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# The Water Action Guide

Prepared by the Green Associations Water Conservation Council

American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA)

The Irrigation Association (IA)

Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)

Turfgrass Producers International (TPI)

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Prepared by the Green Associations Water Conservation Council  
representing the  
American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA)  
The Irrigation Association (IA)  
Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)  
Turfgrass Producers International (TPI)  
especially for the use of their respective members.



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For more information, visit <http://www.WaterActionGuide.org>

## Part 1

# **Green Associations Water Conservation Council**

Did you know that the economic impact of our nation's green industry is an estimated 39.6 billion dollars? What's more, its aesthetic and environmental impact on our communities cannot even be measured in dollars and cents. From greenhouse growers and landscape contractors, to turfgrass producers, seed retailers and irrigation contractors, we are all part of a vital industry that touches the lives of every single American.

Yet today, the future of our industry is at risk. That's because real and perceived water shortages are spurring legislators to write new laws and restrictions that will affect the use of water. Who will be there to speak on our behalf—and for Americans everywhere—when decisions are made that threaten the future of our businesses and the environment?

## **Introducing the Green Associations Water Conservation Council**

Prompted by a mutual concern for our water supplies, four diverse green industry associations have joined together and formed the Green Associations Water Conservation Council:

American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA)  
The Irrigation Association (IA)  
Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)  
Turfgrass Producers International (TPI)

This national coalition unites our combined memberships into one, strong, unified force that can effectively address both local and regional water-use issues.

A key goal of the coalition is to help industry professionals like you to form coalitions in your own communities. We are prepared to provide you with the grassroots guidance and information you need to effectively influence decisions or restrictions that will affect water use in your community—and your business.

## **Why YOU Need to Take Action**

As the lack of precipitation, overdrawn aquifers and restricted pipeline capacities continue to plague areas of the United States, new legislation and restrictions are imminent. During such water crises, however, water boards and elected officials may respond with well-intended, knee-jerk restrictions, some of which may actually be harmful to both the environment and the economy. To ensure that this does not happen in your area, you need to educate your officials about water use before they cast their votes.

And who knows more about *your* industry than you do? By teaming up with other related businesses—as business owners, environmental advocates, employers, taxpayers and community

activists—you can deliver a stronger, more focused message that will be heard by the decision makers. Together, you will have a greater impact than any individual or single group could ever hope to achieve.

### Start Here. Start Now.

Right now is the best time for you to get involved, and the coalition developed this Water Action Guide to help you get started. It provides step-by-step instructions on how to effectively:

- organize a strong voice in your community
- build a coalition
- engage and work with media
- lobby decision makers, or hire professionals to represent your interests.

Additionally, you will find that this guide provides relevant, easy-to-read information on current drought, water use, economic indicator and other related green industry issues. We have also included a variety of handouts, charts and directions to other resources to help you and your community partners navigate through potentially troubled waters—or the lack thereof!

## The Coalition

The four association members of the national coalition encourage you to begin today to prepare for the water issues of tomorrow. Through our mutual concern for our nation's water supply, we can make a difference for our businesses, our communities and our country.

### American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA)

The American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA) is the national trade association of the nursery and landscape industry. ANLA provides education, research, public relations, and representation services to members, enabling them to operate more effectively and to provide the public with quality plants, landscape design and installations, and related products and services.

ANLA membership is comprised of nearly 2,200 firms that grow and retail plants of all types, and design and install landscapes for residential and commercial customers. Headquarters for the association are in Washington, D.C. Call (202) 789-2900, or visit [www.anla.org](http://www.anla.org).

### The Irrigation Association (IA)

The Irrigation Association is an international organization that works to improve the products and practices used to manage water resources and to help shape the worldwide business environment of the irrigation industry. The Irrigation Association's interest in water resources encompasses the responsible application, conservation, drainage, improvement and recovery of water for economic and environmental enhancement in agriculture, turfgrass, landscape and forestry.

The Irrigation Association's efforts focus on playing significant roles and providing leadership in such areas as the development of recognized industry standards, providing irrigation-related education and communication, conducting public awareness programs and interacting with governmental organizations and associations. Call (703) 536-7080, or visit [www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org).

## Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)

The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), formerly ALCA and PLCAA, is a trade association that promotes business management skills and the profitability of its members' businesses. PLANET recognizes that the professional landscape contracting business is continually evolving and extremely competitive. PLANET provides its members with a good business foundation to help them evaluate, plan, and better manage their companies.

Member firms have direct access to marketing tools, industry specific business publications, and business experts who can assist companies in becoming more profitable. Call (800) 395-2522, or visit [www.landcarenetwork.org](http://www.landcarenetwork.org).

## Turfgrass Producers International (TPI)

Turfgrass Producers International is an international trade association that is dedicated to serving the turfgrass industry's special needs. It serves both individuals and firms that are engaged in the business of planting, growing and marketing sod.

Founded in 1967 as the American Sod Producers Association, TPI now seeks to both represent and advance the turfgrass sod industry worldwide through the promotion of improved practices and the professional development of members and the enhancement of the environment. Call TPI at (847) 705-9898 or visit [www.TurfGrassSod.org](http://www.TurfGrassSod.org).

**One Coalition. One Goal. One Voice.**

## Part 2

# How to Deal with a Water Crisis

### In a Crisis Mode

Water restrictions are imminent. The buzz throughout your community is that your water board, municipality, county or state government may announce severe actions at any time. You've got to deal with a water crisis.

**Note:** Merriam-Webster defines **crisis** as

**1 a:** the turning point for better or worse

**2:** the decisive moment

**3 a:** an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending; *especially*: one with the distinct possibility of a highly undesirable outcome.

### 10 Steps to Managing a Water Crisis

Should a crisis occur, hopefully your business concerns will be represented by a larger community coalition (see Part 3, *How to Form a Coalition*) of greenhouse owners, turf growers and providers, landscape contractors, garden retailers and irrigation contractors, among others. If not, now is the time to start one by reaching out to other green businesses and determine the necessary course of action. The following 10 steps will help you take a proactive stance and avert or minimize a crisis.

#### Step 1 – Do Your Homework

Begin by arming yourself with facts and figures on the economic impact of the green industry on the local economy and environment. You can request the data you need from your Chamber of Commerce, your state and county governments (economic development) and other credible sources. Analyze the facts, and try to predict the expected results of this “crisis.” Will it harm the environment? Will it hurt business? What will it do the local economy? Will it financially affect the town, county or state?

#### Step 2 – Mobilize Your Staff, Advisors and Local Coalition Leaders

Build your list of potential supporters by asking yourself the following questions:

- How many people do I employ?
- How many people do the regional green industry businesses collectively employ?
- How many are direct and indirect jobs? (Consider garden center staff, construction workers, administrative and logistics personnel, trucking company employees and third party contractors that perform special services).

Then calculate your overall contribution to the commercial tax base in your area and find someone who can run estimated figures on the following:

- income tax contribution of the direct and indirect jobs
- sales tax generated by the purchase of your goods and services.

### Step 3 – Be Part of the “Solution” to the Crisis, Not a Victim

Identify the steps that you, in concert with the community coalition, can do to help avert severe action, or to respond positively once action is implemented. It’s in your own best interest to be a team player, both with your fellow green industry businesses and with local government.

Together with your team, you can define just what your industry is willing to do to help avert a water crisis. You will find that it is more productive to engage in self-imposed restrictions, and encourage the community to do likewise, than to react to someone else’s restrictions. Some voluntary measures that you can consider include:

- employing new and improved watering practices
- installing more efficient equipment
- encouraging commercial real estate and private customers to upgrade irrigation systems
- using drought tolerant species in their landscapes
- launching a strong public information campaign on water-saving practices.

Not only can these activities help your cause, but they can also help establish your group as water-use experts and community leaders.

### Step 4 – Create a Plan

Develop an effective strategy that outlines how *you* can contribute to a resolution:

- use best management practices in water conservation
- help educate the public about water conservation
- volunteer to be an “expert” on government panels.

Also include specific steps that designate how your coalition will respond publicly and privately to restrictions:

- define your coalition’s position
- name a coalition spokesperson
- designate someone to represent your interest in non-public forums (e.g., closed-door meetings with elected officials).

