

# FRESNO WATER SAVER



A Publication of the City of Fresno Water Conservation Program

Friant-Kern Canal

## Save Water, Fix a Leak

*Every year, 1 trillion gallons of water are wasted across the country — all because of minor leaks*

As California's 3-year drought continues, residents are urged to conserve water both indoors and outdoors. And with the City of Fresno currently in Stage I Water Shortage, the need to save water has never been more critical.

Fresno has joined Governor Schwarzenegger in his call to increase conservation efforts by reducing water usage in urban areas by **20 percent**.

The following policies were adopted April 23, 2009, to help reach Fresno's new conservation goals:

- Intensify public information and media outreach campaigns to encourage water use reductions;
- Increase water waste patrols to enforce provisions of the Fresno Municipal Code focusing on watering schedule compliance and other requirements;
- **Elimination of daytime (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.) summer outdoor watering** and maintaining current watering days to simplify public education;

### SPRING/SUMMER WATERING SCHEDULE March 2 - November 30

**ODD** Numbered Addresses:  
(Ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, 9)  
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

**EVEN** Numbered Addresses:  
(Ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, 8)  
Wednesday, Friday, Sunday

**NO WATERING MONDAYS.**

**NO WATERING 6 AM TO 7 PM**

· Allow car washing with a bucket only (a hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle may be used for a quick rinse).

By increasing outreach efforts and adopting a more proactive approach to reducing water use, city officials are confident Fresno will meet its 20% conservation goal. These actions will also help avoid the effects of "over-drafting" the city's ground water supply in the future and contributes to the long-term sustainability of this essential community resource.

One way residents and businesses can easily reduce their water usage without feeling the effects is by checking for and fixing leaks. The City offers free indoor and outdoor water leak surveys, available to all commercial, industrial, multi-family and residential City customers.

Call **621-5480** to make an appointment!

**Q:** How do I report a water waster?

**A:** Call **621-5480**, the Conservation Hotline, if you witness over-watering. Let the staff know what you observed (water running in the gutter, cause of over-watering, length of time), the date and time you saw it and the location. Or visit [www.fresnowater.org](http://www.fresnowater.org), click on “Conservation,” followed by “Water Waste Reporting Form.”

## Water-Wise Plant Exchange Set for May 16



In our current drought conditions, using water-wise plants for landscaping and gardening has become crucial. Collecting the

best plants for a Fresno-friendly garden will be easy and rewarding at the Water-Wise Plant Exchange on May 16 at the Fresno State Horticulture Greenhouses.

Gardeners are encouraged to donate water-wise plants at the exchange, from 8 a.m. to noon at 3150 E. Barstow Ave., just east of Chestnut Avenue. Cuttings, bulbs and seeds will be available and gratefully accepted throughout the event. A limited supply of free, water-wise potted plants also will be available, and other water-wise plants can be purchased from Fresno State students.

Free water-wise plants will be available, and gardeners are encouraged to donate water-

wise plants from their gardens, from 8 a.m. to noon at 3150 E. Barstow Ave., just east of Chestnut Avenue. Cuttings, bulbs, seeds and potted plants will be available and gratefully accepted throughout the event.

Master Gardeners, and others with expertise in native and water-wise plants, will be on hand to offer advice for nurturing yards and gardens that are beautiful and can thrive with a minimal amount of water.

May is Water Awareness Month and the Water-Wise Plant Exchange underscores the need to conserve our precious natural resources. The exchange is sponsored by the City of Fresno Water Conservation Program, Central Valley Water Awareness Committee, California State University, Fresno Horticulture Unit, Fresno County Women’s Chamber of Commerce, University of California Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener Program, California Native Plant Association, Clovis Botanical Gardens, Tree Fresno, Water-wise Landscape Design, International Center for Water Technology at CSUF.

For a list of water-wise plants, gardening tips and ways to protect our water supply visit [www.fresnowater.org](http://www.fresnowater.org) or request a free brochure by calling the City of Fresno Water Conservation Program at (559) 621-5480.



## Save Your Garden With Mulch

Think you can't maintain an attractive garden and landscape during a drought? Think again — and think mulch!

Mulch offers several benefits to your garden and contributes to water conservation. Here's how:

- A thick layer of coarse mulch (at least a 3-inch layer) helps retain moisture in the soil by reducing evaporation.
- Mulch helps keep the soil temperature consistent, enabling plants to better withstand sudden weather changes.
- Weed growth can be dramatically suppressed by applying mulch to any flowerbed or lawn-free area. Thick layers of mulch block sunlight from weed seeds, preventing germination. By reducing weed growth, the competition for soil moisture and nutrients is greatly reduced, providing better growing conditions for your desired plants in your landscape.

