

pipeline



SUMMER 2017

A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT



2017 WaterSmart Landscape Contest Winner Selected



Otay Water District recognized Bonita homeowners Allan and Rose Wood as the winners of this year's WaterSmart Landscape Contest, formally known as the California-Friendly Landscape Contest. The District's judging committee selected the Woods as the "Best in District" winners for exemplifying beauty and efficiency in low-water-use landscaping.

In the fall 2013, the Woods decided to lower their water consumption by removing the grass and clusters of queen and king palm trees from their front yard. With the help of a hired landscaping contractor, they designed a desert-scape theme with vibrant, colorful water-wise plants. Their palette varied including agave, cacti, and palo verde trees, among other California-friendly plants that thrive in San Diego County's Mediterranean climate.

"My wife and I have always been a fan of cactus and succulents, so when we bought our house about four years ago, we knew we wanted to convert the front yard," said Allan.

"We got ideas from websites, nurseries, and existing yards around our neighborhood."

The Woods installed a weed barrier, gravel, and boulders in place of the existing grass. They also replaced the sprinkler system with a drip-irrigation system. Their water-wise plants allow them to limit fertilizing and pruning to about four times a year. Besides the aesthetics, they said they enjoy most how little effort it takes to keep their yard in good shape, and of course, how much money they save on their water bill.

"We've shaved off an average of about \$25 to \$30 a month," said Rose.

District staff recognized the Woods at a special awards ceremony at the Water Conservation Garden in May. Staff awarded the Woods with a \$250 gift card to Walter Andersen Nursery and a goodie bag filled with a variety of water-related promotional items. For details about the contest and to view photos of the winning landscapes throughout the county, visit landscapecontest.com.

Otay Water District Granted Presidential Permit for Cross-Border Water Project

The U.S. Department of State granted a presidential permit to allow the Otay Water District to build a nearly four-mile potable water pipeline that begins at the U.S.-Mexico border. The permit authorizes the District to "construct, connect, operate, and maintain cross-border water pipeline facilities for the importation of desalinated seawater at the International Boundary between the United States and Mexico in San Diego County, California." Purchasing and transporting water from *Agua de Rosarito's* desalination plant in Rosarito, Baja California, Mexico, is a component of the District's water supply diversification efforts. The Rosarito plant could potentially produce water to meet up to two-thirds of the District's projected water use by 2024.

The project has undergone environmental review as required by the California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act and has obtained a U.S. Fish and Wildlife biological permit. The District also applied for a permit from the California Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water to ensure that water imported from Mexico meets the same high water quality drinking standards as water from regional lakes, the Claude "Bud" Lewis Carlsbad Desalination Plant, and the City of San Diego's Pure Water Program. For more details on the project, visit otaywater.gov.





CONSUMER
Confidence Report
for Calendar Year 2016

Water Quality Report Available Online

The Otay Water District's calendar year 2016 Consumer Confidence Report is available online here: otaywater.gov/consumerconfidence. Once again, Otay met or surpassed all the public health drinking water requirements and standards, and did not exceed a health-related maximum contaminant level. Otay staff is committed to performing continuous water quality testing and vigilantly safeguards its water supplies to ensure reliable drinking water for its customers. To request a printed copy, visit the District's office at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd., Spring Valley, CA 91978, call (619) 670-2222, or email info@otaywater.gov.

Board Approves Fiscal Year Budget with No Overall Water Rate Increase

In the spring, the Otay Water District's Board of Directors approved its fiscal year 2018 budget that presents no overall water rate increase and minimizes the impacts from the District's water suppliers' cost increases. While the budget presents no overall rate increase for water customers beginning Jan. 1, 2018, the Board is proposing changes that will shift rates for customers between various fee types to collect revenues in accordance with the requirements of Proposition 218, "The Right to Vote on Taxes Act." The adopted budget does include a 7.5 percent increase for sewer customers. The District distributed to its customers a notice of a public hearing to be held on Oct. 4, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. at the District office located at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd., Spring Valley, CA 91978.

The 2018 budget reflects the District's ongoing efforts to minimize rate increases, proactively maintain the public water and sewer system, and provide timely infrastructure improvements to meet the needs of its service area. For more information on the budget or to view the notice of public hearing, visit otaywater.gov.

Otay Receives Highest Award for Financial Reporting

Earlier this year, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Otay Water District for its Fiscal Year 2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The award is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. Otay's CAFR met the GFOA's high standards, including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential readers to review the report. Otay's dedicated finance staff, with the support of management and the Board of Directors, is proud of this achievement.