## Step 5 – Select a Point Person Organization

If you decide not to be the point person, choose someone who can:

- interact with other coalition members
- speak candidly and authoritatively about your business
- represent your best interests
- answer questions knowledgeably about your company.

Make attendance at coalition meetings and conference calls a priority! Your ideas and contributions are invaluable to the group, and it's better to hash out problems or concerns in private than in a public forum.

## Step 6 – Name a Coalition Spokesperson

Your spokesperson (or persons) will represent the *overall* goals of your green community to elected officials during water board hearings, to the public during open meetings and to the media.

**Remember:** *One coalition, one voice, one goal.*

The ideal candidate(s) should be...

- dynamic
- well-spoken
- diplomatic
- knowledgeable.

**Tip:** If your spokesperson is from a different sector of the green community than you are, it is imperative that you offer detailed, concise, background information about your industry to ensure that your interests are aligned with the larger group message.

***Working together will only make your voice stronger and more effective.***

## Step 7 – Investigate and Analyze Material

Research and prepare current water level data and information that is pertinent to your locale or region. You can obtain this information from a variety of sources. Go first to your state government Web site, and then try the following resources.

- “Drought Information Center.” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). ([www.drought.noaa.gov](http://www.drought.noaa.gov))
- “Drought Information.” United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). ([drought.fsa.usda.gov/weather.asp](http://drought.fsa.usda.gov/weather.asp))
- “National Water and Climate Center.” National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). ([www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wcc.html](http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wcc.html))
- “U.S. Drought Mitigation Center,” University of Nebraska-Lincoln. [www.drought.unl.edu/](http://www.drought.unl.edu/)
- “U.S. Drought Monitor.” ([www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html](http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html))
- “Water Watch.” U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). ([water.usgs.gov/waterwatch/](http://water.usgs.gov/waterwatch/))

You should be able to download the following information:

- Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) and Palmer Index
- Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI)
- Stream Flow
- Forecasted Weather (short term & long term)
- Other data such as the U.S. Drought Monitor Map.

After you prepare the water availability data, analyze its impact on your industry to determine if it will impact orders of turfgrass, landscape plants or consumer decisions to landscape or irrigate if water use is severely limited.

Some of what you conclude will be “educated speculation.” You may fare better than you think; conversely, things could always be worse. Be *realistic* about the data and what it indicates for the future.

Take a step back, and put the data into context. Prepare fact sheets for the coalition, elected officials and community leaders of influence. Follow your coalition chain-of-command to communicate the information.

## Step 8 – Remain Calm

If your analysis appears to be grim during this phase, avoid being divisive. It is a natural instinct to have a “fend-for-yourself” or “survival-of-the-fittest” attitude, but that approach isn’t really in your best interests. Instead, try to focus your efforts and energy on the following:

- Continue to support the coalition agenda, but make sure that your concerns are heard and recorded.

- Stay in control. Make everyone feel secure, but always share accurate information. Otherwise the community in which you do business, including your employees, vendors and contractors, will sense your fear.
- Prepare responses for your employees who might be experiencing uneasiness about their jobs. It is important to acknowledge their uncertainty. You don't want key employees or a critical mass of staff to seek other employment before you've solved the problem. On the other hand, if you feel you may eventually have to let them go, you should give them more than just a day's notice.

### Step 9 – Communicate Internally

Weekly staff meetings, e-mails, internal newsletters or memos should be regular components of your internal communications efforts.

- Issue regular status reports to your employees to confer a sense of “ownership” and personal responsibility in the company.
- Communicate regularly, issuing frequent updates to thwart the rumor mill and keep your employees focused on their work.

### Step 10 – Benchmark Your Progress

As you move through this phase, closely monitor the coalition's progress.

- Request regular updates on interaction with the local water board, elected officials and pertinent state agencies.
- Request copies of communiqués, meeting minutes and legislation that might directly affect your business.
- Publicly support the on-going efforts of your coalition.
- Follow the coalition's action plan, and request an update on activities.
- Ask for an update on the state and federal resources that are offered to businesses to help mitigate any potential losses. If applying for federal and/or state assistance, request that your coalition press for assistance and help you get the necessary paperwork in order. (The following Web site is also a good disaster relief reference: <https://disasterhelp.gov/portal/jhtml/index.jhtml>)
- File any necessary paperwork, keep track of business losses, continue to monitor water restrictions, be innovative where possible, utilize the power of your coalition and deal honestly with your customers and employees.

This crisis will pass—hopefully without holding your business hostage. Beyond short-term solutions, the coalition's long-term goals should focus on creating and maintaining positive community relationships, while proactively working towards permanent water management resolutions.

**One Coalition. One Goal. One Voice.**

## Part 3

# Form a Coalition

### What Is a Coalition?

A coalition is very different from an association.

*Associations* unite businesses with similar interests—growers and landscape contractors, for instance. Associations allow competitors and other groups within the industry to network, establish industry-wide practices, improve as professionals, promote industry innovation and elevate the industry.

*Coalitions* align members from various industries, organizations and businesses, such as irrigation contractors, turf growers, landscape contractors and greenhouse growers, on a single platform. Coalitions connect people who share common concerns, interests and a desire to work together toward specific short- and long-term goals.

As green industry businesses, we share concerns for our water resources and the environment. We also expect to have fair water-use rules and regulations. To achieve our goals, we must put aside our differences, emphasize our similarities and form coalitions. A coalition formed from a diverse group lends credibility and strength to a cause, and it can influence public perception and policies.

### How Involved Is the Green Industry?

Green industry businesses are major contributors to communities around the world, throughout the country and in our own neighborhoods. Green industry professionals, including owners of nurseries, turfgrass sod farms, greenhouses, garden centers and companies that manufacture equipment, irrigation systems and other products, have a tremendous vested interest in water issues. So do landscape architects and landscape or irrigation designers and contractors.

As a \$39.6 billion industry nationwide, a coalition with an economic impact of this magnitude, even on the local level, should play an integral role in decisions governing water use. But that is not always the case. Despite their reliance on abundant water, green industry businesses often fail to adequately represent themselves in any water-related, decision-making process.

Here is what a member survey of the American Nursery and Landscape Association revealed...

**77% of respondents said they have *never* participated in their local water board.**

That means only 23% have actively participated! The survey also found that only 43% of respondents have ever attended a water meeting, but some have invested more than 100 hours in water meetings to give the green industry a voice with decision makers. To date, too few members indicate direct involvement with government leaders and water purveyors who make the decisions on water restrictions. This lack of action has real costs.

## Industry Impact

Green coalitions formed at a grassroots level can and should have an impact on water-related decisions. They can help to...

- strengthen industry representation
- influence or initiate public policy
- build a foundation for water conservation efforts
- educate the public on the benefits of water conservation and the importance of green spaces.

Andy Hull, president of EnviroNetwork Consulting in Woodstock, Ga., said, “By being involved in various state committees, we can voice our opinion and influence what happens in the landscape area. The state agencies have figured out that we’re on their side and that we know what we’re talking about. From that involvement, we have influenced permitting procedures and processes affecting the direction of water quality and quantity.”

“We have the chance to be the largest, number one contributor to reducing water consumption and cleaning up the water. At the same time, because of the landscape systems and infiltrations, our expertise and technology is going to be huge. We’re smack dab in the middle of it.”

## Who’s Listening?

Who will hear this collective voice? In your community, you must first identify the players whose primary concern is water regulation. Chances are, your water board is handled at the county or municipal level, and your coalition’s key focus should be on this important governing body. In addition, any of the following could be key players:

- local elected officials
- local regulatory authorities
- state representatives
- environmental groups
- your state department of environment and/or natural resources
- local or state garden clubs.

## Become a Player

To become an effective player, you must first get involved on a personal level:

- Educate yourself on water-use issues—learn all you can, and then educate others, including the ultimate decision-makers.
- Get into the game—attend public meetings or spend time with individual water policy officials in your area. Decision makers want—and value—your input. Don’t wait until there is a crisis.

## Find Out How Decisions Are Made

Do a little legwork to find out what infrastructure is already in place. Find out...

- what laws determine who has access to water and how decisions are made
- which group has ultimate authority to make and enforce water-use policies
- what process is used to allocate, reallocate, price or control water use
- what are the specific requirements, if any, to attend meetings and receive notices
- which groups control fresh and recycled water. (Recycled water will play an increasingly significant role in our overall water supply. Knowing who administers it—and how—is vitally important.)

