

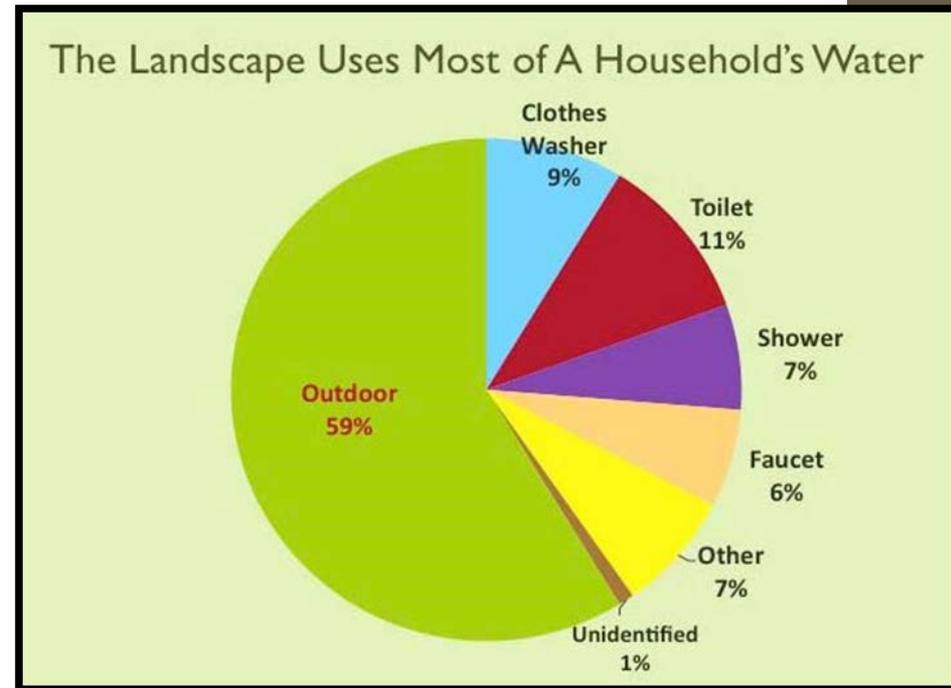


Water Efficiency Ordinance ZCA No. 750

El Monte City Council – June 7, 2016

BACKGROUND

- In California, about half of the urban water is used for landscape irrigation.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 1881 in 2006 required the State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to update the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO).
- State MWELO was first adopted in 2009. El Monte Municipal Code updated in 2010.
- On April 1, 2015, Governor authorized the State Water Resources Control Board to establish regulations to increase water efficiency and update the MWELO.



PLANNING COMMISSION

- **Planning Commission Hearing** – May 10, 2016.
 - Unanimously recommended City Council approve draft Ordinance.
- **Comments and Recommendations**
 - Provide additional information regarding the Prescriptive Compliance Option.
 - Invite local nurseries, hardware retailers, and landscape contractors to workshops.
 - Produce additional handouts for public.
 - Request to revise Section 17.11.100(a)(2)(D) of the EMMC – “Pool and spa covers are highly recommended” to read “Pool and spa covers shall be used when pool or spa is not in use to minimize the loss of water due to evaporation”.

WHEN DOES ORDINANCE APPLY?

- The City of El Monte needs to establish city-wide water conservation regulations for new projects that are at least as effective as the State.
- **New development projects** that include landscape areas of 500 sf or more are subject to the Ordinance (previously at 2,500 sf). This includes new buildings and additions to existing buildings.
 - Projects with landscape areas of 500 to 2,500 sf may comply with a simplified landscape plan submittal through the Prescriptive Compliance Option.
- The size threshold for **existing landscapes** that are being rehabilitated has not changed (2,500 sf).

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS

- More Efficient Irrigation Systems than Currently Required.
- Incentives for Gray Water Use.
- Improvements in Onsite Storm Water Capture.
- Limiting the Portion of Landscapes that can be Planted with High Water Use Plants such as Cool-Season Turf.
- Annual Reporting Requirements.
- Prescriptive Compliance Option for Landscape Areas of 500 to 2,500 sf.
- Soil Management Report Requirement.
- Expanded Definitions Section.
- Increased Requirements for Irrigation Design.

REVIEW PROCESS

1) Type of Project: “New Development” or a “Rehabilitated Landscape.”

New development projects with 500 sf of landscape or rehabilitated landscape projects with 2,500 sf of landscape.

