



# SPRING NEWSLETTER

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March 2014

## Water Conservation Plan

After the driest year on record for California and over two years of below-average rainfall for the majority of the state, Governor Jerry Brown has declared a drought emergency. Hundreds of water agencies have implemented water use restrictions based on their own specific water supply issues.

Heritage Ranch has one water supply source, the Gallery Well, which is fed via three horizontal wells located in the Nacimiento River bed just downstream of the Nacimiento Dam. Release of the water to the River is controlled by Monterey County until the water level of the reservoir drops below 687 feet, minimum pool, at which time San Luis Obispo County may obtain control over the release of water.

At elevation 670 feet, dead pool, of the Nacimiento Reservoir, water can no longer be gravity released from the lower outlet works of the dam.

In response to drought concerns, the Heritage Ranch CSD Board of Directors adopted a Water Conservation Plan in June 2009, which provides procedures and policies to reduce water demand at Heritage Ranch during drought conditions. San Luis Obispo County has rights to 17,500 acre feet a year (afy) of Nacimiento Water pursuant to a 1959 Agreement with Monterey County. HRCSD water entitlement of 889 afy of Nacimiento water is part of this contract.



Dead pool conditions should not occur (if the 1959 Agreement is enforced) until sometime in 2015 and only if we continue to not receive any inflow to the reservoir.

The Water Conservation Plan is not focused on saving or conserving water in the lake, but rather preparing residents to live on less water than they historically have. It will help us manage water demand during the drought. If the community can reduce their water consumption during the drought, we will be able to maintain limited water delivery and keep the system operating.

The traditional winter rain season is coming to an end. The rainfall we have had this year has been minimal and there has been almost no runoff into the reservoir. The reservoir is currently at 724 feet of elevation (21% of storage) and is lowering by about 4 inches every week.

The real key and simple water conservation action is the reduction in irrigation. Records reveal that between 50% to 70% of all water production is used for outside irrigation. District records indicate that in the month of January 2014, the Water Treatment Plant produced 13.5 million gallons of water and the Sewer Treatment Plant treated 5.21 million gallons of wastewater.

## Looking Ahead...

We will likely enter Phase II, Drought Awareness Phase, sometime in late March regardless if it rains or not. Staff believes a projection of the reservoir level / river flow until next winter season can be made at the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The low water in the reservoir and resulting low flow in the river will impact our ability to meet peak summer water demand. Staff intends to recommend implementation of Phase II water use prohibitions with the goal of achieving a 20% reduction in water consumption with a strong message of irrigation reduction, but not implement the water allocation per lot at this time. If this first attempt of demand reduction does not achieve the required 20% water savings, further action can be taken by the District Board.

### AVERAGE DAILY USE

*The average Californian uses 196 gallons of water per day. On page 2 you will find some easy ways to reduce water use. Find the right combination for you to reduce by 20% or 38 gallons a day.*



*Continued on page 2*



## Water Conserving Tips

### Outdoors

Reduce your watering days to once or twice per week. Water your lawn only when it needs it. Water early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are cooler.

 *Saves* 25 gallons / each time you water

Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.

 *Saves* 12 to 15 gallons / each time you water

Choose a water-efficient irrigation system such as drip irrigation for your trees, shrubs and flowers.

 *Saves* 15 gallons / each time you water

Plant drought-resistant trees and plants

 *Saves* 30 to 60 gallons / each time you water per 1,000 sq. ft.

### Cleanup

Use a broom to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios, not your hose.

 *Saves* 8 to 18 gallons / minute

Wash cars or boats with a bucket, sponge and a hose with self-closing nozzle.

 *Saves* 8 to 18 gallons / minute

### Activities

Teach children that the hose and sprinkler are not toys.

Test pool and spa water frequently and maintain appropriate chemical balances to avoid the need to drain it except for structural repairs. Check your pool and pool plumbing for leaks.

### Bathroom

Install efficient, WaterSense-labeled shower heads

 *Saves* 1.2 gallons / per minute or 10 gallons / per average 10-minute shower

Install a high-efficiency WaterSense-labeled toilet (1.28 gallon per flush)

 *Saves* 19 gallons per person / day

Fix leaky toilets

 *Saves* 30-50 gallons per day / toilet

Turn off water when brushing teeth or shaving

 *Saves* 10 gallons per person / day

Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket

 *Saves* 1.6 to 5 gallons / flush

### Laundry Room

Wash only full loads of clothes

 *Saves* 15-45 gallons / load

### Kitchen

Run the dishwasher only when full and install a water efficient dishwasher.

 *Saves* 3 to 8 gallons / load

Install aerators on the kitchen faucet to reduce flows to less than one gallon per minute.

If you accidentally drop ice cubes, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.

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**For more information and conservation tips visit**

**[www.heritageranchcsd.com](http://www.heritageranchcsd.com)**

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