## Research the Players

Find out who the real players are in the water-use arena.

- What group controls the area's water? Is it local, state, regional or national? Is it an elected or appointed group? Is it a for-profit or not-for-profit monopoly that is either public or quasi-public?
- Are the visible "decision makers" elected, appointed or hired to serve on the controlling group?
- Who are the "promoters" that quietly, but effectively, influence the initiation or result of water policies?
- Who are your allies? Can they be called upon to assist when needed? Could they include other green industry professionals, gardening and homeowner associations or the media?
- Who are your "opponents?" Do they include anti-growth advocates or extreme environmentalists? Could they be water regulators, land developers or financial institutions that support severe landscape water restrictions as a means to expand their own market interests?
- Who are the most credible or expert "witnesses" that can help support your position? Do you have access to university researchers or industry personnel who can independently substantiate your claims and provide additional insights or scientific documentation?

## Recognize That Timing Is Critical

- Develop a working “radar” that will alert you in advance of possible water decision movements. Begin by requesting advanced agendas, attending meetings, reading newspapers and following any mini-trends that relate to weather conditions, construction or infrastructure breakdowns.
- Recognize the value of being “first” or “last” in the decision-making process. People tend to have better recall of, and are more influenced by, the first or last things they hear or see. If you have an opportunity, be the first to raise an issue, offer a solution, write or speak on an important issue. Failing that, work toward being the last panelist, the last word, the final authority.

## Understand the Specifics of Current Water Issues

- Analyze the current circumstances by determining if the actions under consideration are for a crisis situation, long-term problems or short-term conditions with long-term consequences.
- Familiarize yourself with decision-making timetables, especially those relating to meeting schedules and decision deadlines. Keep in mind that some decisions are made before the meeting ever begins.
- Determine the scope of the problem so you can be prepared to offer suitable solutions. A serious but short-lived emergency requires a different approach than a long-term problem.
- Stay current on all water users, including agricultural, industrial, business and residential. Gather facts about the water use by each segment. If you do not have figures readily available, you may be able to get them from the water-governing group. Continue to probe for more details, and critically examine the data you are given to ensure that it truly reports what it implies and that the “facts” are properly used.
- Be prepared to address outdoor water use by having scientifically documented information that relates to the actual plant need vs. common watering practices. Ensure that comparisons between plant groups are based on science, not anecdotal observations.
- Assemble information about the environmental benefits of landscape and outdoor water use. Prepare to report on the many aesthetic, functional and recreational benefits—as well as the economic impact of individual landscapes that can be lost if they are not maintained at a survival level.
- Document the economic impact of landscaping with figures from your own operation (e.g., number of employees, payroll, taxes and purchases) as well as related statistics for such areas as sports fields and parks, golf courses and nursery and garden centers.

## Offer Practical Solutions

Offer one or more positive solutions to address identified critical water needs. Generally speaking, but depending on the situation, the following resolutions have proven effective:

- Pre-crisis planning is the most effective approach because it allows for proactive initiatives and a longer lead-time for implementation. If, for example, the current water delivery system is out dated or undersized for the growing population, it may take years and even voter-approved authority to improve or expand the system.
- Stepped or phased-in water-use restrictions can be developed in non-crisis times, with the public and businesses informed of each phase so they can plan and respond appropriately.
- Consumer education programs that teach indoor and outdoor water conservation techniques can be very helpful. Stay up-to-date and share your knowledge of new water-saving and efficiency-improving techniques. If funding is not available from one source, a coalition of businesses, civic organizations and governmental groups could form.
- Water allocation budgets that fix amounts, not prescribed, or prohibit water use allow individuals to make personal choices. Mandated or prohibited water-use regulations take away personal freedoms.
- “Block water” pricing increases the cost for every X-gallons of water at a higher rate than the previous block. The rate of increase between blocks can also rise with usage. This pricing elasticity raises individual awareness of water use and results in conservation, while maintaining personal choice.

## **Questions Water-Policy Officials Should Be Prepared to Answer**

Ultimately, enlisting the public in a successful water-conservation program requires water-policy officials to be able to deliver on the promises they make—even if those promises are only implied.

### **Question 1**

Are the landscape and turf water-conservation goals short-term, long-term or indefinite, and are they expected to become more restrictive?

### **Question 2**

Have the proposed conservation programs proven to be effective in saving water, or like some xeriscape programs, have they actually resulted in using more water?

### **Question 3**

Will the proposed landscape water conservation efforts result in creating heat islands, which require increased energy consumption for cooling?

### **Question 4**

Will there be any negative impacts on the environment and ecosystem as a result of the proposed water-conservation efforts?

### **Question 5**

What will be the economic impacts (positive and negative) of these conservation efforts on home values, businesses and jobs?

### **Question 6**

What will happen to the water that is conserved? Where will it go, and how will it be used?

### **Question 7**

Will individuals maintain personal choice and individual responsibility when the proposed conservation efforts are implemented?

## How to Build a Coalition

Building a coalition is as much of an investment in your future as training employees, purchasing new equipment or applying new technology. Drought and water management issues will continue to confront us. Long-term answers need to evolve and short-term goals need to be met to address these issues.

By forming local and regional coalitions, green industry businesses can be more effective and accomplish more than a single entity working alone. Coalitions can multiply your resources (i.e., funding, experience, influence), add credibility to your mission and significantly enhance your ability to influence public policy and opinion.

**Tip:** Building coalition support has been key to the success of many local green communities nationwide. To see a case study, go to [www.TurfGrassSod.org](http://www.TurfGrassSod.org) or [www.LawnInstitute.com](http://www.LawnInstitute.com). Click on “Water Right” and proceed to “Case Study 10: Communicating Water Conservation to a Community.”

### Begin

Now is the best time to start a green industry coalition in your area. You do not need to be the group’s ultimate leader, but if you initiate the idea of unity, other enthusiastic and dedicated professionals will step forward. During this initial phase, determine your primary focus and define your goals so you can continue recruiting participants.

Start with one telephone call to a vendor, supplier, grower or contractor to introduce the idea of forming a coalition of green industry businesses in your area. Soon, you will form a small, core planning group, and your organization will begin to take shape.

### Diversify

With water conservation at the forefront of everyone’s concern, we must bridge our differences and build relationships with others who share our desire to enhance and preserve the environment, educate the public and continue to grow within the local community. Collective knowledge equals amplified power, and to harness the influence and power of your coalition, you must recognize the individual skills, resources and expertise that each member brings to the group.

## 10 Steps to Jumpstart Your Coalition

### Step 1 – Identify Potential Partners

Your prime prospects are organizations that share your interests in water conservation, industry preservation and positive, productive relationships with elected officials. This is an inclusive exercise, so invite fellow green businesses from down the street and across the state to participate. While some of these businesses may be your biggest competitors, don't let that stop you from seeing the bigger picture.

An existing drought may have more impact on some geographic areas of your region than others. Increase your coalition's representative base and amplify your power and collective voice by including potential members from every corner of your state.

### Step 2 – Recruit Members

Think outside the box. Put aside all preconceived notions about other green businesses and recognize the wide range of contributions that each business and segment of the industry can make to the coalition effort.

**Remember:** You need to have a variety of green businesses in your coalition. Otherwise, you could appear to be representing the sole interests of one select group.

Invite all businesses, large and small. The larger ones can help offset manpower or budgetary concerns, while smaller businesses will help build key resources. Be sure to include experienced business owners as well as new entrepreneurs to broaden the base of experience with enthusiasm.

Remind those who are reluctant to join that a water crisis can occur at anytime, without warning. If they are waiting for a crisis to get involved, they will be too late to be effective. Proactive involvement from the start can help ensure the success of the coalition now and the well-being of our businesses in the future.

### Step 3 – Target Expertise

When you talk to potential partners, ask about the assets they can bring to the coalition:

- experience
- philosophy
- internal resources
- community influence
- access to legislators, the water board or media.

Your core group should make a conscious decision to look for specific experience when you approach other businesses. For example, look for members that have in-house or vendor-supported PR, advertising or graphic design capabilities. A business that has a Web site or IT staff can help communicate a group message, post minutes or disseminate information. Still others will be very involved in their professional associations and have access to a variety of valuable resources.