2) Plan Submittal:

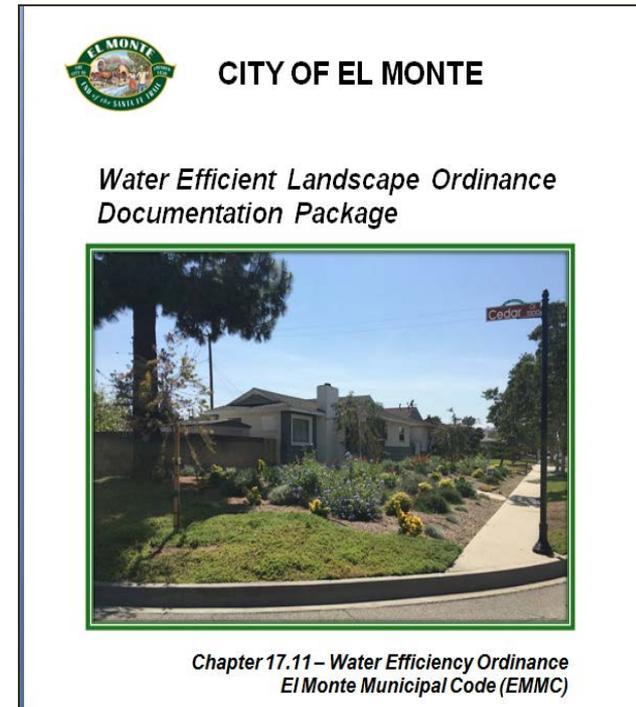
- General Compliance: Projects with landscape areas of 2,500+ sf will need to achieve General Compliance. Plans must be designed by a registered landscape architect or licensed contractor.
- Prescriptive Compliance Option: Projects with landscape areas of 500 to 2,500 sf may comply with a simplified landscape plan submittal through the Prescriptive Compliance Option. Most plans may be designed by a qualified person (e.g. landscape designer). Installation is required to be conducted by a C-27 licensed landscaper.

REVIEW PROCESS CONTINUED

3) Submitting the Water Efficient Landscape Documentation Package

The project applicant shall submit the package to the Planning Division for initial review:

- a. Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Application;
- b. Water Efficient Landscape Worksheet;
- c. Soil Management Report;
- d. Landscape Design Plan;
- e. Irrigation Design Plan;
- f. Grading Design Plan;
- g. Drainage Plan;
- h. Certificate of Completion; and
- i. Prescriptive Compliance Option.



