



OAKRIDGE
LANDSCAPE, INC.

PUTTING THE BEAUTY BACK IN LANDSCAPING

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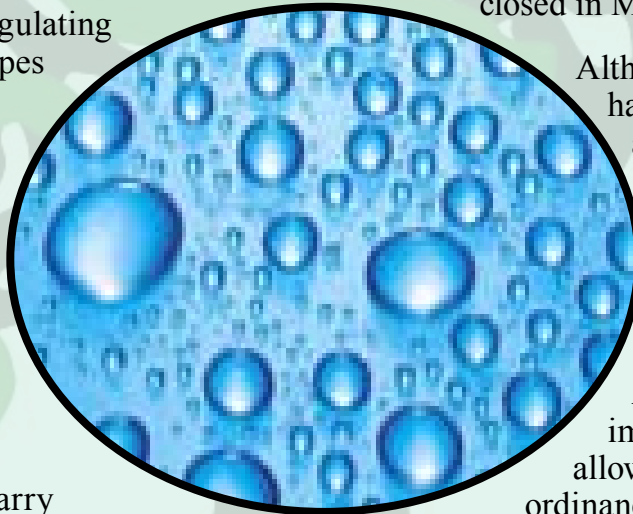
WATER WATCH

Cities and counties that have not yet implemented a water-efficient landscape ordinance in response to 2006's Assembly Bill 1881 are in the final stretch of the bill's rollout with a Jan.1, 2010, deadline.

AB1881 attempts to improve an existing landscape ordinance originating from 1990's Assembly Bill 325. While hailed by planners and landscape architects as a significant step forward in water conservation, critics say AB325 missed the mark when it came to regulating residential landscapes and with general enforcement.

"What AB325 did was set into motion the procedure for creating California's first landscape water-efficient model ordinance," said Larry Rohlfes, assistant executive director of the California Landscape Contractors Association.

The California Department of Water Resources completed its model landscape ordinance, which was required by January of this year. Since then, the Office of



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Administrative Law sent the ordinance back to the DWR, revisions were made and a public comment period for those revisions closed in May.

Although the statewide ordinance has not yet been adopted, local agencies must decide to adopt either the DWR's ordinance or their own equally efficient version. All of this must be done by Jan. 1, 2010.

The difference between AB325 and AB1881 implementation is that AB325 allowed cities to adopt the DWR ordinance, create their own or justify why they did not need to adopt an ordinance at all. The third option was taken off the table for AB1881.

"A lot of cities and counties had ordinances before [AB325] and stuck with the ones they had," Rohlfes said of the implementation of AB325. "Some adopted the DWR ordinance

NEWSLETTER

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WATER WATCH

and some adopted it but didn't really implement it. And then many cities said they didn't need it."

Another key difference between AB1881 and the original ordinance is the emphasis placed on irrigation technology.

Under AB1881, performance standards and labeling requirements for landscape irrigation equipment will have to be created by the California Energy Commission. These regulations also would have to be adopted by the Jan. 1, 2010 deadline. Two years after that deadline, any irrigation equipment not meeting the commission's standards would be prohibited from sale and use.

On the water-user side, AB1881 applies to commercial landscapes greater than 2,500 square feet subject to any permitting process or single-family landscapes larger than 5,000 square feet also subject to a permitting process.

Prior to work being done, a property owner would have to agree to compliance of the new ordinance. A landscape worksheet will have to be followed during construction. The worksheet would include information such as water allowance calculations, soil management, irrigation design plans and an estimate of total water use. Upon construction completion, a certified irrigation audit report and maintenance schedule, among other things, would have to be supplied to the permitting agency.

SoCal Water Smart Update

WaterSmart residential water efficiency rebate re-launched as of Sept. 21, 2009. THE PROGRAM WILL NO LONGER REQUIRE REBATE RESERVATIONS for qualifying product purchases. Rebate applications for purchases made on or after September 21 may be submitted by mail or via the program website.

A few changes:

- Program period is from September 21, 2009 through May 31, 2010, or until funds are depleted (whichever comes first).

As stated above, rebate reservations will no longer be required; mail-in or online applications will be accepted starting September 21, 2009.

