

Council Meeting 4/21/15 Speaking Notes

Eric Nicoll, Brea Public Works Director

Good evening Mayor and City Council Members. With California facing a fourth year of historic drought, and with April's snowpack in the sierras at only 6% of average, the lowest on record, Governor Brown, on April 1 issued the State's first ever Executive Order mandating a 25% water reduction in cities and towns across California. This hit National news and everyone is now aware of the extreme conditions we face and there is a lot of confusion as to the next steps and what should residents and businesses do regarding water conservation. The City of Brea is the water agency and provider to all residents, businesses and some county uses such as the land fill and County regional parks.

I'll be presenting information to you on the status of the Executive Order, and what residents, businesses, and the City can do to meet the requirements. The State Water Resources Control Board released revised draft regulations on April 18 with its plan to form regulations around the Governor's Executive Order which mandates a 25% reduction in water use state wide.

The 25% reduction is the total amount for the entire state, with each water agency being assigned individual requirements. Individual residents and businesses do not have a

specific requirement, only water agencies. However, the way the Water Board is assigning different conservation levels to each agency, and monitoring reductions is by residential consumption in gallons per capita per day. In simple terms, if your city is using a lot of water per resident per day the conservation mandate can be as high as 36% reduction, but if you are a lower per capita amount then the reduction is as low as 4%. Brea is in the middle, with a reduction requirement of 24%. Brea per capita residential use was 125 gal per day per person. If a resident wants to see how much water they are using, take the CCU amount on your water bill and multiply it times 748 gallons and divide by the number of people in your household, then divide by the number days in the billing period.

For Brea to reach the 24% reduction, we need to reduce our per capita number to 94 gallons per day. This is not a requirement on every resident or business individually, but the City of Brea as the water provider. The Water Board will also look at total consumption of water with businesses included so a similar reduction will be needed for the commercial side. If we don't meet the reduction mandate as a water provider, then we are subject to warnings and eventually fines.

Q and A – most frequently asked

#1 Where does Brea get its water?

The City of Brea as your water agency gets its water from two sources. We are a member of a private water company called Cal Domestic, which uses ground water from the San Gabriel Water Basin and supplies us about 70% of our water, and Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) is about 30%. For many years, the City Council has been very aggressive at securing water rights through Cal Domestic, which is a reliable and affordable ground water source and not relying solely on higher cost Metropolitan Water District through MWDOC. There is a major cost difference, Cal Domestic is about one third the cost of MWDOC. The City does not use the ground water in Brea for drinking water, only for non-potable use at the 9 hole Brea Creek Golf Course and Arovista Park.

#2 I'm a resident, or I own a business in Brea, what does the Governor's

Executive Order mean to me?

Although individual reductions are not part of the mandate, we can't get there without residents and businesses making significant reductions. In 2009 when we adopted our Water Conservation ordinance, the goal was a 10% reduction by 2015, and residents made it to 13%. Businesses have also helped in the past and we will be seeking participation from the Chamber in outreach, we will work with HOA's and our maintenance district residents to look for ways to meet the mandate. The City as owner of facilities and parks

will also be part of the plan. Short answer is we are in this together and we need all sectors contributing. Let me provide some ways residents and businesses can help:

- Outside irrigation for grass is typically the largest use of drinking water and the Governor has targeted this as the major goal. Residents and businesses need to be aware of the City's water conservation ordinance (laws). The City ordinance can be found on our web site at www.cityofbrea.net and if you type in drought in the search box you can find a list of water conservation tips. The other web site that will provide rebate information and plant materials is the MWDOC site www.ocwatersmart.com

Let me explain the local rules as they apply today and where we are headed:

- Currently we are in phase 1 of the water ordinance and are waiting for the final regulations at which point we will go to phase 2, which changes the rules to increase conservation from 10% to 20%.
- Currently in **Phase 1**, you can
 - Water outside landscaping 3 days per week for no more than 15 minutes per station, but not between the hours of 10 am until 4:00 pm
 - Watering Nov-Mar = 1 day per week (phase 1 & 2)
 - There can be no excessive overspray onto paved surfaces
 - You must fix any leaks in no more than 72 hours
 - You must use a hand-held bucket or hose with a shut off sprayer if you wash your car at home

- Restaurants and hotels can only serve water upon request
- **Phase 2** is
 - Water outside landscaping 2 days per week at 15 minutes per station, but not between the hours of 10am-4pm
 - There can be no excessive overspray onto paved surfaces
 - Fix leaks in 48 hours
 - Same restrictions on car washing as in phase 1
 - Restaurants and hotels can only serve water upon request
 - Limitations on filling swimming pools

The good news that we have for residents is the turf removal rebates. MWDOC offers \$2.00 per square foot to remove grass and replace it with California friendly landscaping. 70 Breans have used the program so far with more ready for their approvals. The City of Brea also adds \$1.00 per square foot as funds are available. Businesses are just starting to use the program and we have a single user that will replace 300,000 square feet of turf by July. To sign up, go to the www.OCWatersmart.com site. They also offer rebates for irrigation controllers, low flush toilets, and efficient washing machines. Also, if you have an unusual spike in your water use and you would like a City staff member from our Water division to do an assessment, call (714) 990-7691 to set up an appointment.

#3 What is the City doing with its property and facilities?

The City as an owner of facilities, parks, and landscaped medians plays a key role as a leader in this effort. When it became clear that this winter was not providing the rainfall needed, the City began looking at all of its buildings and parks to do a five year water consumption table looking at our past use, so we could see where our reductions could come from.

- The first step was reducing water in the area of parks that have grass but are not used for sports.
- We have completed some small turf replacement projects at Fire Station 3 and the Community Center east side, and we have a three year turf removal plan to present to Council during the budget process.
- The Executive Order by Governor Brown prohibits watering of grass in center island medians in City streets. This prohibition allows cities to water trees, so we are adjusting the irrigation system to maintain the health of the trees but lose the grass.
- The Executive Order also talks about golf courses, and mandates water conserving irrigation systems. The City's 9-hole course, Brea Creek, uses well water that is non potable which is supported by the Executive Order and not subject to the new rules. This well also serves Arovista Park. The 18-hole Birch Hills Course, which is ready to open next month, used state of the art irrigation system and the reconstruction of

the course included a grey water “purple Pipe” for future connection to a non-potable source.

Those are the important messages I wanted to convey to the community, and that it will take all of us doing our part to use less water. This is not new for Californians but the level of severity is higher now than it has been in the past, and the positive changes we make today will be long lasting. We will engage the Chamber, HOA's, and others to help meet the new requirements. We will also continue to have articles in Brea Line on how we are doing to meet the new rules.

I'm available for questions.