

# B.I.G. Water News

Drinking Water Information for Business, Industry & Government

Tualatin Valley Water District



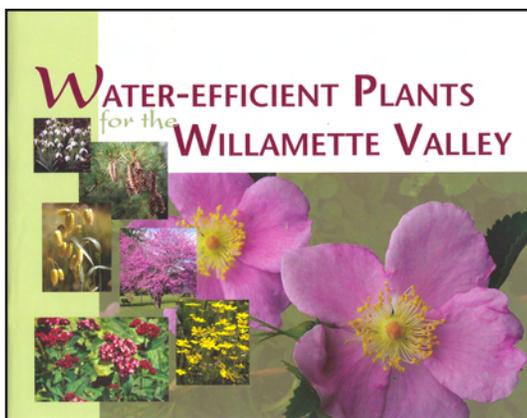
## Water-Efficient Plants for the Willamette Valley & the Seven Basic Steps to Water-Efficient Landscaping

*Water Efficient Plants for the Willamette Valley* will appear as a series of excerpts in upcoming editions of the BIG Newsletter. This FREE and informative guidebook was produced in partnership by: Clackamas Community College, City of Corvallis, Eugene Water & Electric Board, OSU Extension Service, Regional Water Providers Consortium and the South Fork Water Board.

Western Oregon has a Mediterranean-type climate, which is characterized by mild, wet winters and dry, warm summers. Our dry period typically lasts 3 months (July through September) and daytime temperatures may exceed 90 degrees. This combination of dry day and summer heat will cause stress to many landscape plants if they are not irrigated regularly. As a result, municipal water use in the Willamette Valley frequently doubles or triples during the summer months due to outdoor watering. As the population in our region grows, meeting our summer watering needs is becoming more challenging.

When we draw water from our reservoirs faster than we can keep them filled, we threaten the supply of water needed for drinking, irrigation, manufacturing, fish habitat and emergencies such as firefighting. In addition to seasonal peaks, daily water use patterns can add stress to already stressed water distribution systems. Most automatic irrigation timers are set to go off in the early morning (5 a.m. – 7 a.m.) certain days of the week; therefore utilities must often super-size their facilities to meet early morning demands that may or

may not occur in any given year based on weather conditions. If customers set irrigation timers at other times of the morning or night (11 p.m. - 5 a.m.), water utilities would be assured of making the most of existing facilities before building new expensive structures.



To get your FREE copy of *Water-Efficient Plants of the Willamette Valley*, contact [BigConservation@tvwd.org](mailto:BigConservation@tvwd.org) or visit [www.conserveh2o.org](http://www.conserveh2o.org).

Water conservation measures can enable water providers to delay building costly new facilities or seeking new water sources, thus helping keep water rates down. While conservation alone will not eliminate the need to increase our water supply, it can make a substantial impact and balance the effect of population growth.

This guide (*Water-Efficient Plants of the Willamette Valley*) was created by horticulture and conservation experts as a tool to assist the general gardener in making decisions about how to use water more efficiently in their landscapes. In addition to the water savings you will see, there are a number of other benefits that come with water-efficient landscaping. They include reduced fertilizer and chemical use, less water runoff, and reduced maintenance.

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#### Receive This Newsletter Electronically!

In the interest of sustainability and saving costs, TVWD also offers this newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send your name, E-mail and regular address to [bigconservation@tvwd.org](mailto:bigconservation@tvwd.org) or call (503) 848-3064.

Your E-mail address will only be used to receive this newsletter. It will not be used by or given to anyone else.

#### Interested In How You Can Become A More Sustainable Organization?

Visit [www.tvwd.org](http://www.tvwd.org) and click on "Practicing Sustainability" under the "About Us" tab.

