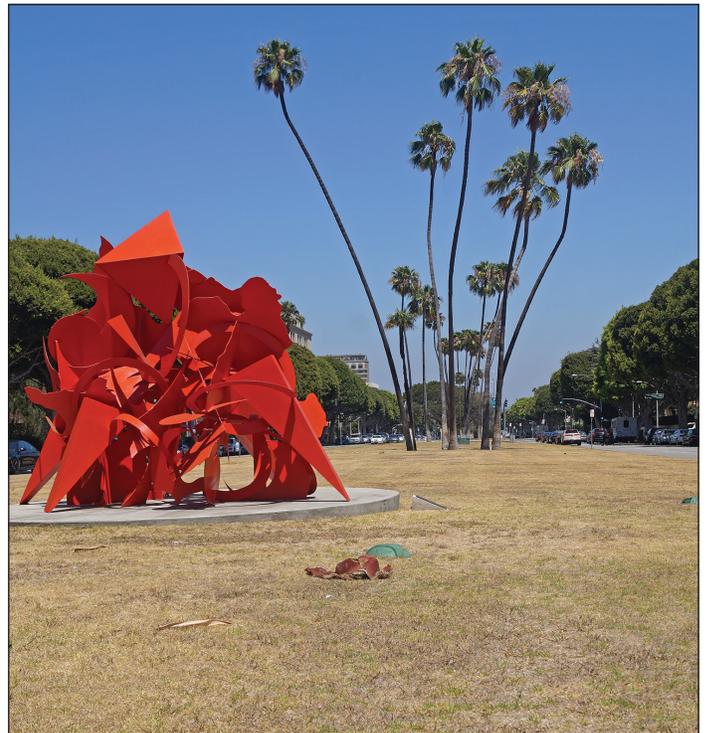
The penalty surcharges are part of the City's strategy for meeting water conservation targets—and for offsetting any potential costs that could be incurred if these conservation goals are not achieved. Potential costs to the City include rate increases from the Metropolitan Water District, which supplies the City's water; fines from the State Water Resources Control Board; and costs related to implementing additional conservation programs, if required by the state.

According to the penalty surcharge structure recently approved, customers who consume more water than 70% of their 2013 baseline can expect to pay the following amounts:

- For customers who use between 70% and 88% more than the base, the penalty is 1.59 times the base water rate for the excess amount.
- For customers who use more than 88% of the baseline, the penalty is 1.59 times the base water rate for 70% to 88% PLUS an additional 3.08 times the base on usage that is more than 88%.

To find your baseline, compare your current 60-day billing cycle to the same 60-day billing cycle in 2013, or sign up for Water Tracker at: [water.beverlyhills.org](http://water.beverlyhills.org).

**Penalty surcharges will go into effect this fall for customers who do not meet the City's mandatory conservation goals.**



*"Gold is the new Green": The City has cut off water to grass medians as part of conservation program*

These penalty surcharges go into effect in October. Your August–September 2015 water bill, which will not be subject to penalties, will include your water conservation goal for the following billing period. There will be an appeals process for special circumstances. (See page 7.) These penalty surcharges will remain in place until the emergency drought declaration ends. (Please note that penalties do not apply to Tier 1 residential water customers.)

Fortunately, these scenarios—and the penalty surcharges—can be avoided if everyone commits to using 30% less water.

# 25%, 30%, 32%: Which Number is Which?

## Water Conservation by the Numbers

Lately, there has been a lot of talk in Beverly Hills—and throughout the state of California—about working together to save water. You’ve likely heard about state mandates to cut back on water consumption, as well as the Beverly Hills City Council’s recent action to adopt its own set of conservation measures and target cutbacks in response to the severe statewide drought.

With several different target numbers being discussed, it can be difficult to keep them all straight. Here’s a run-down of a few conservation goals to keep in mind:



**25%.** This is the percentage by which the state of California as a whole must reduce its water consumption, according to an executive order issued by Governor Jerry Brown on April 1. Governor Brown’s announcement was a milestone, marking the first time mandatory water reductions were put in place in towns and cities across California.

