

**Colvin, Judith**

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**From:** mweo-bounces@water.ca.gov on behalf of Toby Goddard [TGoddard@ci.santa-cruz.ca.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 27, 2008 4:58 PM  
**To:** mweo@water.ca.gov  
**Subject:** [MWE0] Model Ordinance

March 27, 2008

Ms. Judy Colvin

Department of Water Resources

Office of Water Use Efficiency and Transfers

P.O. Box 942836

Sacramento CA, 94236-0001

**SUBJECT:** Updated Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance      Dear Ms. Colvin:

The City of Santa Cruz Water Department has had the responsibility of administering a water efficient landscape ordinance ever since AB 325 was passed in the early 1990's. As a local government and municipal water supplier, we have many years' experience with the practical aspects of reviewing landscape plans and have adopted many effective provisions that have helped save water outdoors. So it is with considerable interest that we reviewed the proposed updated regulations. We have a number of comments and concerns about the proposed regulations but are unable to go into much detail due to the lack of time before the comment period closes. Our comments are as follows:

1. The existing regulation was initially directed at local governments, i.e. cities and counties, because landscape plan review is closely tied to the development review process. However, we believe that, with the primary goal being that of improving the efficiency of water use in new and existing landscapes, this body of regulation would be better directed at retail water agencies, which have the responsibility to manage water use. In our experience serving other jurisdictions that are not water suppliers, those agencies place little if any priority on this matter in reviewing development plans. The proposed regulation places significant additional responsibilities for ensuring compliance on new and existing landscapes for which local planning and community development departments have neither the time, expertise, or appropriate information to properly carry out. We recommend considering an alternative to the proposed regulation that makes this landscape review function the responsibility of retail water agencies.
2. The level of information required should be scaled to the size of the development proposal. Under the proposed regulation, a single family residence with a standard urban size lot and landscape area of just over 2,500 square feet would have to submit the same level of detail as a major commercial development project. Given the level of detail required, it does not seem reasonable to mandate a single family home provide this much detail, especially since landscapes in homes are changeable over time, and not permanent improvements.

3. It seems contradictory to require monthly irrigation schedules as part of the documentation in 492.12 if, at the same time, it is required that weather or sensor based irrigation controllers be used in 492.9, since it is the controller that determines run times and run frequency of the irrigation system, not a predetermined schedule.
4. The requirement in section 493.1, part 4 regarding annual survey of existing landscapes equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet needs to be reconsidered, for the following reasons:
  - Many if not most of these properties have water accounts that are mixed use domestic meters for which landscape water use cannot be examined directly.
  - Information about individual customer water use is confidential under Government Code section 6250, and not something local governments usually have access to.
  - Landscape area on existing properties is generally unknown, so there is no way to compare water use against local ET, without knowing area.

It is recommended that this requirement be limited only to landscapes with dedicated irrigation accounts.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Please call me at (831) 420-5232 if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

Toby Goddard

Water Conservation Manager

[Toby Goddard](#)

[Water Conservation Manager](#)

[Santa Cruz Water Department](#)

[Tel: \(831\) 420-5232](#)

[Fax: \(831\) 420-5231](#)