## Mid-Season Irrigation System Checkup

Automatically controlled irrigation systems can make efficient watering easier, yet they often waste large amounts of water due to poor maintenance and scheduling practices. Follow the irrigation tips below to help use only what you need to keep your landscape attractive and healthy:

### Inspect your system a few times during the watering season while it is running. Look for and immediately address:

- Broken, damaged or missing sprinkler components such as nozzles
- Reposition and adjust misaligned sprinklers that spray unintended areas
- Clear and clean out clogged nozzles and emitters and filters to ensure full, uniform spray patterns

### Take the next step and improve your irrigation scheduling practices!

- Install a rain sensor shut-off device to prevent watering when it rains
- Adjust your watering schedule to track weather conditions once a week OR install a weather based smart controller that adjusts watering schedules automatically according to local weather conditions
- Don't forget! TVWD offers generous rebates of up to \$400 per controller to install Weather-Based Irrigation control systems and free commercial consultation services to help you understand your efficiency improvement options!

Not sure you want to learn proper irrigation system maintenance and management? Then make sure to hire licensed and certified Landscape Construction Professionals to manage your landscape and let them know that water use efficiency is a priority. For more information about rebates, irrigation system assessment, consultation or landscape water use in general, contact our conservation staff at 503-848-3064.

## Backflow Prevention Assemblies Protect The Water System From Contaminants

Drinking water flows from the source to the tap in pressurized water pipes. Normally it flows in one direction, although under certain circumstances it can flow in the opposite direction, or *backflow*. When backflow occurs, water runs backwards through the water system. The water flowing backwards could contain something that might contaminate the drinking water supply.

A *cross connection* is any connection between the public water supply and any source of non-potable (substances that are not safe to drink) water which could contaminate the potable water supply or may impact the taste or odor of water. Did you know that all potential or actual cross connections are required to be protected with a backflow prevention assembly and are required to be tested annually by a certified tester to ensure they are working properly?

### Facilities required to have high hazard backflow prevention assemblies include but are not limited to

- Car Washes
- Dry Cleaners
- Hospitals & Medical Facilities
- Mortuaries
- Wastewater Treatment Plants
- Sites with an auxiliary water supply connected to the potable water supply
- Sites treating the water with chemicals

### Common types of hazards include but are not limited to

- Fire Sprinkler Systems
- Landscape Irrigation Systems
- Boilers
- Pumps
- Chemical Injection Equipment



Double Check Valve Assembly

## \$35 Annual Backflow Testing Service For Residential And Irrigation Customers

Tired of the hassle? TVWD has an annual backflow assembly testing service available to residential and irrigation customers only. Contact our Backflow Program today to sign up for this convenient service. For an annual fee of \$35 we'll make sure your backflow assembly is tested every year by a licensed and certified tester. The \$35 annual fee also covers repairs up to \$50! Following the test, you will be provided with a test report and the testing fee will be applied to your TVWD account.

For more information about backflow and cross connections, contact TVWD's Backflow Program at (971) 327-6285 or visit [www.tvwd.org](http://www.tvwd.org) and look at "Backflow Prevention" under the "Your Water" tab.



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Landscapes add value, beauty and livability to our homes and keeping them water-efficient is a critical part of being a good steward. Whether you are redoing an existing landscape or landscaping a new home or business, consider this guide as a place to begin your efforts.

By following the seven basic steps of water-efficient landscaping and by using the Water-Efficient Plants of the Willamette Valley guide, you will discover trees, shrubs, bulbs, perennials, ground covers and ornamental grasses that were chosen because they are suited to our Mediterranean-type climate and require less water, fertilizer, maintenance and other special care once they are established. These plants will also allow you to continue to achieve color, diversity, texture and beauty in your landscape.



*Visit TVWD's Water-Efficient Demonstration Garden for landscaping ideas and irrigation pointers.*

**Next Issue...Step 1: Planning and Design**

**Slight Water Rate Increase Set To Go Into Effect October 1**

The Tualatin Valley Water District Board of Commissioners approved rate increases this year that average 1.5% to 1.6% for its usage and fixed charges. Because each multi-family, commercial, and irrigation customer is unique, your bill will vary by meter size and usage. (see chart below). If approved, charges will take effect October 1, 2011.

