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Irvine Ranch
WATER DISTRICT



The Days Are Shorter, So Water Less

The shortest days of the year are in December, so your landscaping needs less water. In winter, plants naturally enter their dormant phase until spring. The shorter days also mean less water is lost through evaporation, regardless of daytime temperatures. So dial back your sprinklers up to 70 percent. You'll still have a beautiful yard and save a boatload of water to boot. For a free watering guide and more, please visit wateringguide.com.

Trim the Tree and Turn Down the Tap

The holiday season can be a frenzied time. While you're running here and there all around the square, make sure your faucets aren't running too. Practice these holiday water habits:

- **Entertain efficiently.** Defrost frozen foods in the fridge overnight instead of thawing them out in tap water. Wash vegetables in a large bowl of water rather than running the faucet—then reuse the water in your garden.
- **Be mindful after mealtimes.** Scrape dirty dishes clean and dump the scrapings in the trash instead of rinsing the dishes with water. Remember not to pour fats, oils or grease down the drain. To reduce loads in the dishwasher, be sure to fill it up and use water-saving settings if available.
- **Sing in the shower.** Singing is good for the soul—and can help you reduce your shower time. Aim to sing just one carol while you're lathering—then zip out when your song is through. A few suggestions to get you in the spirit: "All I Want for Christmas Is You" (Mariah Carey), "Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays" (*NSYNC), "Frosty the Snowman" (The Ronettes), "Santa Baby" (Eartha Kitt), "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" (The Jackson 5), and to inspire the Sierra snowpack this winter, "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" (Michael Bublé).



Holiday and Winter Closures

The IRWD office will be closed **Dec. 22, Dec. 25, Dec. 29** and **Jan. 1**.

The Recycled Water Fill Station is closed for winter, tentatively scheduled to reopen **March 15, 2018**.

Reserve 2018 Meeting Rooms

IRWD is accepting 2018 room reservations for the Duck Club and Community Meeting Room. Apply at irwd.com/community/meeting-rooms.

Water-Savvy Holiday Gift Ideas

Looking for an original gift for your friend, neighbor or family member? We've got you covered! These water-efficient presents will bring a holiday smile to anyone eager to conserve water.

5-minute shower timers and low-flow showerheads.

It's never too late to develop the good habit of conserving water. With either of these gifts, your loved one can enjoy a full-force shower while saving water and cutting the energy bill. They're available at online shopping sites and local retail or home-improvement stores.

Holly shrubs. These Yuletide classics tolerate low watering and add a festive pop to a yard, with red berries in the winter and white flowers in the spring. Among drought-tolerant species that thrive in Orange County are burford holly and toyon, which attract butterflies and birds. (Learn about them on rightscaperesources.com.) Be careful though, because eating holly berries can be dangerous to people or pets.



Burford holly brightens gardens.

Rebates. Give the gift of water savings, and keep a little money in your pocket too.

- A high-efficiency clothes washer uses 55 percent less water than a standard washer, saving about 75,000 gallons over its lifetime. Save up to \$250 on your purchase.
- Are you dreaming of a new landscape? Get \$2 for every square foot of grass you replace with drought-tolerant landscaping.
- Other rebates include \$150 for high-efficiency toilets, \$255 for weather-based irrigation controllers, \$35 per rain barrel, and \$2 for sprinkler nozzles.

See details at rightscapenow.com/rebates.



Q: I live in a community with an HOA. During the drought we were allowed to let our lawns go brown. Now, with the drought restrictions lifted, I believe our HOA has gone back to requiring us to green up our lawn. What are your thoughts and recommendations on our situation?

A: Thanks for your question. Although conservation is the way of the future, homeowners associations can require residents to follow

guidelines on landscape upkeep. But that does not stop you from converting your landscape to a water-efficient garden, staying within your HOA's guidelines. The state's new long-term goal is "Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life."

On rightscapenow.com, we have information and resources. Visit the Turf Removal section to find out about the do-it-yourself and turnkey programs that could be good starting points to creating a water-efficient landscape. Many plants are available as lawn substitutes that require less water than traditional lawns. For more information about lawn alternatives, read my previous "Ask Juan" column, in November's issue of *Pipelines* or online at irwd.com/learning/newsletters. Also, visit rightscaperesources.com for helpful plant lists.

Irvine's Hyatt House

A WaterStar is Born

The newly constructed Hyatt House Irvine is scheduled to open in January—and it's already a WaterStar.

The seven-story building, at 2320 Main Street near John Wayne Airport, is the first California hotel to be dual-plumbed so guest toilets flush with recycled water. Its 149 extended-stay suites are equipped with high-efficiency water fixtures. Landscape is irrigated with recycled water.



IRWD Board Member **Mary Aileen Matheis**, Hyatt House Irvine General Manager **Brett Ambrose**, IRWD Senior Water Efficiency Specialist **Allan Pascual** and IRWD Recycled Water Project Specialist **Gabe Vargas** at WaterStar Certification on Nov. 15.

On Nov. 9, Shimano American Corporation also earned WaterStar Certification for installing high-efficiency indoor water fixtures and using recycled water to irrigate the grounds of its two-building facility in Irvine.

Learn all about IRWD's WaterStar Business Recognition Program at rightscapenow.com/programs/waterstar-business-recognition.

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