

Inland Empire Utilities Agency

A MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

6075 Kimball Ave. • Chino, CA 91708
P.O. Box 9020 • Chino, Hills, CA 91709
TEL (909) 993-1600 • FAX (909) 597-8875
www.ieua.org

March 25, 2008

Department of Water Resources
Office of Water Use Efficiency and Transfers
Attention: Judy Colvin
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Dear Ms. Colvin:

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) is a member of the Inland Empire Landscape Alliance, a voluntary collaborative working group of stakeholders within the Chino Basin watershed, including the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Upland, Ontario, Montclair, Rancho Cucamonga, Fontana, as well as the Monte Vista Water District, San Antonio Water Company, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana Water Company, Chino Basin Water Conservation District, and Chino Basin Watermaster.

The Inland Empire Landscape Alliance is committed to promoting water conservation and providing a unified voice in recommending landscaping related policies within the Chino Basin. Each member of the Landscape Alliance is submitting their comments individually to represent their opinions as a stakeholder within the region. As a member of the Alliance, IEUA is submitting these comments on the potential impacts that the proposed State model ordinance would have on our service area.

First, we support the development of the State's landscape model ordinance and what it is trying to accomplish through a water budget approach. However, we have concerns that the ordinance, as drafted, may contradict or duplicate local restrictions/regulations and may not be feasible for local jurisdictions to adopt and implement several provisions. Key points include:

- DWR needs to clarify what would make a local ordinance "at least as effective as" the State model ordinance.
- Local agencies are not necessarily water suppliers. As such, issues related to sharing water use data may arise. Many water suppliers are also actively involved in providing education on landscape water conservation to customers. Under the draft model ordinance, these efforts would be duplicated.
- Concerns have been raised locally about how the ordinance would affect botanical gardens, which have unique roles in preserving the natural environment. It is recommended that an exemption be granted to botanic gardens as well as cemeteries and historic sites.

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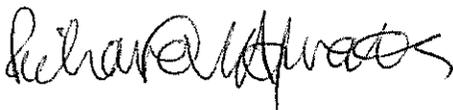
Richard W. Atwater
Chief Executive Officer
General Manager

- The applicability of the proposed model ordinance to include all new, rehabilitated and existing landscapes with a minimum of 2,500 square feet of landscape area could potentially apply to the majority of existing single family residences in the state. Such a provision will be costly and overwhelming for local agencies to comply with. We strongly recommend that the minimum lot size be increased to 5,000 square feet. In addition, a phased approach should be used to include smaller properties under the ordinance.
- Water audits should be required only when water use exceeds the water allotments (such as those calculated in the Maximum Allowable Water Allowance) or violates wastewater/stormwater provisions.
- Compliance with stormwater and runoff is currently mandated with ordinances in place within local agencies and has been shown to be an effective way to reduce landscape water use. While we support the integration of those ordinances with the State's model Landscape Ordinance, we oppose duplicating efforts.
- Please provide a clear justification for the proposal to reduce the Evapotranspiration Adjustment Factor from 0.8 to 0.7. This change will significantly impact acceptable landscape designs.
- While we applaud the intent behind the Landscape Documentation Package, we recommend that the materials be simplified. As proposed, the materials would require prohibitive amounts of time for the local agencies to review the package in addition to being overly complicated for single family homeowners to submit without technical assistance.
- We support the recommendations set forth by the Association of Compost Producers.

In closing, we fully support the direction of the State model ordinance and appreciate the work that has gone into developing this draft. However, we believe that the current draft model ordinance needs additional work before it is proposed for adoption. We strongly recommend that DWR modify the draft ordinance and recirculate it for additional public review before taking this action.

Again, thank you for your consideration of our comments. We strongly believe that a well designed model landscape ordinance will promote both water conservation beautiful landscapes in California.

Respectfully yours,



Richard W. Atwater
CEO/General Manager