Otay Resident Wins Live WaterSmart Instagram Contest

"Reflections of water. This image represents a profound relationship we (all life forms) have with water. We need it and we thrive on it." – Genevieve Fong, Chula Vista



The San Diego County Water Authority announced Genevieve Fong — Chula Vista resident within the Otay Water District's service area — as one of two grand-prize winners of the Live WaterSmart Instagram photo contest. During Water Awareness Month in May, San Diego County residents submitted photos with captions reflecting what water means to them. The photos were then posted to the Water Authority's Instagram (@sdcwa) page in an effort to promote everyday water-use efficiency and

highlight the value of water. Fong's photo, taken at the Living Coast Discovery Center in Chula Vista, demonstrated the relationship between water and all living things. A panel of judges reviewed all entries and recognized Fong's photo as having the most originality, composition, and connection to the contest theme. Candace Chu of the City of San Diego was selected as the other grand-prize winner. For details about the contest winners, visit sdcwa.org. Congrats to all the winners and especially Fong!

OTAY WATER DISTRICT – Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. in the Board meeting room. The public is encouraged to attend at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard, Spring Valley, CA.

President
Mark Robak, Division 5
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Nan Sterman's

Plant Soup Inc.

Tree Watering Basics: Keeping Trees Healthy After a Drought

THE VALUE OF TREES

Trees are vital to wildlands, rural environments, and urban areas. They provide many "services" that few of us recognize. For example, the carbon dioxide we exhale is the gas trees take in during photosynthesis. And as they photosynthesize, they recharge the air with the oxygen we inhale.

Tree roots capture, slow, and clean runoff. Their roots hold water that would otherwise flood our communities.

Tree leaves shade and cool our houses. They also filter the air and capture particulates we would otherwise breathe in. Trees serve as habitat for birds, good bugs, and other important critters.

Trees also can be one of the most powerful tools in the fight against global warming.

Cities and suburbs are hot places thanks to paving, buildings, cars, machinery, air conditioning, reflective surfaces, and so on. Trees and other plants release moisture into the air for evaporative cooling. I recently measured the temperatures of different surfaces in downtown San Diego on a day when the air was in the upper 60s. My infrared thermometer measured concrete sidewalk as being in the 80s, street asphalt in the 90s, rubber playground surface in the 120s, and artificial turf as more than 130 degrees. Yet the soil under a shade tree was in the 50s!

TREE WATERING BASICS

Trees, like all plants, take up water through their roots. Equally important, trees need to grow deep, drought resistant roots. Trees don't belong in lawns. That's fine in climates where there's plentiful rainfall and soil stays moist deep in the earth. Here, trees planted in lawns develop shallow roots that take up surface water but not the important, deep, drought-tolerant roots. To encourage those roots to grow, trees need deep, infrequent irrigation.

NEWLY PLANTED TREES

In their first two or three years in the ground, trees should be watered about once a week, with 15 to 20 gallons each time (captured shower water or rainwater is fine). Before you water, stick your finger into the soil, about 4 inches deep. If you feel moisture, it's not yet time to water.

When planting, build a 3 or 4 foot-wide basin around the tree's trunk. If you have the patience, water from a bucket, adding it to the basin slowly. Alternatively install concentric rings of inline-drip irrigation around the trunk. Set the first ring 8 to 10 inches out from the trunk; add rings every 10 to 12 inches to just past the drip line (that's the outer edge of the canopy). As the tree matures and trunk thickens, remove the inner irrigation rings and add more to the outer edges, maintaining that 12-inch spacing.

ESTABLISHED TREES

After three years most trees are established, which means they've developed a deep and extensive root system. Irrigate these trees less often – only once or twice a month – but with more water each time. The goal is to wet the roots 1 or 2 feet deep. This is when inline-drip irrigation is most important. Set rings of inline-drip irrigation a foot or 18 inches out from the trunk, and extend every 12 inches to just past the drip line.

HOW OFTEN TO WATER

You'll need to experiment with how long to run the irrigation. With clay soil, water moves into the soil slowly and stays a long time. With sandy soils, water moves through quickly and dissipates. Use a soil probe to determine how deep water penetrates as you irrigate. Use the probe after you irrigate too, to see how long the water stays in the soil. When the area around those deep roots start to dry is when you should irrigate again.

Different kinds of trees need more or less water. Deciduous fruit trees need water when they have leaves, flowers, and fruits on them. In the winter when it rains, they may not need any irrigation at all. Citrus trees however need irrigation year round (except after a big rain). Don't make the mistake of putting citrus and avocado trees on the same irrigation zone as peaches, plums, figs, or pomegranate. You'll end up watering those less thirsty trees more than they need just to supply the citrus and avocado trees.

For Nan's full article on tree watering basics and using mulch, visit otaywater.gov/plantsoupinc.

