**Spouts**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY WATER AGENCY**

**Fall 2012**

**CUBS #3641**

For further information, visit www.SCWA.net

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**Water with the Weather!**

It’s time to let Mother Nature do her job by providing the water for your plants and landscaping needs during the rainy seasons of fall and winter.

Water efficiency in cooler, wetter weather is easy; just follow these simple tips: Turn off your sprinklers and irrigation system OR install a rain sensor to automatically shut off your irrigation system when it’s raining.

If there is an extended dry period during the rainy season, change your irrigation schedule to apply the minimum amount of water needed—many plants are dormant and others need little water during the cooler months.

**Are You Saving Money with a Meter?**

About 80 percent of Water Agency customers are on metered billing and are eligible to save money by conserving water! Customers using 1400 or fewer cubic feet per billing cycle receive a 20 percent discount and customers using between 1401 to 3000 cubic feet receive a 10 percent discount.

Cash in on water conservation!

**How to Read Your Water Meter**

Locate your water meter. Usually, water meters are located in your front yard, near the curb or sidewalk. You’ll find it inside a rectangular box in the ground near your property line. It is important to keep the meter box clear of landscaping and other obstructions.

Read your meter. Read from left to right and be sure to note how your meter measures water use. Our water meters read in CCF (100 cubic feet). To convert to gallons you would multiply the CCF by 748. Record the number and check your meter again in 30 days. Subtract the first reading from the second to determine your water consumption for the past month.

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**Water Wise House Call**

As the summer comes to an end, this is an excellent time to make your home and yard as water efficient as possible. Schedule your free Water Wise House Call to assess the performance of your irrigation system and check your indoor plumbing.

Call our consultant, Irrigation Consultation and Evaluation (ICE), at 916-772-2226, Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., to schedule an appointment. To prepare for the consultation, make sure your irrigation controller is easily accessible and jot down any water efficiency questions you have.

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**When Ants Attack!**

Rainy season often drives hordes of Argentine ants into homes. Efforts to control them with pesticide sprays are a major source of pollution in our local creeks and rivers. Effective alternatives to pesticides exist! The best method for immediate relief from swarms is to clean them up using soapy water. Other tips include sealing up their points of entry and using containerized baits. For more tips, visit: www. beriverfriendly.net/pestcontroltips/#ants.

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Not all meters have the triangular low-flow indicator—you can also check for a leak by evaluating the round dial with a red hand. If movement is faster than any other dial, this would be a leak detection indicator.

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**Calculate gallons used.** If your water meter reads in cubic feet, multiply the number by 7.48 to tell you how many gallons you’ve consumed.

**Check for Leaks.** The red circular dial or a triangular shaped low-flow indicator on your meter rotates when you are using water. To check for a leak, turn off water indoors and outdoors including sprinklers, ice maker, etc. If the low-flow indicator moves, this may indicate a leak in an appliance or pipe. If you notice movement, check all appliances, faucets, toilets and other water sources for drips or leaks. For a video of how to locate leaks, please visit: www.snwa.com/3party/find_leak/main.html.

If you are unable to locate the leak, you may need to hire a plumber to locate and repair the leak.

**Save water, save money.** By finding and fixing leaks, you can save thousands of gallons of water a year! If you’re paying a metered rate, it will help you save money, too!
Rake Fall Leaves

When fall leaves are not swept up and disposed of properly, the leaves wash into gutters carrying other debris and clog storm drains. When there is heavy rainfall, the build-up causes street flooding. So it’s important to rake your leaves during the fall months keeping your streets clean and storm ready!

Get Mulching!

Mulch is any material that is spread evenly over the surface of the soil to help the growth of plants and the appearance of the landscape. You can create beautiful, healthy landscapes that control weeds, conserve water and reduce labor and water costs by using natural materials like, leaves and grass clippings, as mulch.

By working with nature to nurture the soil, we create less waste that, in turn, conserves valuable landfill space. River-Friendly Landscaping means working in harmony with the natural ecosystem of the Sacramento region to foster soil health, reduce runoff and pollution, prevent and reuse plant waste and conserve water and other natural resources. Plant debris accounts for about 7% of what is thrown away annually in California. By using this debris as mulch, landfill space is conserved, local soils are improved, less chemical fertilizers and pesticides are used and healthier landscapes are created . . . naturally.

Mulch is a very important practice in the design, construction and maintenance of landscapes and gardens. Using mulch can benefit your maintenance operations by:

• Reducing weeds by as much as 90% -- causing less work for you!
• Saving you money by NOT buying herbicides.
• Reducing the need for trimming grass around trees and poles.
• Conserving water and saving money on irrigation.

For more information on mulching and other river friendly practices, please visit: www.RiverFriendly.org.

Fluoridation Update

The First 5 Sacramento Commission awarded the Sacramento County Water Agency an $11 million grant to fluoridate its drinking water supplies. The Statewide Fluoridation Act requires public water systems throughout California with more than 10,000 water-service connections to fluoridate their water to promote dental health.

Installation of the fluoridation systems has now been completed at all 32 locations throughout the Water Agency's service area. Final testing of the fluoridation systems are currently underway and are expected to be completed by early January 2013. During this test period, suboptimal levels of fluoridated water will be delivered, rotationally, to customer groups for a period of up to eight days.

After final testing of the 32 fluoridation systems, the Water Agency will begin fulltime fluoridation. All customers and dental health care providers will be notified by mail prior to the initiation of fulltime fluoridation.

“Fluoridation of community water supplies is safe and effective in preventing dental decay.”
Olivia Kasirye, MD, MS,
Sacramento County Public Health Officer

Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta Update

About 25 million Californians and 4.5 million square miles of farmland rely on diversions from the Delta for water. This water supply is a critical need for California, of equal concern is preserving the state of the Delta and maintaining and restoring the health of its ecosystem.

Sacramento County is and will continue be interested in pursuing an all-encompassing effort for a California water solution—but the solution must be holistic in nature and also must protect our historic and culturally significant Delta communities, the local economy, existing water rights and the pristine habitat that is home to some 750 species of plants, fish, and wildlife.