

NEWS

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County Water-wise Conservation Project Surpassing Expectations

Serious water conservation in San Bernardino County is well underway at the Facilities Management Department. The water-wise garden project started in July 2008 has surpassed its twelve-month goal of one million gallons saved. In just under six months, the project has already realized more than one million gallons saved; the equivalent of almost two Olympic swimming pools.

"We couldn't be happier with the results to-date and have now increased our 12 month savings projection to 1.8 million gallons saved," said Department Director David Gibson. "As budget allows, we hope to continue reducing the County's water consumption at other County facilities by replacing over-thirsty turf with drought tolerant landscaping," Gibson said. The Department's estimated annual savings for the cost of water and related expenses at this one location is nearly \$8,000.

In spite of recent rains, precipitation totals remain below average and shortage predictions for the coming year have been dire statewide. Measures to restrict water use are in discussion or have already been enacted at many water agencies. "San Bernardino County steps up once again," said Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales. "As I stated at the project's kickoff last July, I am so very proud of our County's proactive approach to addressing the mandates of AB 1881." AB 1881 is the State legislation requiring local agencies to adopt efficient landscape practices by January 2010.

Chairman Gary Ovitt expressed his delight saying, "Efforts that save both natural resources and dollars are a win-win for residents." "I am very proud of our Facilities Management Department's efforts."

The demonstration garden, located at the Facilities Management Headquarters, 200 S. Lena Road in San Bernardino, showcases the beauty and diversity of several drought tolerant California Friendly and California Native plants. The garden provides living examples of options

for homeowners to use in their own yards, as well as examples of drought tolerant landscaping for businesses and other agencies. Water saving tips along with other information about the garden and the progress of the various plant life can be found online at [:http://www.sbcounty.gov/greencountysb/](http://www.sbcounty.gov/greencountysb/)