

## **ITP – Proposed Recommendation 7.2a: Approximation of Outdoor Water Uses and Extent of Expected Impact of Landscape Ordinances**

*Potential addition to §10631(e) of the Urban Water Management Planning Act and appropriate additions to the DWR UWMP Guidebook for the approximation of outdoor water use in future water use projections and the extent to which such outdoor usage is subject to the landscape efficiency ordinances adopted within the service area.*

The Independent Technical Panel on Demand Management Measures (ITP) recommends that the Urban Water Management Planning Act be revised to include estimates of present and future outdoor water use in future Urban Water Management Plans.

Landscape irrigation in California frequently comprises half or more of all residential water use, and a large share of CII water use as well. To maintain urban water supplies that will support further economic recovery and a restoration of the housing market, it is important that water suppliers understand the extent of outdoor use within their respective service areas and the policies enacted by state and local governments to promote landscape water efficiency.

There are several distinct attributes of outdoor water use that warrant its identification in projections of future water usage, including:

- pronounced seasonal swings in water demand in most locations;
- distinct customer demand and price elasticity for outdoor uses compared with indoor uses;
- the inverse relationship between housing density and residential per capita water use;
- the automation of irrigation and the importance of effective controls;
- the likelihood of increased demand from existing as well as future landscapes due to the effects of climate change; and
- the ability of non-potable sources to meet a portion of outdoor usage.

As a result, the tools used to promote outdoor water use efficiency are often distinct from other efficiency programs. For this reason, local planners and governing boards will benefit from a better understanding of the relative share of future water use that is made up of outdoor uses. Even an informed approximation, rather than a meticulous estimate, would add value to a supplier's urban water management plan.

One of the principal tools for improving the efficiency of newly installed landscapes is the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and its local variations adopted under AB 1881. Each local jurisdiction is free to enact an ordinance of its own of equal or greater stringency, or to accept the state model by default.

The landscapes of the future must be more efficient than the landscapes of the past. To ensure that this is the case, urban water suppliers should know the extent to which future outdoor water

use will be influenced by the landscape ordinances in their service area. Suppliers that anticipate a large share of future water use attributable to landscapes covered by ordinance will naturally want to encourage that the ordinances be administered effectively. Conversely, suppliers with minimal future demand attributable to landscapes covered by the ordinances will focus their attention on other strategies to improve the efficiency of outdoor uses.

We recommend that the Department of Water Resources include in its 2015 UWMP guidance one or more simplified methodologies for approximating outdoor use as a share of future water use by sector, and an approach to compiling and screening applicable landscape ordinances for the extent of their applicability to future outdoor water demand.

**Suggested statutory language:** Add the following new paragraph to Section 10631(e) of the Water Code:

“(3) For the current and projected water use for each water use sector above [single-family residential, commercial, etc.], provide an approximation of the amount of outdoor water use included in the total presented for each sector. Indicate the extent to which projected outdoor water use is attributable to landscapes subject to the local ordinances adopted pursuant to AB 1881.