Recognizing the difficult current economic conditions, TVWD has limited this small rate increase to below the rate of inflation. However, the District still must make sure our fixed costs are covered and continue efforts to secure an expanded long term water source for our customers. TVWD is planning ahead and has taken a gradual rate increase approach to be financially ready to meet the needs of this large project.

TVWD is a self-sustaining utility and does not receive any tax dollars. As a special service district, our focus is only drinking water and our customers can be confident their rate dollars will not be diverted to unrelated purposes. All revenue we collect is spent on drinking water operations, projects and system maintenance. Specifically:

- TVWD's Capital Improvement Plan, which includes the development of a long-term water supply and upgrading or replacing water mains and reservoirs
- Our cost of water purchased from the Portland Water Bureau and water obtained from our owned Joint Water Commission source
- Repairing leaks and flushing water mains to enhance and protect water quality
- Testing to ensure that your water meets or is better than safe drinking water standards

**How Would This Affect Commercial Customers?**

Because each multi-family/commercial/irrigation customer is unique, your bill will vary by meter size and usage.

Usage Changes			Monthly Fixed Water Charges			
	Old Rate	New Rate	Meter Size	Cost	Meter Size	Cost
<b>Base*</b>	\$2.47/CCF**	\$2.51/CCF**	5/8"	\$6.86	3"	\$45.34
<b>Peaking</b>	\$3.54/CCF	\$3.59/CCF	3/4"	\$7.24	4"	\$56.79
*Base rate will be charged for all water up to 140% of customer's 12 month rolling average. **1 CCF = 100 Cubic Feet or 748 Gallons			1"	\$8.39	6"	\$83.71
			1-1/2"	\$9.95	8"	\$114.64
			2"	\$14.18	10"	\$177.72
Note: Peaking charges do not apply to Fireline accounts						

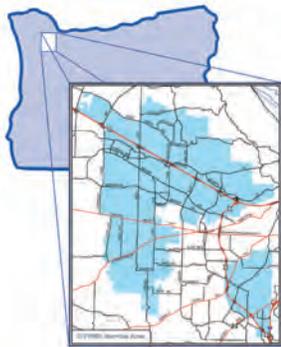
For a complete breakdown of the new rates, visit [www.tvwd.org](http://www.tvwd.org).

# Tualatin Valley Water District



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The Tualatin Valley Water District serves an estimated 200,000 customers in parts of Washington County, Oregon, west of Portland. Our service area covers more than 45 square miles and includes portions of Beaverton, Hillsboro and Tigard.



Download a QR scanner app on your smartphone and take a picture of our QR code for more information about TVWD



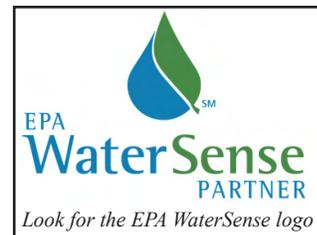
## Reminder About TVWD Rebate Program Changes

Don't forget that as of July 1, 2011 the following changes to the Business, Industry and Government rebate incentive programs have gone into effect:

- BIG toilet rebate applies only to WaterSense labeled High-Efficiency Toilets (HET). Maximum rebate value is \$75 per toilet.
- Irrigation rebates will only apply to the following devices (up to \$2500 per account maximum):
  - Weather-based irrigation controller systems
  - Multi-stream, Multi-trajectory, Matched-precipitation, rotating nozzles
- Cooling Tower and Industrial Process rebate applications will be processed as Customer Organized Proposals (Up to \$5000 or 25% of project implementation costs, whichever is less). This may also include irrigation or other improvements not covered by the standard rebates. Got an idea? Let's talk!

**All rebate programs will remain available as funds allow. Interested?**

Visit [www.tvwd.org](http://www.tvwd.org) or call our Conservation Technician at (503) 848-3064.



### Multi-Family Residential Showerhead Giveaway

TVWD has partnered with Energy Trust of Oregon and Portland Energy Conservation Inc. to provide **FREE LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS** to Multi-Family residential TVWD customers. Please contact our conservation staff to verify fixture availability and submit a required installation address list.