## Step 4 – Schedule a Meeting

Choose a central location and convenient time for your meeting, and plan your agenda. Include time for everyone to get acquainted, inviting the potential members to introduce themselves, identify their business and voice any positive or negative concerns they may have about forming a coalition. Mail, fax or e-mail your agenda ahead of time to communicate the focus of the meeting.

Make sure you assign action steps throughout the meeting to give everyone a good reason to return and continue the coalition dialogue. You might distribute the latest water level reports or sanctions or an analysis of the latest green bills in front of your state legislature. At the end of the meeting, review the action items, persons responsible and deadlines. Be sure to schedule the next meeting to maintain momentum.

## Step 5 – Select the Leadership

A board should be the decision-making body of your organization. Depending on the size of your coalition, you should choose three to six representatives—with as much diversity as possible. Include growers, landscape contractors, irrigation specialists and others. Your board should develop a preliminary plan on behalf of the entire coalition. It is generally necessary for boards to meet outside of scheduled meetings involving the entire coalition.

## Step 6 – Appoint a Chair

Selecting a chairperson is a very important step toward launching a successful coalition. The ideal candidate must be able to oversee the coalition’s strategic mission and help steer financial, functional and programming activities.

Strong leadership skills, organization and follow-through are essential. Ideally, the position should be held one to two years before a new person is chosen. The chair may not necessarily be the coalition spokesperson.

## Step 7 – Draft a Plan

The board’s first order of business is to draft a preliminary outline that communicates, qualifies and quantifies what the coalition hopes to accomplish.

The essentials of an effective plan include the following:

- mission statement
- long- and short-term initiatives
- action plan
- implementation schedule.

Include a timeframe to guide and build momentum for the mission. If your plan includes short- and long-term goals, keep these categories separate and specific.

**Note:** Mission statements are most effective when kept to one or two simple sentences!

## Step 8 – Identify Proficiencies

Coalition members participate at different levels. Some will lead or invest time; others will utilize their own staffs to help implement goals. Still others will only allow the use of their names on a letterhead, while others will act as lobbyists, researchers, data collectors and general supporters.

## Step 9 – Communicate with Members

Consistent communication helps make a coalition work. Members may want to receive messages by a variety of methods—mail, e-mail, fax or voice-mail, so determine in advance what is feasible.

Begin to compile your membership list at the first meeting and regularly add the names of any new members. Your list should contain the following basic contact information:

- contact name
- company/organization name
- mailing address
- e-mail
- telephone numbers (home and work)
- fax and cell numbers
- pager number.

While some coalition members may never actually show up for meetings or participate in events, it is imperative that they be kept as well informed as those who do.

Make sure that all coalition partners receive the same information on a timely basis, and establish an emergency communication system—such as a volunteer, board member or calling tree—to keep everyone informed of late-breaking information, such as a vote on pending water sanctions or a piece of volatile legislation.

## Step 10 – Solicit Financing

Charges for postage, long-distance telephone and faxing, copying, etc. may only require a small budget that could be voluntarily covered by one or more of the participating businesses. If you need to hire a lobbyist, public relations practitioner, media consultant, Web designer or other support, you may need to solicit financing from all of your members. Contributions may be made on a sliding scale from large to small businesses.

**Important:** Membership should not be predicated on how much the member can contribute.

**One Coalition. One Goal. One Voice.**

## Part 4

# Get Noticed

### Plan a News Conference

There may be times when a news conference or media event is the best way to broadly convey important information about your project, program or coalition agenda to the media.

News conferences offer the opportunity to reach numerous reporters from television, radio, print and trade press at a single event. News conferences *can* be resourceful, efficient and exciting, and they can increase interest in your story. They can even take advantage of the natural competitiveness of the media, increasing the prospects of your story being covered.

**Caution:** Consider a news conference *only* if you have interesting, newsworthy and timely information to announce.

A news conference can be the most appropriate way to:

- announce the formation of a local or regional green industry coalition
- launch a new public education/information program
- announce receipt of a major grant to fund water conservation activities
- release an important survey or study
- publicize a “state-of-the-industry” report in reaction to water restrictions
- achieve critical goals or milestones.

But before you decide to hold a news conference or media event, ask yourself the following:

- Is this story newsworthy, timely and of interest to news-reporting organizations?
- Are there alternative methods of delivering the message that would be equally or more effective (i.e., news release, local media appearances)?
- Will holding the news conference offer reporters special advantages, such as interesting visuals, one-on-one interviews and hearing directly from experts, key elected officials and other important figures?

## Find a Location

Once you've determined that a news conference is the best way to publicize your message, you need to find the right location. It's a key consideration to any media event, and it must be easily accessible and provide an appropriate backdrop for your message. Some potential locations to consider include:

- coalition headquarters or the office of a coalition partner
- facilities that are easily accessible to the media, such as a hotel with meeting rooms, a local press club, water utility, department of environment, agriculture, local agricultural extension service or other identifiable location that will visually demonstrate the message of your news conference.

## Arrange the Accommodations

The location you choose must have adequate space for the following:

- media and other invited guests
- television cameras, enabling easy access to electrical outlets
- audio-visual equipment such as screens, overhead projectors, laptop table for PowerPoint demonstrations.

In addition, at the front of the room or designated location, you will need adequate space to set up these essentials:

- podium
- microphones
- mult box (i.e., an electronic device that allows several broadcast media microphones to receive a voice feed at the same time.)

## Choose a Day

Which day of the week is the smartest choice for a news conference or media event?

**Important:** Avoid Mondays and Fridays

Many reporters will not commit the first day of their week to attend an out-of-office event. On Fridays, they are completing assignments, and most are on deadline, maybe even for the following week. If you release news on a Friday, it will probably fall in the Saturday paper or weekend television news segment, reaching only a limited number of readers and viewers.

You should also avoid weekend news conferences. They just don't work. Reduced staffing at all media outlets will limit your coverage, and weekend assignment editors are difficult to reach.

## Select the Time

Time of day is another key factor to consider. A morning news conference is preferable and provides the best opportunity for a full day's coverage in broadcast media, including the noon news broadcast. It also reduces conflicts with afternoon print deadlines. When possible, a news conference should begin between 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and last no more than one hour.

**Note:** Respect deadlines. Start on time; the number of people in attendance should not be an issue. Your first point of concern is keeping the media on schedule and giving them what they need to get *your* story “in the works.” The only exception might be the arrival of a dignitary who is essential, or the drawing card, for your event.

## Select Your Speakers

Your coalition spokesperson should be the primary speaker at the event. Otherwise, you must designate someone who is knowledgeable and prepared to answer questions from reporters.

- Create a set of brief talking points, no more than 10 minutes in length, to highlight the primary reason you are holding the news conference.
- Integrate visual aids, if possible, such as large charts, maps, graphs or photos that will be visible from anywhere in the news conference area.
- Consider providing a statement or copy of the speech to reporters after the news conference.
- Have a dry run at least a day before to anticipate possible questions—and even uncomfortable scenarios.

## Who's Attending?

### The Media

If you want your ultimate audience to be the general public, then invite all the media sources in your area, including

- newspapers, dailies and weeklies
- radio stations
- television stations
- trade press (if located in your area).

For newspapers in particular, your list may include environmental reporters, as well as business and garden/lifestyle reporters. If there's news that will affect commercial real estate or management companies, include those “beat” reporters as well. Ultimately, the media outlets will decide who will actually cover the story, but it's best to notify as many different editors and reporters as possible who have a relevant tie to the story about your media event.

## Other Guests

Your news conference is, obviously, for the media. But it's also important to involve other community members. It promotes good will and can help get the word out about your announcement. For that reason, you may also want to invite

- community association leaders
- business leaders with relevant interests from the community
- elected officials from your city, county and state (if they are not going to speak, they should be recognized during the news conference)\*
- public affairs officers from relevant city, county and state agencies who can help disseminate information throughout their agencies, agency newsletters or media outlets
- retailers and wholesalers of your products and/or services.

## Announce the Event

Prepare a media advisory, one page in length, that provides just enough information to capture media interest—but not so much that you give away your story before the news conference. Provide the name and affiliation of anyone who will be available for interviews.

As a rule of thumb, your advisory should always include the following information:

- who
- what
- when
- where
- why.

You should mail, e-mail or fax your media advisory to newsrooms and “daybooks” in your city. You can address it to “News Assignment Editor,” “Business Editor” or “Environmental Editor,” but it is better to send it to a specific person in each newsroom. This makes follow-up confirmation receipt easier. Most newsroom assignment editors will tell you they have it and “it’s on the books,” but few will guarantee that a reporter will be there, although some may indicate interest.

Be sure to designate someone to make follow-up calls. First, faxes are notorious for “getting lost” in the newsroom, and you may have to resend them. Second, calling gives you an opportunity to encourage attendance at the news conference and to ask if the reporter is interested in scheduling an interview with your spokesperson(s) following the event.

\*Mere recognition applies *only* to city or county council members and state legislators. If you invite a mayor, state cabinet member or head of state (governor), you should invite that individual to speak.

In some cases, calling can give you an idea of how many people will attend the event. Television newsrooms will not know until just hours before the event if they will be present.

**Remember:** You are competing against other news that could break at any time, such as a fire or major accident. Don't be discouraged if an unexpected news story takes precedence. Yours may still get coverage, but without videotape of the news conference. You can always follow up with television or radio station news desks by delivering a media kit and offering a telephone or in-person interview.

## Compile a Media Kit

The generally accepted form of distributing information at a news conference is with a **media kit**. Information is typically presented in a folder, but also making it available in electronic format can increase the likelihood of its use. The essential elements of a media kit include the following:

- a news release containing the key information presented at the conference
- fact sheets or background materials that amplify the content of the news conference, provide context and give the reporter basic, factual information helpful to understanding the issue and developing a story
- copies of any prepared statements, graphs, charts or other substantive information presented at the conference
- biography or background information on key spokespersons
- photographs of key spokespersons or other graphics to increase the possibility of a picture accompanying the story.

After the event, messenger copies of the media kit to reporters who usually cover the topic but were not able to attend.

## Get PR Support Online

Check out the press pages of your national association. They often will have news releases and/or industry fact sheets that will save you from re-inventing the wheel. Most associations encourage members to utilize their national press efforts as a resource.

## Additional Resources:

### Web Sites

- International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). ([www.iabc.com](http://www.iabc.com))
- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). ([www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org))

## Budgets and Logistics

### Establish a Budget

Be sure to consider the potential costs associated with the following:

- room rental
- chairs and podium, if additional
- tables for refreshments and/or event registration
- microphone set-up (e.g., traditional, lapel clip-on or wireless)
- photographer and related photo costs such as duplication
- media kit materials—production, printing and copying
- audio-visual needs and materials (e.g., banners, charts, slides, mult box\*, videos, telephone hook-up for radio stations, etc.)
- light refreshments, coffee, pastries
- signage (i.e., directional, event and/or podium).

### Determine the Logistics

Once you've selected your location, address these details to prevent snags on the day of the event:

- arrange the room to facilitate a comfortable flow of traffic
- establish room arrangements with your staff, hotel or site facility management
- provide directional signage that's easy-to-read and follow
- ensure adequate parking onsite or at nearby parking lots; *be sure* to include parking instructions in your media advisory
- create your agenda, designating who will speak first (Limit speakers to no more than five to eight minutes each; total event time should not exceed 30 minutes.)
- include the acknowledgement of dignitaries in remarks and on the agenda
- compile media kits to offer at the registration table
- provide a sign-in sheet or staffed check-in to encourage guest registration.

\*"Mult box" (electronic device allowing several broadcast media microphones to receive a voice feed at the same time)

## Tips for a Successful News Conference

### Day of the Event

- Arrive at least one hour before the event, even earlier if you have to set-up or supervise the set-up of equipment, banners, chairs, podium, podium sign, etc.
- Meet with the speakers at least one-half hour before the event and have them familiarize themselves with the facilities, attend to any last-minute details and relax for a few minutes before the event begins.
- Assign someone the “greeter” role, instructing that person to meet guests as they arrive, direct them to the sign-in table and see them into the conference area. The greeter should be able to answer most questions the attendees may have. Alert your greeter to keep an eye out for dignitaries and immediately direct them to the person in charge, who will then introduce them to the event spokesperson.
- Start the news conference on time.
- Designate an official to welcome the media and briefly mention why the purpose of the news conference. This person should acknowledge VIPs and key speakers, introduce the spokespersons and let the media know who will answer questions at the conclusion of the presentation.
- Have the moderator request that reporters identify themselves by name and media outlet during the question and answer period.

### Conference Post-Mortem

- Evaluate attendance and the quality of the news conference.
- Request feedback from non-partisan attendees.
- Assess the quality of the presentation and include a critique of the spokesperson and audio-visual materials.
- Follow-up with key media who were unable to attend.
- Monitor the media for coverage.

## News Conference Checklist

### Facility

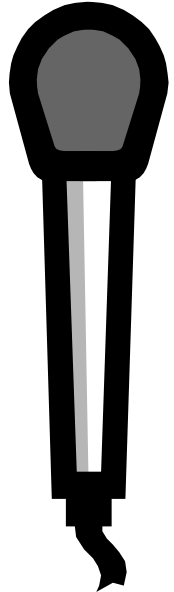
Assess the event location prior to booking and on the morning of the event.

- Site satisfactory
- Space adequate
- Accessible for physically disabled
- Parking available
- Outdoors—grounds in good condition

### Equipment

Test all equipment before and on the day of the event. Allow time for replacement and know whom to contact about equipment problems.

- Microphone/speaker(s)
- Podium (may have a microphone built-in)
- Platform/stage
- Visual equipment (e.g., laptop, screens, easel, charts)
- Heat/air (i.e., where controls are/how to adjust if necessary)
- Video/audio recording equipment, including “mult box”
- Seating
- Registration table
- Sign holders



### Materials

- Signage (in addition to that of the facility)
- Sign-in sheets
- Name tags for special guests and speakers
- Media kits (i.e., folders with news releases, fact sheets, graphs, charts and other relevant material); bring some extras
- Pads and pencils
- Participant materials (e.g., extra set of talking points, releases, background information, etc.)
- Telephone service and Internet dial-up if needed

### Staffing and Set-up

- Speakers
- Greeters
- Staff on-hand and in-place
- Photographer
- Refreshments
- Clean-up

## Part 5

# Lobby Like a Pro...or Hire One

### What Does a Lobbyist Do?

A lobbyist is someone who is paid to represent the interests of particular constituents for the purpose of influencing and/or affecting legislation or regulations. Under the law, political party officials, news media and elected government officials (while performing the duties of office) are **not** considered lobbyists.

Much like an attorney might represent an individual or group in court, or a PR practitioner would represent a client to the media, a lobbyist represents organizations, associations or business groups to legislators and regulatory agencies at the state and federal level. On issues of licensing, taxes, regulation, corporate incentives, environmental mitigation and much more, a lobbyist, or lobbying group, understands the policies, legislation and process of how a bill becomes law and how to influence bills *before* they become law. In addition, successful lobbyists have skills and government contacts they have nurtured over the years that can lead to productive relationships for their clients.

### Why Do You Need a Lobbyist?

Irrigation Association Director of State Relations, Richard Ali, has this to say about the importance of hiring a lobbyist:

“Every day of the year, someone is making a decision or debating an issue that could have profound impact on the way you do business. Your state legislature enacts new laws—or changes existing ones—to the tune of several hundred each year. These hundreds of laws are the result of sifting through several thousand newly introduced bills in a given year. Whether or not a proposal among these several thousand ever reaches the governor’s desk depends on the degree of support or opposition that is generated by those who will be affected.”

“That’s exactly why lobbying is so very important. Elected officials don’t know the green industry, and they are poorly informed of the impact their decisions have on the industry as a whole. Whether lobbying individually or as a group, the point is that your lobbying efforts are meant to inform as well as to persuade on an issue of importance to you and the successful operation of your business.”

“No legislator can possibly understand every facet of every industry. It’s practically guaranteed that very few legislators have a firm grasp on the issues important to the green industry. The solution is clear—to have a real say on important issues, then we must have a presence in state capitals around the country. Hiring and using lobbyists just may be the most effective way to do that.”

