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From: mweo-bounces@water.ca.gov on behalf of Bollinger1group@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2008 4:52 PM
To: mweo@water.ca.gov
Subject: [MWE0] Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

We have worked with many water agencies to assist them in implementing their water conservation programs. Our small desert area districts have had success with a variety of programs, but typically lack the resources to perform the work. We feel that the revised guidelines will create additional barriers for successful implementation of their programs. Our concerns are:

- The process is overly complicated, and would be burdensome to administer.
- The guidelines diminish the role of water purveyors that are separate from municipalities in the protection of their water resources. They also create an extra burden for these districts, some of which would have to deal with multiple city and county governments.
- The guidelines and many definitions are overly restrictive:
 - "Local Agency" has been narrowly defined as a city or county . . . responsible for adopting and implementing the ordinance.
 - Creation of landscape plans has been limited to a "licensed landscape architect or licensed landscape contractor" removing from the marketplace many qualified landscape designers. This may create an economic disincentive to install landscaping or make landscape improvements.
 - "Landscape area" has been defined to include a maximum of 10% of non-irrigated areas, rather than the more widely accepted definition of all areas that could be planted. This will greatly reduce the water budget.

While our business is conservation, we feel that the guidelines as written will alienate many populations and be counterproductive. We have worked very hard to improve community relationships and gain acceptance for reasonable government water efficiency regulations. Within our conservative inland empire communities what will work is an ordinance that creates wide bookends within which residents can enjoy freedom of choice with minimal government intrusion while remaining within their water budget.

We are proud of our Morongo Basin communities that use an average of 1/3 acre-foot of water per household. Communities with a proven track record of conservation should be eligible for a waiver from the guidelines.

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