**30%.** This is the number Beverly Hills customers should focus on, since it’s the percentage by which residents have been asked to reduce water consumption under the City of Beverly Hills’ mandatory water conservation program, which is now in effect.

**32%.** This is the percentage by which the Beverly Hills Water Utility must reduce its water consumption, according to a goal set by the state water board. Recognizing that saving water is not only the responsibility of Beverly Hills residents and businesses, the City is committed to reducing its water use and covering the additional 2% gap.



These targets must be achieved by the end of February 2016.

And finally, **20% by the year 2020.** This is the City’s long-range conservation goal, which was set by state mandate in 2009. Even when the current drought eases, Californians and Beverly Hills customers need to make water conservation a permanent, life-style change.

Together, our community can STEP UP to achieve these important conservation goals. To learn more about what you can do to save water, visit [www.beverlyhills.org/conservation](http://www.beverlyhills.org/conservation).

## The Rising Cost of Water: Why Rates Are Going Up

The City is considering water rate increases to cover operating costs and revenue losses related to the severe statewide drought and to help promote conservation.

A public hearing on the proposed rate increases will take place at 7 p.m. in City Council Chambers at the Sept. 1 City Council meeting. If approved, water rates will increase by:

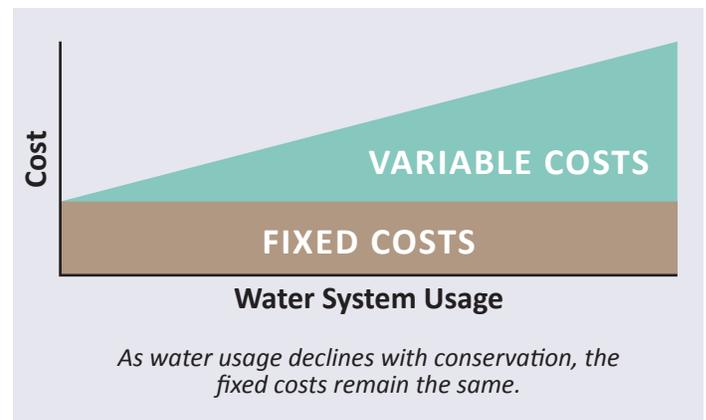
- 5% on October 11.
- Another 5% on December 15.

The increase in water rates, which would apply to all customers, is necessary because revenues will decline as consumption declines due to conservation. Although the water volume costs to the City will go down, the fixed costs associated with supplying water to customers, such as pipeline maintenance, operations and staffing, do not decline. (See graph.) Therefore, in order to cover the costs of providing water to customers, the rates must go up.

That is why, as customers reach the 30% goal, individual bills will go down, but by less than 30%.

By February 2016, the City plans to develop and implement a new tiered water rate structure that will cover the total system costs of providing water to its customers and account for the impact of long-term conservation on revenue and reserves.

There are many reasons to conserve water: lower water bills, avoiding penalties — but most importantly, because water is a precious resource and it’s the right thing to do.



# FAQs: Pools, Spas & Fountains

**U**nder the water conservation restrictions, existing swimming pools and spas cannot be drained and refilled unless there are health and safety reasons for doing so. New pools can be built and filled under certain restrictions. All pools must have a pool cover to prevent evaporation. Read on for answers to common questions about maintaining pools, spas and fountains during the drought:

**Can I top off my pool or spa?** Yes. Continue using your pool and spa covers to prevent evaporation.

**What if my pool has a serious problem, such as a crack?** You can drain and refill your pool if there is a serious problem or any health and safety issue, but you will need a permit and will be subject to all penalties and charges from the corresponding water use.

**Can I move forward with plans to construct a new pool?** Yes. However, as part of the permit process, you must show that you can save the same amount of water elsewhere at your property or pay a fee into the water conservation fund, which will be used to support the City's ongoing conservation efforts.

