

**CITY COUNCIL**

KEN BLACKWOOD  
MARGARET ESTRADA  
JIM GAZELEY  
TIMOTHY KING  
DON SUMINAGA



**CITY OF LOMITA**

**ADMINISTRATION**

JOHN JALILI  
INTERIM CITY MANAGER

DAWN TOMITA  
CITY CLERK

February 8, 2010

Simon Eching  
California Department of Water Resources  
Water Use and Efficiency Branch  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Re: City of Lomita, Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

Dear Mr. Eching:

This letter serves as confirmation that the City of Lomita has prepared and adopted its own local water efficient landscape ordinance in compliance with the requirements of the Water Conservation in Landscaping Bill (AB 1881, Laird). Article 82, "Landscape Requirements", of Title XI of the Lomita Municipal Code was adopted January 4, 2010, and took effect February 4, 2010. The ordinance prepared by the City meets the requirements of the Department of Water Resources "Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance" and is enclosed for your reference.

Should you have any questions, please contact Alicia Heideman, Associate City Planner, at (310) 325-7110, extension 122 or via email at [a.heideman@lomitacity.com](mailto:a.heideman@lomitacity.com).

Sincerely,

Gary Sugano  
Community Development Director

Attachment: Article 82, Landscape Requirements

CC: John Jalili, Interim City Manager  
Christi Hogin, City Attorney  
Dawn Tomita, City Clerk



## Article 82. LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

### Sections:

- 11-1.82.00 Purpose.
- 11-1.82.01 Applicability.
- 11-1.82.02 Definitions.
- 11-1.82.03 Compliance Requirements.
- 11-1.82.04 Landscape Design Requirements.
- 11-1.82.05 Model Homes.
- 11-1.82.06 Exceptions.
- 11-1.82.07 Submittals.
- 11-1.82.08 Determination of Conforming Installation.
- 11-1.82.09 Compliance Verification.
- 11-1.82.10 Water Waste Prevention.

### Sec. 11-1.82.00 Purpose.

It is the policy of the City of Lomita to promote water conservation. The Landscape Water Conservation Standards detailed in this Chapter are intended to promote water conservation while allowing the maximum possible flexibility in designing healthy, attractive, and cost-effective water efficient landscapes.

This Chapter is to be used in conjunction with the water conservation requirements of the Municipal Code, commencing with Section 12-4.01.01. Where conflicts in language may exist between this Chapter and Chapter 12-4, the more restrictive water conserving language shall prevail.

### Sec. 11-1.82.01 Applicability.

This Chapter applies to any project which proposes new or altered landscaping exceeding 1,500 square feet. All proposed landscape shall comply with the following requirements in the design, installation, and maintenance of the landscaped area, unless an exception is granted pursuant to Section 11-1.80.06.

### Sec. 11-1.82.02 Definitions.

*ET or Evapotranspiration*, is the approximate summation of water losses through evaporation from soil and transpiration from the plants during a specified period of time.

*ETo or Reference Evapotranspiration* is the approximation of water loss expressed in inches per year from a field of 4-to-7-inch-tall cool season grass that is not water stressed.

*ET Adjustment Factor* shall mean the factor used to set an efficiency goal, that when applied to ETo adjusts for plant factor and irrigation efficiency, two of the major influences upon the amount of water that needs to be applied to a landscape.

*Hydrozone* shall mean a portion of the landscaped area having plants with similar water needs. A hydrozone may be irrigated or non-irrigated

*Landscape Area* shall mean all areas where new or altered landscaping is proposed as a part of a new development proposal.

*Landscape Plan* is a plan, drawn to scale, depicting the proposed landscape areas and placement of landscape materials by type, number and size. The plan shall include both the common and scientific name of the plant.

*Plant Factor* shall mean the factor that when multiplied by the ETo, estimates the amount of water used by a given plant species.

*Special Landscape Area (SLA)* shall include park and recreational areas, areas permanently and solely dedicated to edible plants such as orchards and vegetable gardens, and areas irrigated with recycled water are subject to the MAWA with an ET adjustment factor not to exceed 1.0.

*Turf* is a groundcover surface of mowed grass with an irrigation water need of greater than 30% of the ETo.

*Water Budget Calculation* is the maximum annual applied water allowance and shall be calculated using this formula:

$$\text{MAWA} = (\text{ETo}) (0.62) [0.7 \times \text{LA} + 0.3 \times \text{SLA}]$$

MAWA = Maximum Applied Water Allowance (maximum gallons per year available for the project).

