

## Despite Wet Start to Winter, California's Drought Persists



*Rainbow at the 4S Ranch Water Reclamation Facility*

After several consecutive warm, dry months, December brought some much-needed rain to California. San Diego was fortunate to receive 4.42 inches of rain in December, which is 3 inches more than normal, and parts of Northern California received more than four times that amount!

Forecasters believe that wet weather may continue through the winter. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center has predicted that Southern California will receive higher than average precipitation through April. As a result, drought conditions are expected to improve slightly by spring.

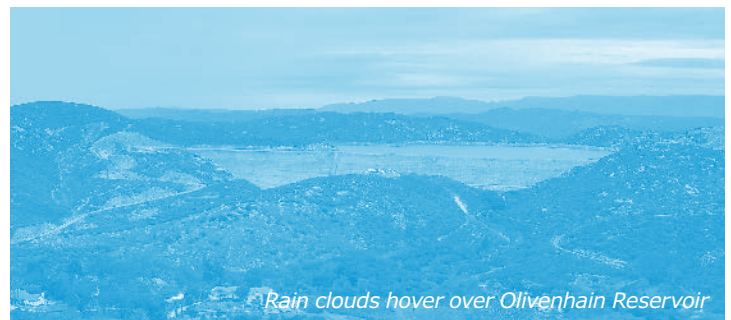
While this is encouraging news, our region has suffered from three consecutive years of below average precipitation, and we have a lot of catching up to do.

Although the year ended on a cool note, 2014 was the warmest year ever recorded in San Diego and in California as a whole. Our major reservoirs throughout the state continue to hold significantly less water than their average volume, and NASA calculated in late December that it would take *11 trillion* more gallons of rain to end the drought.

Additionally, though it was predicted in 2014 that El Niño could bring above-average rainfall to the state this winter, climatologists have since backed off on these predictions. The drought is now expected to persist or intensify in Northern California, from where we receive a significant portion of our water supplies.

To help contend with the statewide drought, OMWD remains in a Level 2 Water Supply Shortage, which means that the following water use restrictions are in effect:

1. No washing down surfaces, unless to alleviate a health or safety hazard or for one-time improvement projects such as cleaning a driveway prior to re-sealing.
2. No water waste from inefficient landscape irrigation.
3. Do not irrigate between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. unless a hand-held hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle is used.
4. To irrigate landscaping not irrigated by a landscape irrigation system, use a hand-held hose only when equipped with a shut-off nozzle or bucket.
5. Do not irrigate nursery and commercial grower's products between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. unless a hand-held hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle is used.
6. Repair all leaks within 72 hours.



*Rain clouds hover over Olivenhain Reservoir*

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Published by Olivenhain Municipal Water District in the interest of an informed public.

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Olivenhain Municipal Water District is a multi-functioning public agency that is dedicated and committed to serving present and future customers in a service-oriented manner by:

#### Water

Providing safe, reliable, high-quality drinking water while exceeding all regulatory requirements in a cost-effective and environmentally responsive manner.

#### Recycled Water

Providing recycled water and wastewater treatment in the most cost-effective and environmentally responsive method.

#### Parks

Safely operating the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and providing all users with a unique recreational, educational, and environmental experience.

#### Emergency Management

Complying with policies and procedures that adhere to local, state, and federal guidelines for national security and disaster preparedness.

#### Sustainable Operations

Pursuing alternative and/or renewable resources with the most sustainable, efficient, and cost-effective approach.

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- The following irrigation schedule is in effect. This restriction shall not apply to the use of a hand-held hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle or bucket to water landscaped areas, or to landscape irrigation systems using water efficient devices, including but not limited to weather-based controllers, drip/micro-irrigation systems, and stream rotor sprinklers.
  - Odd-numbered houses may irrigate on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday.
  - Even-numbered houses may irrigate on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.
  - Multi-family accounts and non-residential accounts may water on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Irrigation is limited to 10 minutes per station per day. This provision does not apply to landscape irrigation systems using water-efficient devices, including but not limited to weather-based controllers, drip/micro-irrigation systems, and stream rotor sprinklers.
- Discontinue landscape irrigation during measurable rainfall.

For additional information on the drought and the Level 2 Water Supply Shortage, please visit: [www.olivenhain.com/shortage](http://www.olivenhain.com/shortage).

## Is your information up to date?

OMWD may need to contact you in the event of an emergency or if our utility workers will be conducting maintenance that might interrupt your water service. Will we be able to reach you? In order for us to do so, we ask that you make sure your contact information is up-to-date. Visit [www.olivenhain.com/update](http://www.olivenhain.com/update) or call our customer service representatives at 760-753-6466 to provide OMWD with your new phone number or email address.



## Spring Forward... and Check Your Irrigation Timer

As you go through the routine of changing your clocks on March 8, fire officials will remind you to check the batteries in your home's smoke detectors. This is also a great opportunity to check one more battery at your home—the one found in your irrigation controller.