**Can I operate a fountain?** Yes, with recirculated water only.



## #BHWaterHeroes

**D**o you take pride in your golden lawn, organic mulch or drought-tolerant plants? If you are saving water, you should flaunt it! Show us how you are conserving water by using the hashtag “#BHWaterHeroes” on the City’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. The City will select and re-post images with the hashtag to recognize the community’s effort to conserve water and keep Beverly Hills water-wise!

## Beverly Hills Mandatory Watering Schedule

Limit your outdoor watering to 2 days a week, 8 minutes per station\*, before 9 a.m. or after 5 p.m.

Residents Living	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
North of Santa Monica Boulevard		NO WATERING	NO WATERING	NO WATERING		NO WATERING	NO WATERING
South of Santa Monica Boulevard	NO WATERING		NO WATERING	NO WATERING	NO WATERING		NO WATERING

\*Drip irrigation systems exempted.

# Ambassador Program Will Address Pandhandling

Safety and hospitality are two qualities essential to the unique character of Beverly Hills, which is why a new ambassador service program begins a one-year pilot this month. The ambassadors, soon to be deployed throughout the Business Triangle and South Beverly Drive, will help reduce aggressive panhandling and provide wayfinding and other services.

The new program contracts with Block-by-Block, a private firm, to staff commercial areas with uniformed ambassadors for 21 hours each day. With their active and alert presence, the ambassadors will deter panhandlers, thereby reducing intimidation of customers and the resulting disruption of commerce. Through close coordination with law enforcement, the ambassadors will be able to file police reports and serve as victims in court proceedings.

By providing additional eyes and ears on the streets, the ambassadors will greatly aid the City's Human Services homeless outreach team in identifying homeless individuals to link them to resources.

Beverly Hills is one of several cities in the region to enlist an ambassador service firm to enhance quality of life for all community members. Other local cities, including Santa



For more information about the ambassador program, please contact City of Beverly Hills Human Services at 310-285-1006.

Monica, West Hollywood and Pasadena, have hired similar firms to help deal with the issues. Beverly Hills' decision to enhance its City services by piloting an ambassador program is well timed given the 17% rise in homelessness across Los Angeles County since 2014.

## Keep Tabs on Your Tap with Water Tracker

### Sign Up Now to Track Your Water Use

You have been asked to reduce your water consumption by 30%. How do you know if you're meeting that goal?

Thanks to the City's innovative Water Tracker program, you do not have to wait until you receive your next bill to find out. Using data from the City's smart water meters, this free online tool displays your monthly, weekly and even daily use of water—and emails you an alert if you reach a specified threshold of water use. Water Tracker's easy-to-read graphics compare current

household usage with your target water consumption, as well as with average household consumption in your neighborhood.

Starting in August, Water Tracker will display your water conservation threshold using the 30% reduction goal. But you can also learn your threshold by looking up your water bill from the same period in 2013 and calculating 70% of the amount consumed during that billing cycle.

The Water Tracker is also a powerful tool for identifying potential leaks. If

your smart meter detects a continuous flow, the Water Tracker will let you know. Using similar technology, the City has already notified thousands of customers about leaks.

Signing up for Water Tracker is easy. Visit [water.beverlyhills.org](http://water.beverlyhills.org) to register. You will be prompted to enter your email address, account number and customer number.

Sign up now to check your progress toward your target!

# Reimagine Your Landscaping: Engage a Garden Guru

Cutting water use outdoors isn't a problem you need to tackle alone. Beverly Hills will help you conserve.

The City has launched a new water-wise program to subsidize a session of landscape coaching provided by the Green Gardens Group (G3). Each coaching session consists of a 90 minute consultation by a G3 landscape professional that includes a thorough assessment of the property and recommendations for water-saving changes that can be made.

During a home visit, a G3 landscape professional provides advice on how to:

- Remove turf.
- Grade for rain.
- Build living soil to conserve water and stave off desertification.
- Choose climate-appropriate plants.
- Make irrigation systems as efficient as possible.
- Keep and utilize rainwater in your landscape.