Nan Sterman is a garden expert, author, designer, and educator. Nan leads international garden tours and hosts the show *A Growing Passion* on KPBS TV. www.plantsoup.com

For additional classes or events, visit thegarden.org

ONGOING EVENTS



Free Docent-Led Tours Saturdays, 10 a.m.

Be inspired to create a water-wise landscape of your own while enjoying an informative walk through the Garden with a docent tour guide. Visit thegarden.org for special themed tours.

Professional Landscape Design Consultations

The Garden offers 45-minute landscape consultations for residents looking to make changes to their landscape with water-wise plants. Call (619) 660-0614 ext. 10 to schedule. Cost: \$60 for members; \$75 for nonmembers.

Ms. Smarty-Plants School Tours and Assembly Program

Become a Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Earth Hero. Join Ms. Smarty-Plants™ as she takes you on a magical, fun, and interactive journey through plant adaptations, the water cycle, conservation, and more. To book an educational tour of the Garden or a school assembly program, call (619) 660-0614 ext. 16.

Se anuncia al ganador del concurso de jardinería WaterSmart



Allan y Rose Wood, residentes de Bonita fueron los ganadores del concurso de jardinería WaterSmart 2017 organizado por el Distrito de Agua de Otay. El comité de evaluación del distrito otorgó el premio "Mejor Jardín del Distrito" a los Wood por ejemplificar la belleza y eficiencia de los jardines de bajo consumo de agua.

En 2013, los Wood decidieron retirar el césped y palmas tipo pindó y alexandra de la parte frontal de su jardín para conservar más agua. Con la ayuda de un especialista en paisajismo diseñaron un jardín desértico con plantas de diversos colores y tolerantes a la sequía. Su selección de plantas incluye agave, cactus y árboles palo verde entre otras plantas amigables de California que prosperan en el clima mediterráneo del condado de San Diego.

"Mi esposa y yo siempre hemos sido aficionados a los cactus y suculentas, así que cuando compramos nuestra casa hace unos cuatro años sabíamos que eventualmente cambiaríamos el patio tradicional", dijo Allan. "Encontramos ideas en el Internet, en viveros y en varios patios de nuestro vecindario."

Los Wood instalaron una barrera de hierba, grava y roca para reemplazar el césped existente. También cambiaron el sistema de irrigación por un sistema de riego por goteo. Además, las plantas de bajo consumo de agua les permiten reducir la frecuencia de fertilización y poda a cuatro veces por año. Los Wood dijeron que aunado a la cuestión estética con poco esfuerzo pueden mantener su patio en buenas condiciones y, en consecuencia, ahorran dinero cada mes en su factura de agua.

"Tuvimos una reducción de 25 a 30 dólares al mes en promedio", dijo Rose.

En mayo, el personal del distrito reconoció a los Wood en una ceremonia especial de premios en el Jardín de Conservación de Agua en El Cajon. Los Wood obtuvieron una tarjeta de regalo de 250 dólares del Vivero Walter Andersen y una bolsa con artículos promocionales relacionados con la conservación de agua. Para información sobre el concurso y ver fotos de los jardines ganadores en el condado de San Diego, por favor visite landscapecontest.com.

El Distrito de Agua de Otay recibe permiso presidencial para la construcción de proyecto transfronterizo

El Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos otorgó el permiso presidencial al Distrito de Agua de Otay para la construcción de casi cuatro millas de tubería para agua potable que comienza en la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México. Este permiso autoriza al distrito la construcción, conexión, mantenimiento, y operación de las instalaciones de la tubería transfronteriza para importar agua de mar desalinizada en la frontera internacional entre los Estados Unidos y México en el condado de San Diego, California. La adquisición y el transporte del agua de la planta desalinizadora Aguas de Rosarito en Rosarito, Baja California, México, es parte de los esfuerzos del distrito para diversificar su suministro de agua. La planta de Rosarito puede producir agua para satisfacer hasta dos tercios del agua proyectada del distrito para el año 2024.

El proyecto ha pasado por una profunda revisión ambiental como lo establece la Ley de Calidad Ambiental de California y la Ley Nacional de Política Ambiental. Además, cuenta con el permiso biológico de Pesca y Vida Silvestre de los Estados Unidos. El distrito también ha solicitado el permiso de la División de Agua Potable de la Junta de Control de Recursos Hídricos de California para asegurar que el agua importada de México cumpla con los mismos estándares de calidad que el agua de los lagos en la región, la planta desalinizadora Claude "Bud" Lewis en Carlsbad, y el programa Pure Water de la ciudad de San Diego. Para obtener más información sobre este proyecto, visite otaywater.gov.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT CALL 619.670.2222 OR GO TO WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV