

MWEO

From: Stan Gibson [SGibson@ci.pleasanton.ca.us]
Sent: Friday, December 19, 2008 8:17 AM
To: MWEO
Cc: Brian Fiorio; Lisa Hagopian
Subject: MODEL WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

Comment 015.1

I am a maintenance supervisor for a mid-sized city in northern California. I'm writing to voice my concern over the proposed Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and its crippling impact on our operation. Other than labor, water is the largest line-item in our operating budget. Water is already viewed as a valuable resource not to be wasted. Much of our efforts in the last 10 years have been focused on lowering our water use (and thereby our operating costs). We have achieved efficiency savings in many areas averaging 20% through central irrigation control, use of modern irrigation products, modification of existing systems, and plant selection. These water savings resulted from renovation projects of existing systems performed internally by staff. With limited funding and staff resources, we have been able to achieve outstanding results in water savings.

After reading through the proposed ordinance documents, I am concerned that nobody is thinking about the unintended consequences to operations like ours. Simply put, the passage of the ordinance would create a regulatory burden requiring too much staff resources and time to overcome. The ordinance would effectively stop most of our renovation projects. It is simply not worth my time to try to overcome this regulatory obstacle. I'll leave existing inefficient systems in place and put our efforts and resources into other areas besides water efficiency. The net result is we will continue to run inefficient, water wasting systems.

At the time that I write this e-mail, water savings represents the greatest opportunity for our agency to find efficiencies to improve our operations in a fiscal environment that is constantly demanding that we do more with less. Right now, we have great incentive to find ways to use less water. This proposed ordinance would drastically change the cost of renovation and create a situation where resources would be better used in some other area besides water savings.

Our city is almost at build-out. Most of our irrigation is already in place. If I have to go through a nightmarish regulatory hurdle to save water, I'll simply decide in our own best interest to spend resources on something else that has a better return. You need to look into ways to increase natural incentives to save water like increasing the cost of water itself. Don't create an ordinance that drives people away from the goal of saving water.

Sincerely,

Stan Gibson
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12/22/2008