### Additional Resources:

#### Web Sites

— “Effective Lobbying at the Grassroots Level.” Institute of Electric and Electronics (IEEE-USA). ([www.ieeeusa.org/forum/guide/grassroots.html](http://www.ieeeusa.org/forum/guide/grassroots.html))

- “What Clients Wish Their Lobbyists Knew and What Lobbyists Wish Their Clients Knew.” Stateside Associates. ([www.stateside.com/publications/sgr/clientandlobbyist.shtml](http://www.stateside.com/publications/sgr/clientandlobbyist.shtml))
- “Directory of Local Officials by Region.” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov))
- “State, Country and City Government Web Sites.” Library of Congress. ([lcdweb.loc.gov/global/state/stategov.html](http://lcdweb.loc.gov/global/state/stategov.html))
- “Online Updates of Legislative Issues in the Green Industry.” *Lawn and Landscape*. ([www.lawnandlandscape.com](http://www.lawnandlandscape.com))
- “Look Up Your Elected Officials.” ANLA Legislative Center. ([capwiz.com/anla/dbq/officials](http://capwiz.com/anla/dbq/officials))

## Hiring a Lobbyist

If your coalition decides that it’s necessary to hire a lobbyist, you will want to do your homework before contracting with a lobbyist or lobbying group. Here are some tips to help you start your selection process:

- Most states include a list of registered lobbyists on their state government Web sites. Lobbyists usually are required by law to register with the state in which they serve and represent clients. There is no single categorical listing for lobbyists, but many lobbying groups are listed with the state Ethics Commission.
- Another place to check is your state house or local Chambers of Commerce. They may be able to furnish a list of lobbying firms and the issues and companies they represent.
- The fee structure for retaining a lobbyist depends on the size of the market, the size of the lobbying firm, the number of people who will represent a cause within a firm and many other factors. Be prepared to pool resources, however, as hiring a lobbyist will be an investment in your future.

**Note:** The U. S. Chamber of Commerce, which represents more than three million businesses of every size, sector and region, reported that in the last six months of 2002, it spent \$11.3 million on lobbying-related activities.

## Additional Resources:

### Books

- *Guide to State Legislative Lobbying*, by Robert L. Guyer and Laura K. Guyer  
Paperback: 223 pages  
Publisher: Engineering THE LAW, Inc. (November 30, 1999)  
ISBN: 0967724201
- *The Citizen's Guide to Lobbying Congress*, by Donald E. Dekieffer  
Paperback: 232 pages  
Publisher: Chicago Review Press; (January 1997)  
ISBN: 1556521944

**Contacts**

- American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA)  
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- The Irrigation Association (IA)  
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Phone: (703) 536-7080  
Fax: (703) 536-7019

## Lobbyists: Why, When, How?

In an interview, Michael Canning, Sr. of Manis-Canning and Associates, a governmental affairs specialist and senior lobbyist in Annapolis, Md., and Washington, D.C., ([www.maniscanning.com](http://www.maniscanning.com)) stated that organizations at the grassroots level should pool their resources and be represented by a lobbying organization.

“In Maryland,” said Canning, “the green industry came together to work on public policy as it related to the drought issue.” Canning said that the green industry and other representative businesses and organizations united to give weight and credibility to the drought issue that plagued Maryland in late 2001 through the summer of 2002.

He recommends that grassroots, green industry businesses everywhere do the same, regardless of geography. “The key is to speak with one voice,” said Canning. “You must look in the area of shared common interests and begin your work under one umbrella.”

Canning recommends being inclusive and calling on related industries in your area to bring together anyone and everyone who has an interest in drought-related and environmental/water conservation issues.

These businesses can include the following:

- landscape contractors
- commercial property owners
- real estate management companies
- turf growers
- seed retailers
- nurserymen
- landscape architects
- irrigation designers and contractors
- and many more.

Canning also notes that product manufacturers, such as fertilizer companies, might already have a contract with a lobbyist in the region who can bring that expertise to a coalition. Tapping into existing resources is key to maximizing both budgetary and legislative concerns.

### What to Expect

“It isn’t necessary for a lobbying group to be ‘green’ to represent the best interests of the green community. Having that experience is a bonus,” said Canning, “but it isn’t a requirement.” Canning said a good lobbyist will have connections and access to people working on a particular issue. “It’s more about who you know and how to get the job done.”

Working with a lobbyist involves much more than hiring someone and then just walking away. Canning cautions that good lobbyists work alongside their clients every step of the way—and vice versa—which can translate into some legwork for the client.

“The client,” said Canning “is responsible for writing what we call a ‘position paper.’ It may only be three paragraphs from the client’s expert opinion about the coalition’s stance on a particular issue, but it’s not something you want to leave up to a lobbyist. Your lobbyist’s expertise comes in the form of government contacts and how to position your statement with elected officials—not in deciding what position is most advantageous to your industry.”

Each industry has its experts—lobbyists don’t claim to be industry-specific authorities (although some may be) and their role is not to argue with a client about a particular position. Their role is to move that position forward through the halls of a state house or Congress.

Getting the most out of your lobbying dollars will probably come from working with a firm that deals with many issues, not a single, focused one. Lobbyists tend to talk to elected officials on a regular basis about a variety of things. If you choose a firm that also represents other industries, it’s likely that your issue will be talked about more frequently and to a wider audience.

## 12 Tips for Better Lobbying

Courtesy Manis, Canning & Associates

- **Get the facts:** Fully understand what the legislative or regulatory proposal does and how it will impact you and what you do.
- **Know your legislator:** Gain an understanding of where a legislator stands on an issue, and why, before discussing the matter with him or her. Never ask lawmakers to do something you know they can't do.
- **Keep it simple:** Develop a brief, concise message that explains why you support or oppose the proposal, and stick to it.
- **Give examples:** Prepare a number of solid examples to illustrate how the proposal will affect various constituencies for good or ill.
- **Know your opponent:** Review the opposing arguments and be prepared to provide sound rebuttals.
- **Don't overdo it:** Make your points in a businesslike manner. Being overly argumentative can hurt your cause.
- **Never burn a bridge:** In politics, today's opponent may very likely be tomorrow's proponent. Always leave the door open to working together in the future.
- **Choose your players wisely:** Sometimes keeping a lawmaker with no real stake in an issue out of the fray can be a real plus. If you can't get a "yes" vote, ask the lawmaker not to do anything that will hurt your position.
- **Deliver the message:** A face-to-face meeting with elected officials offers the best opportunity to make your point. It can be held in a home or capital office. Backing up the message delivered by a professional lobbyist with a constituent visit is often the most effective communication.
- **Stay in touch:** Don't just show up when you need something. Be a regular. Try dropping by or writing a note just to say "good job" on any issue you think was handled well.
- **Get involved:** Increase your activity in local and national associations and coalitions. Help in an election or reelection campaign. Volunteer to distribute campaign materials or join a phone bank. Do whatever you can. There is no better way to make a legislative friend.
- **Get organized:** Join a trade association or grassroots group where you work. Organizations like these can help maximize the effectiveness of your voice and your vote.

## Part 6

# Share the Facts: Water Use

### Your Water Facts Toolkit

The Green Associations Water Conservation Council has prepared this fact-filled toolkit to help with your grassroots community outreach and education as well as your messaging and relationship development with elected officials, the public and the media.

The information provided in this kit is intended as a quick reference for everything from water use to drought, and from the environmental and economic benefits of landscaping to the national economic impact of the green industry.

There will be times when you need to focus specifically on local water use issues, economic impact and drought conditions as they relate directly to your community. For that information, you'll need to consult your local water board, state department of environment, state department of natural resources and other government and not-for-profit organizations to build your portfolio of relevant information.

Should you need more detailed information, contact your respective association or refer to the sources listed throughout this guide.

Here's what your toolkit includes:

### Background Information

- Water Facts ..... 36
- Drought Basics..... 37
- Facts About Landscaping and Water Use..... 39
- The Environmental Value of Landscaping ..... 40
- Fast Facts on the Benefits of Environmental Landscaping..... 41
- Economic and Life-Enhancing Benefits of Landscaping ..... 42
- Green Spaces Influence Behavior ..... 43
- The Economic Impact of the Green Industry..... 44
- 1997-2002 Professional Landscape, Lawn and Tree Care Services ..... 48

### Handouts

- Water Conservation Tips for Consumers..... 49
- The Environmental Benefits of Landscaping ..... 51
- The Economic and Life-Enhancing Benefits of Landscaping ..... 52

## Water Facts

We universally agree that water is a limited, but naturally recycling resource. We generally accept that...

