

City of Merced *Your City Connection* CityofMerced.org

AUGUST 2008

Every drop is precious, so conserve our water

Every day residents turn on their faucets and receive fresh, clean, safe water. Millions of gallons pour through the taps for drinking, washing, cleaning and watering.

The City has more than 20,262 residential, commercial and industrial customers depending on our water supply.

City water is pumped from the underground aquifers and we need to guard our precious resource. On this page are some tips on conserving water and how to use the resource wisely.



Wet sidewalks are an indication that sprinklers are not properly aligned.

Conserving outdoors

- ✓ Water your lawn only when needed — three times a week on your watering days, late at night or early in the morning to keep evaporation to a minimum.
- ✓ Check your sprinkler timers and reduce watering times to less than 10-15 minutes.
- ✓ Check your sprinkler heads, valves and drip emitters monthly for leaks and make sure sprinkler heads are aimed properly.
- ✓ Adjust your watering schedule for each season. In fall, you can reduce your watering by half. By December, you can turn off your irrigation system completely.
- ✓ Apply a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce moisture loss and prevent excessive weed growth.
- ✓ Use a broom to sweep outside not a hose.
- ✓ Ask your local nursery for suggestions on drought tolerant plants that do not need to be watered as much and can survive a dry period without any watering.

Conserving indoors

- ✓ Turn off the water when brushing teeth.
- ✓ Run a full dishwasher. It uses 15 gallons a load no matter how many dishes, so run it full.
- ✓ Check for household leaks. Turn off anything that uses water and see if your water meter is moving. If it is, there could be a leak somewhere.
- ✓ Install low-flow shower heads, kitchen and bath faucet aerators.
- ✓ Check for toilet leaks by putting food coloring in the tank and letting it set. Coloring in the bowl indicates a leak.



Water ——— by the numbers

- 7 billion**
Gallons pumped in the City every year
- 21 million**
Gallons pumped in the City each day
- 1.6 million**
Gallons of water stored above ground
- 4**
Number of above-ground water tanks
- 21**
Number of underground wells
- 284**
Miles of main lines underground
- 1899**
The year the City was first connected to the Merced Water Company
- 1973**
The year the City of Merced took over operations from the Merced Water Company

Help protect our water supply

The City Water Conservation Ordinance has been in place since 1993 and is in effect year-round. It promotes wise water use and discourages wasting water.

- The ordinance prohibits:
- ✓ Washing of sidewalks, driveways, porches or other outdoor surfaces, except when necessary to protect public health and safety. However, buildings may be washed down once a year.
 - ✓ Operation of any ornamental fountain unless it uses a re-circulating water system.
 - ✓ The washing of boats, motor homes, or automobiles and trucks with a hose that is not fitted with an automatic shut-off device.
 - ✓ Running or wasting of water, such as excessive irrigation of lawns causing runoff and flooding.
 - ✓ Allowing broken or defective plumbing or irrigation

A key component of our ordinance is the odd/even watering schedule.

Residents living at even numbered addresses can water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Residents living at odd numbered addresses can water on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

Only water before 11 a.m. and after 7 p.m.

The is no watering on Mondays, and no midday watering.

systems resulting in water leaks.

If you see water being wasted, please call the Public Works Department at 385-6800 to report it, or email publicwks@cityofmerced.org. In your e-mail include the date, time of day and the location where the water was being wasted.

Merced City Council

Mayor Ellie Wooten
 Mayor Pro Tem John Carlisle
 Council members:
 Joe Cortez
 Michele Gabriault-Acosta
 Noah Lor
 Jim Sanders
 Bill Spriggs

Contact the City Council by email at Citycouncil@cityofmerced.org, by calling 385-6834. You can write to Council members at the Civic Center address listed below.

Council meetings

The Council usually meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center. The agenda is posted online at www.CityofMerced.org.

Holiday

City offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 1 for Labor Day. Refuse pickup will not be affected.

Contacting us

The Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Municipal Code and General Plan and other information. To contact the Newsletter, e-mail newsletter@CityofMerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center
 678 W. 18th St.
 Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	388-7100
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6855
Finance	385-4718
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel	388-7100
Planning Department.....	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Recreation/Parks	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department..... 385-6891
 Police Department..... 385-6912



Merced Fire Department crews fight fire with fire in Shasta County.

Merced FD joins crews around state

In June and July Merced Fire Department crews were fighting the wildfires raging in Big Sur and Shasta County.

Crews were rotated in for 10 to 14 days before returning to Merced. Their expenses are reimbursed by the state.

The firefighters are called up as part of a “mutual aid” agreement that means we lend our crews where needed and when we need extra help we will receive it from personnel around the state.

City firefighters receive about 100 hours of wildfire training initially and then have 16 to 20 hours of retraining every year.

Ask the City: Why street sweeping?

Ask the City is a regular feature where we answer questions we have received. People can submit questions by using the “I Want to...Send Feedback” link on the City Web site, email Newsletter@CityofMerced.org or write to us at the address in the box to the left.

We’ve had inquiries about street sweeping, with people wanting to know why we do it, and some asking “When?” because they don’t see the sweepers.

City street sweepers prowl the roadways

cleaning dirt, dust and debris from the streets. It helps us keep in compliance with state and federal air quality regulations by removing tiny particles — PM 10 — that can become airborne hazards. A side benefit is it improves our quality of life.

Streets are swept twice a month, except in the Downtown. The Business District pays extra to have streets swept three times a week.

If you have questions about street sweeping operations, call the Public Works Department at 385-6800.

Great Lakes to begin flying from Merced

The U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded the EAS contract for the City of Merced to Great Lakes Airlines.

Great Lakes will be flying from Merced to Ontario Airport, where passengers can rent a car for a drive to Disneyland, or transfer to other flights. The airline hopes to add flights to Las Vegas International Airport. Air services are scheduled to begin by Sept. 8.



Merced PD’s SWAT team will rappel down the Hotel Tioga for Open House.

Open House is exciting, too

The annual City of Merced Open House will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Sept. 4 in and around the Civic Center, 678 W. 18th St.

City departments will have displays, information tables and exhibits to highlight their activities.

There will be games for kids in Kids Alley, and even some snacks.

Council Members and members of boards and commissions will be there to answer questions.