When lying down mulch in a flowerbed beware of applying mulch so close to the trunk of trees, shrubs or perennials. As a general rule, keep mulch away from the base of a plant.

The base of plants need oxygen to breath and bunching mulch up too close can inhibit this oxygen exchange. Without this oxygen exchange plants can become more susceptible to root and crown rot diseases.

Contact your local nursery for more information on mulch. To schedule a free landscape survey, call 621-5480.



<b>Mulch</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Durability</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>	<b>Special Uses</b>
<b>Landscape fabric</b>	Very high	Long—up to 5 years when properly maintained with organic or rock mulch on top	Very effective, long lasting, allows air and water penetration	Expense, installation somewhat more complicated	Excellent mulch for permanent plantings of woody landscape plants. Usually topped with organic mulch or rock to make it attractive and long lasting
<b>Black plastic</b>	Inexpensive	Breaks down rapidly	Cheap	Not permeable to air and water. Unattractive. Breaks down rapidly.	Not recommended
<b>Grass clippings</b>	Free	A few months	Readily available	May contain weed seeds, mats and reduces water penetration, especially if applied too thick and not dried out before applied. If turf treated with pesticides can contain residues	Vegetable gardens or annual flower beds, but apply in thin layers weekly so it can dry
<b>Ground bark</b>	Moderate	Decomposes fairly rapidly, must be replenished	Attractive. Decomposes into soil	Decomposes fairly rapidly unless used with landscape fabric. Weed seeds grow in it easily and must be pulled out. Can tie up nitrogen as it decomposes when mixed in soil	Don't apply more than 2 inches deep. Best for short-term mulching in annual beds or for use on top of landscape fabric
<b>Compost</b>	Free if home made	Breaks down rapidly, must be replenished	Free or inexpensive. Good source of organic matter	May harbor weed seeds if not properly composted. Holds water, if placed too close to tree trunks can promote crown disease. Weeds grow easily in it, must be rogued out	Apply at about 2-inch depth. Use in annual beds or vegetable gardens for short-term mulching
<b>Peat moss</b>	Relatively expensive for organic mulch	Moderate for organic mulch	Contains few weed seeds. Adds acidity to alkaline soils	May blow away. May resist wetting when dry. Encourages shallow rooting	Better as a soil amendment for alkaline soils when well incorporated than a mulch
<b>Rock</b>	Relatively expensive	Lasts forever	Doesn't need to be replenished. Doesn't blow away	May get too hot and injure roots. Hard to clean. Hard to pull weeds out. Children throw it. Can get into lawn mowers	Best if used as a top mulch over a landscape fabric in non-planted areas
<b>Medium sized bark chips</b>	Moderate for organic mulch	Longer lasting than smaller particle organic mulches	Attractive, slowly improves soil as it decomposes Longer lasting than finer mulches.	Like other organic mulches needs to be replenished	Excellent as a topping for landscape fabric Best overall choice for an organic mulch to be used without

					landscape fabric where beds are fairly long lasting. Apply 3 to 4 inches deep and keep replenishing.
<b>Wood chips</b>	Can be inexpensive	Decompose faster than bark chips	May be available free. Allows for recycling of wood material.	Where there is a lot of runoff may float away. If incorporated into soil may tie up nitrogen. Needs to be replenished. Some woods may contain chemicals toxic to some plants.	Apply at 3 to 5 inches in beds. Use for permanent beds that are not frequently cultivated. A good topping for landscape fabric
<b>Newspaper (shredded or sheets)</b>	Free	Decomposes rapidly if kept wet	Free. A cheap alternative to landscape fabric.	Unattractive unless covered up. Newspapers printed with soy based inks and are safe, but don't use glossy parts—they may have soil contaminants. If not shredded can interfere with water penetration (although you can use it on top of drip).	2-3 sheets of newspapers can be placed under organic mulches in landscape beds on top of drip irrigation and remain effective for a whole season. Shredded newspaper can be used in vegetable or annual beds.

### Websites about Landscape Mulch:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/pnweedmanagement.pdf>

Weed management in Home Landscapes

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8036.pdf>

Water Conservation in tips for the home garden

<http://landscaping.about.com/cs/compostandmulch/a/mulches.htm>

Garden Mulch 101

<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/garden/07214.html>

Mulches for the Home Garden