- 97% of the world's water lies in the oceans and seas
- 2% is locked up as glacial ice
- 1% is available for human use.

With only minor fluctuations, these percentages have remained unchanged for eons. Scientists have concluded that the amount of water present on Earth has remained stable at an estimated 290 million cubic miles of water. Conversely, the human demand for water has risen at remarkable rates as a result of increasing population and water use.

Water shortages and water-quality issues are global, not simply local, and there is a growing need to both conserve and clean the world's water supplies. Emergence of water issues is a matter of *when, not if*. Solutions must be based on site-specific determinants and have long-term considerations.

### What is an inch of water?

One inch of water a week is generally recommended for maintaining a viable landscape in a temperate zone, including vegetables, turf, trees and flowers, in a temperate zone. But how much is 1 inch of water?

#### 1 inch of water (applied or rainfall) on

- 1,000 square feet equals 624 gallons or 5,200 pounds
- 1 acre equals 27,154 gallons or 200,000 pounds
- 1 square mile equals 17.4 million gallons or 145 million pounds

#### 1 gallon of water equals

- 128 fluid ounces, 8.337 pounds, 3.782 kilograms
- 15,100 drops, 16 cups, 8 pints, 4 quarts
- 231 cubic inches, 0.2337 cubic feet
- 0.83262 British or Imperial gallon
- 3,785.4 milliliters or cubic centimeters

**1 cubic foot** equals 7.48 gallons, 62.4 pounds

**1 cubic yard** equals 202 gallons, 1,685 pounds, 764.5 liters

**1 cubic meter** equals 264.2 gallons, 2,002 pounds

**1 acre-foot** (12-inch depth across 43,560 square feet) equals 325,851 gallons, 2.7 million pounds.

*Source:* TPI Water Right guide

## Drought Basics

The reality is that we can never exhaust our water supply, nor can we ever increase it—we can only recycle it. Our water emergencies would evaporate if homeowners and communities use water more efficiently and take advantage of the recycling technology that exists today.

### What Causes Water Shortages?

Water shortages occur for many reasons:

- weather
- industrialization
- urbanization
- economic expansion
- land use
- development
- preservation.

Not all causes are based on an *actual shortage of water*. In some cases development outpaces infrastructure. Homes and commercial structures are built, but local water service can't keep up because of supply, treatment capacity or quantity of pipe and pumping stations. In other cases environmental concerns, regulations or legal decisions restrict the amount of water that can be used to serve an area's population.

Mechanical and structural shortcomings also cause water shortages. A main pump or pipe breaks, and water temporarily stops flowing into homes and businesses. In older water distribution systems, more than 50% of treated water can be lost through major leaks.

### What Are the Effects of Drought?

- Drought, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), causes annual economic losses of \$6 billion – \$8 billion, more than the losses caused by floods (\$2.41 billion) or hurricanes (\$1.2 billion – \$4.8 billion).
- Using recycled water (treated to almost drinkable standards) on landscaping would save this country enough fresh water in a year for everyone in New York City to take a 10-minute shower every day for 4.5 years.
- Loss of revenue to green industry businesses due to delayed landscape projects and reduced retail sales.

## Find Out More About Drought in Your Area

### **Additional Resources:**

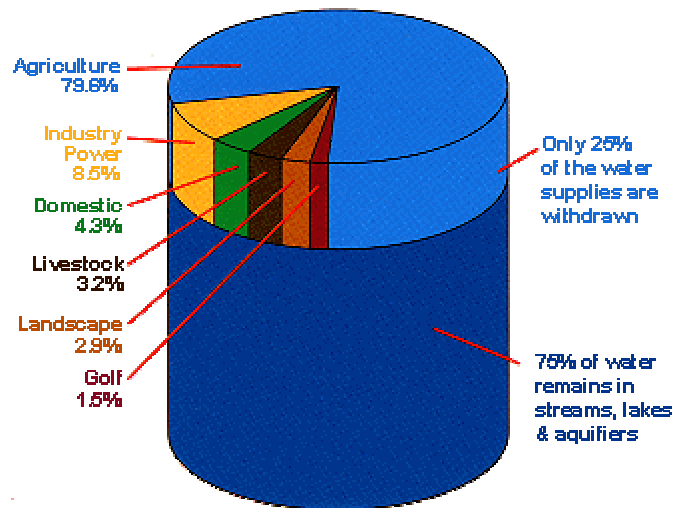
#### **Web Sites**

- National Drought Policy Commission. ([www.fsa.usda.gov/drought/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/drought/))
- National Drought Mitigation Center. ([www.drought.unl.edu/index.htm](http://www.drought.unl.edu/index.htm))
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ([www.epa.gov/owm/water-efficiency/drouhome.htm](http://www.epa.gov/owm/water-efficiency/drouhome.htm))
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). ([www.drought.noaa.gov/](http://www.drought.noaa.gov/))
- “Drought: A Handbook for Prevention.” The Irrigation Association (IA). ([www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org))
- “Water Right: Conserving Our Water, Preserving Our Environment.” Turfgrass Producers International (TPI). ([www.TurfGrassSod.org](http://www.TurfGrassSod.org))

## Facts About Landscaping and Water Use

Water use—and waste—is determined *more by people than by type of landscaping*. Many people assume America’s lush lawns are inefficient consumers of water. Landscaping accounts for only 2.9% of total water usage nationwide. And with sensible stewardship of our limited water resources, this figure could be reduced even further.

### Fresh Water Use in the United States



Pie chart represents 100% of fresh water

Source: Irrigation Association

Supporting this position is the research report of Dr. J. B. Beard and Dr. R. L. Green, which was published in the *Journal of Environmental Quality*. The study concluded that “the main cause for excessive landscape water use in most situations is the human factor. The waste of water results from improper irrigation practices and poor landscape designs, rather than any one major group of landscape plant materials.”

Depending on an area’s climate, residential outdoor water use can account for 22% to 67% of total annual water use. Clearly, this represents a vast opportunity for conservation. But to maintain an individual’s right to personal choice, a one-size-fits-all solution will not be effective.

## The Environmental Value of Landscaping

Green areas provide countless benefits to the environment, including the following:

- soil erosion control
- dust prevention
- rainwater entrapment and ground water recharge
- solar heat dissipation
- glare reduction
- organic chemical/pollutant entrapment and degradation
- noise reduction

A lack of shade trees and turf cause cities to bear the burden of “heat islands,” which are 10 degrees to 30 degrees hotter than outlying rural areas. Further, when turfgrass is removed, the amount of smog and dust in the air increases, because there are not sufficient numbers of plants to hold down the dust and trap particulate pollutants.

Without the filter of plant material, there is an increased prevalence of dust that carries disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Lack of grass also increases erosion, and erosion raises levels of pollution and damages water quality in ponds, streams, rivers and lakes.

Streets, sidewalks and paved areas reflect heat and glare during the day and retain significant amounts of heat energy during the night. As a result, cooling seldom occurs in built-up areas. When rains do come, water drains into the sewer system. Sewer water requires treatment and is dumped into the ocean and not reused. Ideally, this water should be allowed to naturally soak into the soil, replenishing soil moisture, recharging the groundwater supplies or flowing into streams, filtered by the roots of trees and turf.

## **Fast Facts on the Benefits of Environmental Landscaping**

- Grass, trees and plants reduce soil erosion—a major cause of water pollution and sedimentation.
- One tree removes 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air each year and can produce enough oxygen—about 13 pounds—for a family of four to live on.
- Plants, trees and grass fight pollution and provide storm water control and shelter for wildlife.
- Shrubs, turf and trees reduce noise pollution by up to 50%.
- Proper selection and placement of plant material can lower heating and cooling costs by as much as 20%.
- Trees absorb as much as 85% of the sun's direct heat.
- Eight average front lawns have the cooling effect of 70 tons of air conditioning.
- Trees can reduce power demand by as much as 59%.
- Temperatures around grassy areas are about 25 degrees cooler than around dead grass or concrete “heat islands.”
- One large tree can absorb as much heat as several window air conditioners and can lower temperatures by 10 degrees.
- Healthy turf is a strong component in fire prevention.