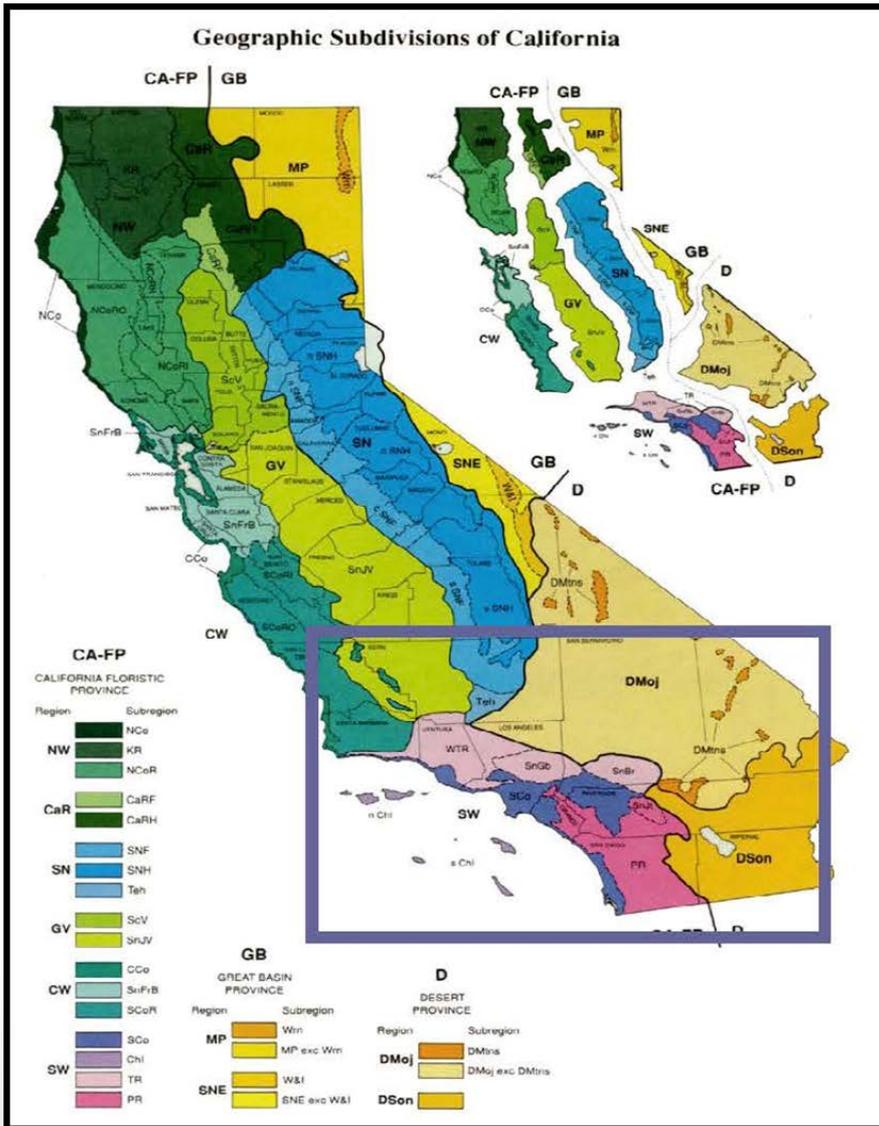
REVIEW PROCESS CONTINUED

- 4) **Certificate of Completion Requirement:** The project applicant submits the signed certificate to the City's Planning Division (i.e. plans meet MWELo requirements).

- 5) **Issuing Permits and Completing Inspections:**
 - Prescriptive Compliance Option:
 - Planning approves the plans and document package.
 - Building Division completes inspections.
 - General Compliance:
 - Planning reviews the plans and document package for completeness.
 - Building completes a comprehensive review and complete inspections.

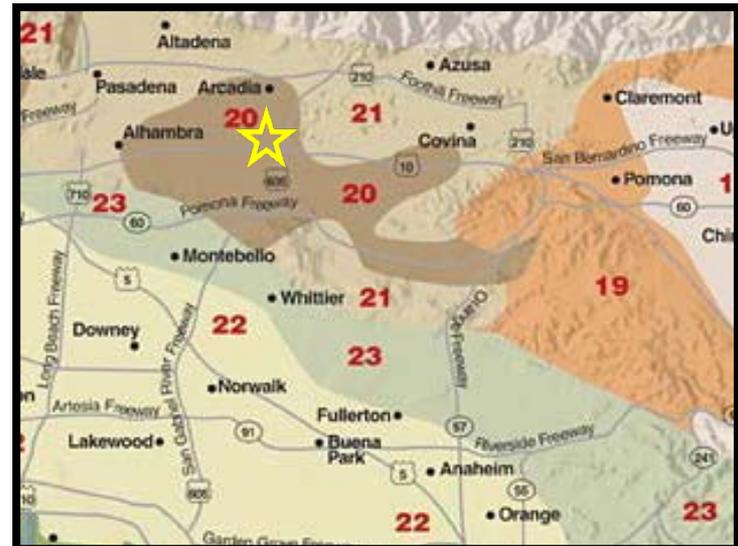
- 6) **Submitting the Annual Report:** The City will report to the State Department of Water Resources.

CLIMATE APPROPRIATE PLANTS



Only those adapted to Southern California are truly climate-appropriate plants.

USDA Plant Hardiness Zone – 10a
Sunset Climate Zone – Zone 20



LANDSCAPE DESIGN – DEFICIENCIES



LANDSCAPE DESIGN – SUSTAINABLE



WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPES



PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Host a public workshop, invites to include:
 - Landscape architects and contractors
 - Local nurseries
 - Hardware and landscape supply retailers
- Include information about the Ordinance in the City's quarterly Newsletter;
- Post information about the Ordinance on the City's website homepage;
- Issue a press release; and
- Develop and distribute informational handouts for the public counter.

FISCAL IMPACT

- Applicant will cover all costs in preparing the plans and submittal requirements contained in the Landscape Documentation Package.
- Applicant will cover all costs associated with the Certificate of Completion.
- Applicant to cover all fees for Landscape and Irrigation Review and field inspections:
 - Combined with any fees paid to the Building Division.
 - Fees are based on the total amount of area being landscaped.
 - Fees include surcharge to cover City staff time.
 - Fees are significantly less for projects that are eligible for the Prescriptive Compliance Option.
- City to cover Planning staff time to review documentation package (approx. 2 hours) and general time to provide assistance at counter.
- Property owners to benefit from long term cost savings through reduced water usage and maintenance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Adopt a Categorical Exemption under Sections 15307, 15308, and 15061 (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, as amended; and
- Recommend that the City Council approve Code Amendment No. 750.



Questions/Recommendations