For more information on how to book a session with a G3 landscape professional, visit [www.beverlyhills.org/gardenguru](http://www.beverlyhills.org/gardenguru).

The Garden Gurus are limited to providing the services above and are not able to provide specific landscape designs or services to complete landscape projects.

The subsidized cost of the 90-minute session is \$50 for Beverly Hills water customers, a sizable reduction from the normal price of \$225.

This landscape coaching program is just one of the recent initiatives to provide Beverly Hills residents and businesses with educational and financial resources to help make the transition to a water-wise city.

A water-wise gardening handbook, designed specifically for Beverly Hills, will be available on the City's website starting in August.

## Take Advantage of City's Rebate Program



**A**s a new rebate program takes effect this month, helping the City meet its water conservation goals is more affordable than ever.

The new program supplements previous rebates provided by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Now residents and businesses can save up to two or three times as much on select appliances and services proven to cut water use the most. Details follow for those items and services that qualify:

### Residential

- **High-Efficiency Washing Machine** – rebate up from \$85 to **\$300**.
- **Turf Removal** – although the MWD suspended its rebate program, the City is still offering **\$1.75** for the first 2,500 sq. ft.
- **High-Efficiency Toilets** – rebate up from \$100 to **\$150**.
- **Irrigation Controller** – rebate up from \$80 to **\$200**.
- **Rotating Sprinkler Nozzles** – rebate up from \$4 to **\$8**.

*(continued on page 7)*

# Several Construction Projects Near Wilshire and Santa Monica Are Underway

Currently, there are three construction projects in progress in Beverly Hills near the intersection of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards – and one high rise just over the border in Century City.

During critical phases of the project, trucks entering and exiting the Beverly Hills construction sites are working during non-peak hours and on nights and weekends. The City continues to monitor the construction impacts, including traffic, noise and air quality, and will adjust the traffic flow plan if needed.

Here is some information about each project:

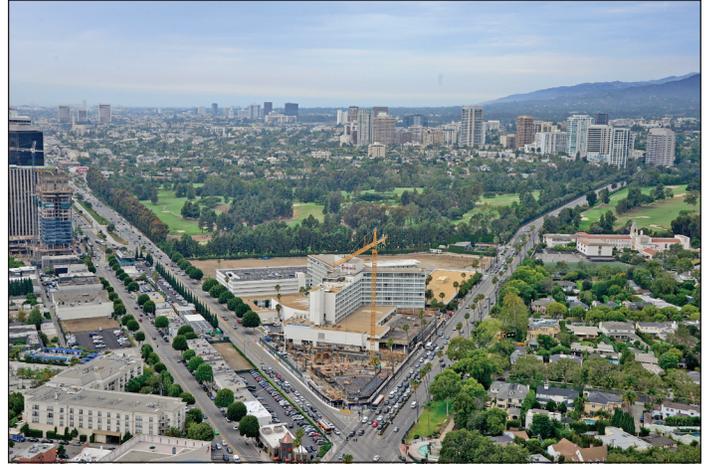
## Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills

Located at 9876 Wilshire Blvd. near the Beverly Hilton, the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills is a 12-story luxury hotel. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2017.

## One Beverly Hills

Formerly the Robinsons-May department store site, One Beverly Hills is a new mixed-use project designed and developed by The Wanda Group. Demolition has occurred but construction has not yet started.

The City has hired an Environmental Compliance Monitor (ECM) to monitor both the Waldorf Astoria and One Beverly Hills projects. The ECM is onsite during all construction hours. You can call 310-570-0995 for more information.



## Electric Fountain

Through the generosity of Friends of Beverly Gardens Park, the City's iconic Electric Fountain is being restored. Projected completion is in early September.

## 10000 Santa Monica Boulevard

The 40-story construction project in Century City is located just outside of Beverly Hills. Developer Crescent Heights is building the 283-unit residential tower. Estimated completion date is late 2016.