- PURCHASES MADE PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 21, 2009 ARE INELIGIBLE FOR REGION-WIDE REBATES.

- Rebate checks will be issued only to the residential water customer directly.



GREEN NEWS

Rainwater Harvesting

An inch of rain yields hundreds of gallons of free water. You only have to catch it.

Rainwater catchment or rainwater harvesting (RWH) are catch-all terms for collecting, storing, and later using precipitation from rock out-crops, roofs, and other surfaces. Across the globe, rainwater is used for many purposes, including drinking water, irrigation, aquaculture, air conditioning, groundwater recharge, and fire fighting. It has been utilized for many centuries.

Harvesting rainwater offers many advantages: it conserves municipal and well water; it is free; gravity fed systems conserve energy; it is low in salts and good for plants; and it can reduce flooding and erosion. Rainwater provides an excellent primary,

supplementary, or alternative source of water. In terms of quality, it generally falls between groundwater and surface water. Rainwater can be used at multiple scales from residential to commercial and at the neighborhood or community level.

RAIN BARRELS



Save some water for those not-so-rainy days with a rain barrel. Here's how to update this old-fashioned practice:

1. Keep pets and children safe by selecting a barrel with a sturdy, rigid top.
2. Barrels fill quickly, so be sure to choose one that adapts for overflow, allowing you to direct excess rainwater away from the barrel (and your home's foundation) or to link multiple barrels together.
3. Make sure all openings on the barrel are screened against mosquitoes.
4. Check local regulations regarding limitations on rain barrel use.





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LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATION

Water Wise Landscapes for Home Owner Associations

HOA Board of Directors are turning to their professional property managers for solutions to save water in the landscape. As a property manager, by following the basic principles of water-wise landscaping, you can assist your HOAs in solving their water conservation issues.

- Limit non-functional turf. Non-recreational areas must be converted to either a) synthetic turfgrass or b) shrubs and mulch.
- Install the proper irrigation, and do not over water. Conventional sprinklers are best for turf, while low-volume irrigation, such as drip, is best for trees, shrubs and perennials.
- Group plants with similar water needs. Maximize the use of low-water-use



plants especially in sunny, dry and windy areas. Thirstier plants should be used sparingly and planted close to the house in either shady areas or containers.

- Improve the texture of the soil, if needed, by adding amendments. Amendments can either increase water retention or improve drainage, depending on the soil composition.
- Use a two to four inch layer of mulch around your plants to help the soil retain moisture. Mulch also inhibits weeds.
- Plant trees to lower air and soil temperatures. This reduces plant and soil moisture loss.
- Use low, spreading shrubs and trees to cover large slopes rather than shallow-rooted groundcovers. Minimize water runoff with drip irrigation.

By following the above conservation tips, your HOA associations' will arrive at beautiful landscape solutions that work in the Southern California climate and, at the same time, conserve water.

NEWSLETTER

EROSION CONTROL

Strategic Planning: Site Protection

Economic events have pummeled the Housing and Construction industries over the past 2-3 years. One of the few bright spots has been the reprieve Mother Nature has provided the Southern California industries with limited rainfall. Although the drought conditions have hurt us all in others ways, it has kept the costs of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and site development down while the industry was at its' weakest. With economic recovery on the horizon will this climate amnesty continue?

On July 9, 2009 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced the arrival of El Nino with the expectation that the event would last through the winter of 2009-2010. As NOAA points out "El Nino's negative impacts have included damaging winter storms in

California." With the impending risk, now is the time to plan for the 2009-10 Erosion Control or SWPPP season. Oakridge Landscape's Erosion Control Division is prepared to help with both the field execution and the strategic planning for this upcoming season.

The October deadlines loom large for the implementation of 2009-10 season erosion control infrastructure or Best Management Practices (BMPs). For most projects the greater costs are not the initial infrastructure, but rather the maintenance and storm response throughout the season.

Oakridge is experienced and diligent at providing the resources to protect your sites, maintain compliance, and prepare the most accurate budgets. The cost effective maintenance and compliance of every site is the paramount objective of Oakridge Erosion Control for every client. Please contact us today to help plan for your 2009-10 season in the most successful and cost effective manner possible.