Eto = Reference Evapotranspiration (39.7 inches per year for the City of Lomita).

0.7 = ET Adjustment Factor (as designated by the state of California).

LA = Landscape Area (square feet, including SLA)

0.62.1 = Conversion Factor (inches to gallons)

SLA = Special Landscape Area (square feet)

0.3 = The additional ET Adjustment Factor for the Special Landscape Area

*Water Wise Plants* shall be those plants that are evaluated as needing "moderate" (40-60% of ETo), "low" (10-30% of ETo) and "very low" (< 10% of ETo) amounts of water as defined and listed by Water Use Classifications of Landscape Species (WUCOLS) available at:

Department of Water Resources  
Bulletins and Reports  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, California 94236-0001

Other sources of water wise plant classifications may be used if approved by the City's Director of Community Development.

*Weather Based Irrigation Controller* is an irrigation controller that automatically adjusts the irrigation schedule based on changes in the weather.

**Sec. 11-1.82.03 Compliance Requirements.**

The procedures and rules set forth in this article are applicable to landscape projects regardless of what zone they are located within.

- (A) The applicant shall submit two copies of the proposed landscape plan and irrigation plan for review and approval by the Community Development Director.
1. If a grading permit is required the grading plan shall also be submitted.
  2. Commercial and industrial projects shall also submit a soil management report.
- (B) Each plan shall be on a separate sheet drawn to the same scale.
- (C) All plans shall contain the following information:
1. Location map with north arrow, scale, and legal description of the property.
  2. Project name and address.
  3. Title block with name, license/certification number, mailing address, email address, and phone number of licensed landscape architect or certified irrigation designer, etc.
  4. Benchmark name, elevation, and location.
  5. Topography with proposed contour lines and elevations.
  6. Property lines.
  7. Location of all utilities (e.g. telephone, electrical, gas, sewer, drainage, etc).

8. Location and details of existing and proposed public improvements within right-of-way (e.g., curb, gutter, sidewalk, street light, fire hydrants, driveways, other approaches, etc.).

**Sec. 11-1.82.04 Landscape Design Requirements.**

- (A) Landscaping shall be designed to be irrigated at no more than 0.7 of the reference evapotranspiration (ET<sub>o</sub>) and shall not exceed the MAWA. The City reserves the right to modify plans in quantity and quality of the landscape to meet the requirements of this Chapter.
- (B) Hydrozone Requirements. Plants shall be grouped together that have similar water needs and also slope, sun exposure, and soil conditions.
  1. Delineate and label each hydrozone
  2. Indicate the square footage of each hydrozone.
  3. Identify each hydrozone as low, moderate, or high water use, etc.
  4. Each hydrozone shall have its own irrigation valve.
  5. Sprinkler heads and other emission devices shall be selected based on what is appropriate for the plant type within that hydrozone.
- (C) Sprinkler heads shall have matched application rates for uniform coverage
- (D) Total Water Use calculated for all hydrozones shall not exceed MAWA
- (E) Head to head coverage shall be required when designing the sprinkler system.
- (F) Where feasible, trees shall be placed on separate valves from shrubs, groundcovers and turf.
- (G) Irrigated areas (including turf) within 24 inches of non-permeable hardscape shall be irrigated with drip irrigation or subsurface irrigation technology.
- (H) All trees shall be a minimum 15 gallons in size and all shrubs 5 gallons.
- (I) Use of Turf and Water Wise Plants:
  1. The landscape area of projects proposing exclusively commercial or industrial uses shall be designed without the use of turf and with 100% water wise plants. Notwithstanding that requirement, projects may use turf where a specific turf type is proposed for any required bio-swale or bio-filter systems,

or areas adjacent to pedestrian traffic where walking travel or crossings are expected. These walking areas would include corner lot locations or linear areas located along pedestrian routes.