# Subway Construction Update

The Advanced Utility Relocation phase of Metro's Purple Line extension is currently moving all utilities to make way for the La Cienega station. This phase of the work will be completed around the end of 2016.

Residents and businesses can expect Monday through Friday lane closures, restricting traffic to two lanes along the length of the construction zone between San Vicente and La Cienega for the duration of the project. Additional work will take place on side streets.



Nighttime and weekend road work is limited only to areas that cannot be accommodated within the available work space on Wilshire or that would cause too much of an impact on traffic during regular work hours. To enforce strict nighttime noise limits, real-time monitors are present at all night work zones and have the power to stop construction in the event of noise violations that disturb residents.

Construction of the subway station itself will begin in early 2017.

If you have questions about the Subway, there are several ways to stay in touch.

- Call: 213-922-6934 • Email: [purplelineext@metro.net](mailto:purplelineext@metro.net) • Website: [metro.net/purplelineext](http://metro.net/purplelineext) • Facebook: [facebook.com/purplelineext](https://www.facebook.com/purplelineext) • Twitter: [@purplelineext](https://twitter.com/purplelineext) •

# Every Household is Unique: More on Water Penalties

Starting in October, Beverly Hills will apply penalty surcharges to the bills of water customers who fail to cut usage by 30% from the equivalent billing period in 2013.

The City offers options for customers who face conditions that make it difficult to reduce water consumption by

The City offers options for customers who face conditions that make it difficult to reduce water consumption by the 30% goal.

the 30% goal. An appeals process has been set up for those who wish to contest a penalty surcharge and receive an adjusted conservation rate.

In addition, customers who significantly reduced their water usage between 2011 and 2013 will receive an adjusted conservation rate and will be notified of the adjustment

Conditions that may warrant a penalty adjustment include medical conditions that require more water use, more people occupying the residence in the



base period and a home being located in a fire hazard zone.

For more information go to [www.beverlyhills.org/appeal](http://www.beverlyhills.org/appeal).

## Step Up and Report Water Waste



Conserving water is a community effort! You are encouraged to anonymously report a water leak, excessive water use or any violations of the outdoor watering restrictions in your neighborhood. Those restrictions include landscape watering on days or hours when it is prohibited or washing of cars and buildings. Before imposing any fines, the City will investigate and provide education.

To report water waste, visit [www.beverlyhills.org/waterwaste](http://www.beverlyhills.org/waterwaste) or call (310) 285-2467.

By reporting waste, you can help stop it—and help spread the word about water conservation measures in Beverly Hills.

## Take Advantage of the City's Rebate Program (continued from page 5)



### Commercial

- High-Efficiency Toilets (**Tank Type**) – rebate up from \$100 to **\$300**.
- High-Efficiency Toilets (**Flushometer**) – rebate up from \$100 to **\$300**.
- High-Efficiency Toilets (**4 Liter**) – rebate up from \$145 to **\$300**.
- **Zero and Ultra-Low Retrofit Urinal** – rebate up from \$200 to **\$500**.

The process of applying for rebates remains the same. Apply online today at [www.socalwatersmart.com](http://www.socalwatersmart.com).

A new rebate program takes effect this month . . . which supplements previous rebates provided by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD).

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# Calendar

## AUGUST

### PickleFest – Beverly Hills Farmers' Market

Sunday, August 2  
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### National Night Out – Rexford Drive

Tuesday, August 4 (Admiral Splash from MWD will be  
at the Water Conservation Booth)  
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

### Concerts on Cañon – Beverly Cañon Gardens

Thursdays, August 6, 13, 20 and 27  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

### Sunday Movie Night – Beverly Cañon Gardens

Sunday, August 9 (Young Frankenstein)  
8:00 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER

### Labor Day Holiday – City Hall & Library Closed

Monday, September 7



### HOLD – Evening with the Mayor – Greystone Formal Gardens

Wednesday, September 9  
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

### Household Hazardous/Electronic Waste Round Up – Foothill Road between Alden Drive & West 3rd St.

Saturday, September 19  
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.