**Step 1: Be sure your controller has a back-up battery.** When the power goes out, many irrigation timers revert to the "default" setting, which can turn on sprinklers for 10 minutes per day, seven days per week. This can not only lead to a very wet yard, but can result in higher water bills and heavy runoff. Most controllers take a 9-volt battery, which is located behind or under the controller face.

**Step 2: Check your controller's run times.** If they're set to water seven days per week, 10 minutes per zone, you have likely experienced a power outage and your controller's back-up battery is dead or missing.

**Step 3: Now it's time to re-schedule your run times.** Visit [www.bewaterwise.com/calculator.html](http://www.bewaterwise.com/calculator.html) for a free watering schedule or [www.h2ouse.org/tour](http://www.h2ouse.org/tour) for irrigation system basics and landscape tips.

Your irrigation controller is important in creating a healthy, water-efficient landscape. Monitor your settings throughout the year, and adjust them seasonally to provide your landscape only with the amount of water that it needs. When rain falls, let Mother Nature do the watering and turn off automatic irrigation cycles!

If you need help adjusting your controller or deciding on appropriate watering times, OMWD provides year-round, water-wise advice for home irrigation systems. Schedule a free home water use evaluation by calling 760-942-3478 or email [cltlandarch@roadrunner.com](mailto:cltlandarch@roadrunner.com). More information about the program is available at [www.olivenhain.com/evaluation](http://www.olivenhain.com/evaluation).

## Free Water Efficiency Workshops for Professional Landscapers

OMWD has partnered with San Dieguito Water District and Santa Fe Irrigation District to hold in February a weekly series of water efficient workshops for landscape professionals.

These workshops are offered to increase awareness of efficient irrigation management and to educate local residents, homeowners associations, and businesses on best irrigation practices.

Workshop topics include irrigation principles, adjustments and repair; controller programming; irrigation scheduling; and irrigation system troubleshooting.

The workshops will be held each Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Encinitas Community Center in Encinitas. For more information or to register, please visit [www.olivenhain.com/events](http://www.olivenhain.com/events).



## Free California-Friendly Landscape Training

Join OMWD and San Dieguito Water District on March 7 for a fun, fast-paced, and informative three-hour workshop that will introduce attendees to landscape design and maintenance emphasizing water use efficiency.

The workshop is free of charge and will be held at 9:00 a.m. at the Encinitas Community Center. Those who attend will learn the tools needed to become a more water-wise gardener and landscaper. We hope you can attend!

For more information or to register, please visit [www.olivenhain.com/events](http://www.olivenhain.com/events).



## Enter the California-Friendly Landscape Contest

Does your home landscape feature attractive, climate-appropriate materials? Could your yard inspire others to remove grass and save water? If so, take a shot at entering this year's California-Friendly Landscape Contest!

Entrants are judged on overall attractiveness, plant selection, design, maintenance, and efficient methods of irrigation.

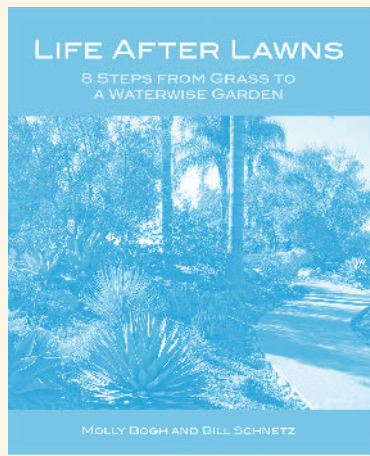
There is one winner from each participating agency throughout the county. Winners will receive a \$250 gift certificate and regional recognition.

For more information or to submit your entry, visit [www.landscapecontest.com](http://www.landscapecontest.com).



## Free "Life After Lawns" Workshop

Join professional landscape designer and author Bill Schnetz on Saturday, March 21 for a step-by-step approach to turn thirsty lawns into attractive, water-saving gardens. This free workshop offers practical advice for beginners and professionals alike. Register at [www.olivenhain.com/events](http://www.olivenhain.com/events).



## OMWD: Watch it on YouTube!

Are you interested in learning how to read your water meter, how to check for leaks on your property, how you can adjust your water pressure, or how wastewater is recycled for irrigation purposes? OMWD is here to help! Visit [www.youtube.com/omwd](http://www.youtube.com/omwd) for informative videos on these and other topics!



## Garden-Friendly Plant Fairs are Back!

Once again, the Home Depot will be hosting multiple Garden-Friendly Plant Fairs throughout San Diego County in 2015 to provide savings on varieties of low-water-use plants and helpful information from gardening experts.

Each fair will include discounts on more than 20 types of plants that have been selected as water-efficient and appropriate for the San Diego region.

Fairs begin this month and continue on Saturdays through May 30. Fairs begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at noon. To find out when the Home Depot near you will host its Garden-Friendly Plant Fair, please visit [www.watersmartsd.org/garden-friendly-plant-fairs](http://www.watersmartsd.org/garden-friendly-plant-fairs).

