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City Council Exempts Low Water Users From 10% Reduction

Beverly Hills, CA –The Beverly Hills City Council at the Sept. 23 formal meeting voted to exempt low water users from mandatory reduction requirements. The exemption affects single-family and multifamily Tier 1 water customers, whose water use is already minimal and would have a difficult time making further reductions.

In response to the severe state-wide drought, the City Council earlier this month voted to activate Stage B of the emergency water conservation ordinance. The ordinance includes a mandatory 10% reduction and a penalty surcharge for water use in excess of the 90% baseline allocation. The City is working out the details of establishing the baseline and making changes to the billing system to accommodate penalty surcharges. Customers will be notified before the surcharges go into effect.

In addition to the 10% reduction, the Stage B Water Conservation Plan requires that:

1. Restaurants shall serve water upon request only
2. All public restrooms in the City and private bathrooms in hotels shall notify patrons and employees of water conservation goals.
3. Plumbing and irrigation leaks shall be repaired within seven days of notification to water customers. Water usage shall be reduced to ninety percent (90%) of the baseline year amount.

State-required water restrictions also are in effect. Runoff from outdoor sprinklers and using a watering hose to clear leaves and debris from driveways, sidewalks and streets are prohibited. Using drinking water in non-circulating fountains has been prohibited as well.

Residents must limit landscape watering to three days a week and follow fixed watering days. Residents living north of Santa Monica Boulevard should water their gardens on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Residents south of Santa Monica should water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. To minimize evaporation, watering should be done between 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. on those days. No watering is allowed on Sundays. Mandatory watering days could be imposed at a later date if conservation goals are not met.

Irrigation of residential landscaping accounts for 60% - 70% of the annual water usage in the City and is where the most savings can be achieved with simple changes in watering practices.

The City of Beverly Hills has an automated leak detection program and will continue to notify residents if a leak is identified on a property. For information on rebates and how to track your water consumption, go to www.beverlyhills.org/waterconservation. Also, for tips on how to conserve water, go to MWD's website at www.bewaterwise.com.

The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) is offering rebates for installing weather-based irrigation controllers, rotating sprinkler nozzles, soil moisture sensors and for replacing grass with drought-tolerant plants. In addition, rebates are also offered for purchasing high-efficiency clothes washing machines and toilets.

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