

THRU THE GREEN

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CALIFORNIA WATER

Has Mother Nature turned her head away from California or is the drought a man-made crisis? The answer lies somewhere between these two possibilities. Weather data definitely supports the fact that there has been less snowpack in the Mountains and less rainfall over the past four years. However, the state and cities knew that droughts will occur, usually in a cyclic nature, but planners failed to act responsibly on this knowledge. Planners have also known for years that the population explosion has propelled the state towards a critical water shortage.

Conserving water is everyone's responsibility. While the golf courses seem to be the most visible users, every business and individual do their part in the battle to preserve the valley and the lifestyle enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors.

WATER FACTS

1. Shutting off all the water to the California golf courses, lawns, parks, freeway landscapes, school grounds and athletic fields would save only four percent of the state's total water consumption.

Contrary to what many people think, shutting off all the water to California's irrigated landscapes wouldn't significantly ease the statewide water shortage.

2. Letting the grass become dormant to save water, then spraying with a green turf dye, costs approximately \$30 per 1,000 sq. ft.. Expect to spray once a month.

3. Less water is lost or consumed from an acre of grass than from an acre of water surface (lake). During the hottest part of the year bermudagrass requires 0.36 inches (ET_c = 0.6) of water per day, while approximately 0.5 inches of water is lost due to seepage and evaporation from the water surface.

4. One gallon of water weighs 8.33 pounds.

5. One acre foot equals 325,848 gallons of water. (An acre foot is the volume of water that would cover an acre to a depth of one foot.)

6. The old-style toilets use 5 to 7 gallons of water per flush. In a city of 8 million people who each average four flushes a day, the water consumption equals 160,000,000 to 224,000,000 gallons of water.

7. The average person uses 20 gallons of water when showering.

8. For each glass of water served in a restaurant, another six to eight glasses of water is used to wash the glass.

9. One acre foot of water will supply the daily water needs of a family of five for one year.

As seen in Rub of the Green, September 1990, by Mel Robey, Director of Turfgrass Management at College of the Desert in Palm Springs, CA.

HOW WE CAN BEAT THE "BIG GREEN"

1) Talk to your local city council members, county supervisor, community organizations, and other local leaders.

2) Become familiar with the initiative's issues and write a simple letter-to-the editor of your local newspaper.

3) Vote against proposition 128 in the November general election.

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