2. The landscape area of single family residential, multi-family residential, mixed use, and institutional use projects shall be designed with no more than 40% of the landscaped area in turf or plants that are not water wise plants.
  3. Turf is not permitted in medians or parking lot landscape finger planters.
  4. Turf shall not be used on slopes of 25% or greater.
  5. Notwithstanding subsections 1 and 2 above, additional turf areas may be approved by the City for areas designed and used for outdoor sporting and recreational activities, or for an approved functional use. Approved turf areas may be watered at 1.0 of the reference evapotranspiration (ET<sub>o</sub>).
- (J) Mulch: All mulch areas shall have a minimum depth of three inches. Additional mulch material shall be added from time to time as necessary in order to maintain the required depth of mulch.
- (K) Irrigation Design Plan: The irrigation design plan shall accurately and clearly identify the following specifications, where applicable:
1. Detailed legend explaining all the symbols used in the irrigation design plan.
  2. Location, manufacturer, model, type, and size of all components of the irrigation system such as: including automatic controllers, main and lateral lines, valves, sprinkler heads, moisture sensing devices, rain switches, quick couplers, and backflow prevention devices.
  3. Irrigation systems shall be designed and installed to avoid overspray and runoff. Valves shall be separated for individual hydrozones based on plant water needs and sun or shade requirements.
  4. Water Budget Calculations (Section 11-1.80.02 above) shall be shown on Irrigation Plans.
  5. An automatic irrigation system is required and shall include a weather-based irrigation controller, including a rain shut-off sensor.
  6. Areas less than eight feet wide shall be irrigated with appropriately selected equipment that provides the proper amount of water coverage without causing overspray onto adjacent surfaces.

7. All sprinklers shall have matched precipitation rates within each valve and circuit. All irrigation systems shall be designed to include optimum distribution uniformity, head to head spacing, and setbacks from walkways and pavement.
8. All irrigation systems shall provide check valves at the low end of irrigation lines to prevent unwanted draining of irrigation lines.
9. Pressure regulators may be required on the irrigation system as determined by the City's Public Works Department.

**Sec. 11-1.82.05 Model Homes.**

All model homes that are landscaped shall demonstrate via signs and information the principles of water efficient landscapes described in this ordinance.

- (A) Signs shall be used to identify the model as an example of a water efficient landscape and featuring elements such as hydrozones, irrigation equipment, and others which contribute to the overall water efficient theme.
- (B) Information shall be provided about designing, installing, managing, and maintaining water efficient landscapes.

**Sec. 11-1.82.06 Exceptions.**

Exceptions to these Landscape Water Conservation Standards may be granted by the City's Community Development Director upon a finding, based on substantial evidence, that the exceptions will promote equivalent or greater water conservation than is provided for in these standards. Requests for exceptions shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the Community Development Director at the time the application is submitted to the City for review. Requests for exceptions must be accompanied by documentary evidence supporting the finding of equivalent or greater water conservation.

**Sec. 11-1.82.07 Submittals.**

- (A) Applicants shall provide all relevant information on the landscape plan including botanical names for plants and turf species; container sizes; percentage calculations of allowable areas of turf; low, medium or high water use plants and water-wise plants; water budget calculations; monthly irrigation schedule; and specific requests for any exceptions to the requirements of this Chapter. Areas of existing landscaping to remain unaltered shall be indicated on the landscape plan.
- (B) The landscape plan shall be prepared in accordance with the provisions of the California Business and Professions Code relating to the practice of landscape architecture (Business and Professional Code Section 5641 et seq.).

- (C) The landscape plan shall include a "Statement of Compliance" in a form approved by the Community Development Director certifying that the landscape design complies with the mandatory elements of this Chapter. The Statement of Compliance shall be signed by the person who prepared the landscape plan.

**Sec. 11-1.82.08 Determination of Conforming Installation.**

The person who prepared the landscape plan shall inspect the installation of the landscaping and any irrigation system included in the plan and shall certify in writing to the Department of Community Development that the installation substantially conforms to the approved landscape plan prior to a final City landscape inspection or occupancy being requested.

**Sec. 11-1.82.09 Compliance Verification.**

Verification of compliance with this Chapter, as applicable, shall be made by the Community Development Department in accordance with the following requirements:

- (A) No building permit shall be issued unless the statement of compliance required by Section 11-1.82.07(C) above has been included on the final landscape plan submitted for plan check approval.
- (B) No building permit shall be given a final landscape inspection or issued a permanent certificate of occupancy until the Department of Community Development receives a written determination of conforming installation as required by Section 11-1.82.08 above.

**Sec. 11-1.82.10 Water Waste Prevention.**

Water waste resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation, such as runoff, low head drainage, overspray, etc, is prohibited. Similar conditions where water flows onto non-targeted areas, such as adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, hardscapes, roadways, or structures are also prohibited.