## **Economic and Life-Enhancing Benefits of Landscaping**

Results of the U.S. Homeowner Landscaping, Lawn Care and Tree Care Survey, conducted by the Gallup Organization, were based on interviews with a representative sample of 1,500 households nationwide. The study looked at spending in 1999 for landscaping, lawn care and tree care, as well as anticipated spending for 2000.

The survey also asked American homeowners to identify the most important benefits of a residential or commercial property that has a well-maintained lawn and landscape. They ranked the benefits as follows:

- Adds beauty and relaxation for the family, employees or visitors (54.0%)
- Reflects positively on its owner (53.2%)
- Offers a comfortable place to entertain, work or visit (47.4%)
- Increases real estate market value (44.1%)
- Helps beautify the neighborhood (43.3%)
- Provides a safe, high-quality play area for children (36.7%)
- Provides an exercise area for pets (21.3%)
- Helps purify the air (19.9%)
- Helps cool the air (17.8%)
- Provides a natural water filter to protect water quality and the environment (13.5%).

*The Gallup Survey was sponsored by the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA), the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the National Arborist Association (NAA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA). It was conducted in cooperation with the National Gardening Association (NGA).*

## Green Spaces Influence Behavior

A July 2001 study by Frances Kuo and William Sullivan, directors of the Human Environment Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, suggests there is evidence that green spaces reduce crime. The study demonstrated that exposure to nature may reduce aggression and violence in inner-city neighborhoods. Compared to residents living near barren areas, those nearer to green spaces were typically friendlier and more social, creating stronger community ties and offering more opportunities for a healthier neighborhood. The study documented the following:

- Children with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) function better indoors after they have been outdoors in green areas and among trees and greens.
- Landscaped settings in inner cities can help reduce stress and restore focus that everyday issues related to poverty and urban congestion can foster.
- Exposure to green spaces can mitigate chronic mental fatigue, which can lead to irritability, inattentiveness and impulsive behavior.

### Additional Resources:

#### Research

– “Green Streets, Not Mean Streets, Vegetation May Cut Crime in the Inner City,” condensed from “Environment and Crime in the Inner City: Does Vegetation Reduce Crime?” *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, Number 3 (May 2001), pp 343-367. F.E. Kuo and W.C. Sullivan. Copyright 2001 Sage Publications, Inc.

– “Girls & Greenery, Views of Green Help Girls Succeed,” condensed from “Views of Nature and Self-Discipline: Evidence from Inner City Children,” *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, Volume 22, (2002), pp 49-63. A. Faber Taylor, F.E. Kuo and W.C. Sullivan. Copyright 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd.

– “Go Out and Play! Nature Adds Up for Kids with ADD,” condensed from “Coping with ADD: The Surprising Connection to Green Play Settings,” *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, Number 1 (January 2001), pp 54-77. A. Faber, F.E. Kuo and W.C. Sullivan. Copyright 2001 Sage Publications, Inc.

– “Nice to See You, How Trees Build a Neighborhood,” condensed from “Fertile Ground for Community: Inner-City Neighborhood Common Spaces,” *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 26 (6), 823-851. F.E. Kuo, W.C. Sullivan, R.L. Coley and L. Brunson. (1998) Copyright 1998 Plenum Publishing Corporation.

– “Green Relief, Trees Ease Poverty’s Burden in Inner City Neighborhoods,” condensed from “Coping with Poverty: Impacts of Environment and Attention in the Inner City,” *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, Number 1 (January 2001), pp 5-34. F.E. Kuo. Copyright 2001 Sage Publications, Inc.

– “Cooler in the Shade, Aggression and Violence are Reduced with Nature Nearby,” condensed from “Aggression and Violence in the Inner City, Effects of Environment via Mental Fatigue,” *Environment & Behavior*, 33(4), 543-571. F.E. Kuo, W.C. Sullivan. (2001)

## The Economic Impact of the Green Industry

### - *The Business of Being Green* -

American consumers spent a total of \$39.6 billion on their lawns and gardens in 2002, an increase of \$1.9 billion, or 5%, over 2001. During the past five years, total lawn and garden sales have increased at a compounded annual growth rate of 8%. From 1997-2002 lawn and garden sales increased from \$26.6 billion to the aforementioned \$39.6 billion.

Grower cash receipts from nursery and greenhouse sales (on sales of plants to retail and distribution businesses) have grown steadily over the last two decades and are increasing at approximately \$500 million per year. On average, consumers spent \$466 per household on their lawns and gardens in 2002. Over the past five years, annual spending has grown by about 4% per year and has averaged \$452.

Eight out of 10 U.S. households (79%) or 85 million households participated in one or more types of do-it-yourself indoor and outdoor lawn and garden activities in 2002. This is the same as in 2001 and is equal to the highest level of participation seen in the past five years.

A Gallup survey, taken in 1999 and sponsored in part by ANLA and PLANET (formerly ALCA and PLCAA), found that lawn and landscape maintenance accounted for the largest dollar volume of green home improvements (\$6.7 billion) and the greatest household participation (13.1 million), while landscape installation and construction represented the largest average amount spent per household (\$1,479).

In 1999, Americans age 50 and older represented the largest customer group, accounting for one half (\$8.7 billion) of total spending on professional lawn and landscaping services.

### A Leading Agricultural Producer

The United States is the world's largest producer and market for nursery and greenhouse crops. These crops represent an important and unique segment of agriculture, and their impact is felt on the national, state and community level. In terms of economic output, nursery and greenhouse crops are the...

- **second most important sector in U.S. agriculture**, ranking seventh among all agricultural commodities in cash receipts and among the highest in net farm income
- **top five agricultural commodities in 27 states, and the top 10 commodities in 42 states.**

Ten states account for more than two-thirds of all nursery-crop output in the United States:

California (20%)	Oregon (5%)
Florida (11%)	Michigan (2% – 4%)
North Carolina (8%)	Pennsylvania (2% – 4%)
Texas (8%)	Oklahoma (2% – 4%)
Ohio (5%)	New York (2% – 4%)

Turfgrass is the number one or number two agricultural crop in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Florida, New Jersey and North Carolina.

In October 1999, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service reported: "Floriculture and environmental horticulture is the fastest-growing segment in U.S. agriculture in grower cash receipts [for 1998], averaging nine percent annual growth."

A year 2000 study released by the California Green Industry Council reports, "The green industry in California is an economic powerhouse. It's one of California's largest industries. University studies have consistently found that this dynamic, growing industry represents more than \$12 billion in sales and hires 130,000 employees. What's more, landscapes cover more than 1.6 million acres in California—making our backyards one of California's largest and most valuable resources."

A 1994 University of Florida study examined turfgrass in the state and reported, "There was about 4.4 million acres [of turfgrass], with 75% of this area in the residential household sector. Turfgrass-industry employment was 185,000 full-time and part-time workers, or 130,000 full-time equivalents. Value added to Florida's economy by all sectors of the turfgrass industry totaled \$7.3 billion."

Many businesses, including those not associated directly with the landscape industry, can lose income and profits, which can result in employee cutbacks and layoffs. In areas where well-maintained landscapes attract a wide variety of short- and long-term visitors, tourism revenues can drop. Commercial and residential development can also decline as fewer people want to move into an area that cannot provide its citizens with what they view as a reasonable amount of water.

When landscape watering restrictions or bans go into effect  
Who Feels the Impact?

Depending on the degree of the restrictions, everyone from a high school student working part-time selling lawn mowers to the owner of a landscape service or irrigation company can be affected. The impact can be economic, aesthetic and even environmental.

### Direct Impact

- Homeowners (single-family dwellings)
- Apartment renters and condo owners (multi-family dwellings)
- Public and private airports, churches, cemeteries
- Golf courses, parks and playgrounds, sports fields
- Tourism
- Commercial operations (owners and employees)
- Feed and seed stores
- Gas stations
- Hardware stores
- Greenhouses, nurseries and garden centers

- Home centers
- Irrigation systems (manufacturing/installation)
- Mail-order firms
- Mass merchandisers
- Production nurseries
- Supermarkets and drug stores
- Turfgrass sod farms
- Landscape professionals (owners, employees)
- Architects and designers
- Contractors
- Golf course superintendents
- Groundskeepers
- Lawn-care operators
- Sports field managers

### Indirect Impact

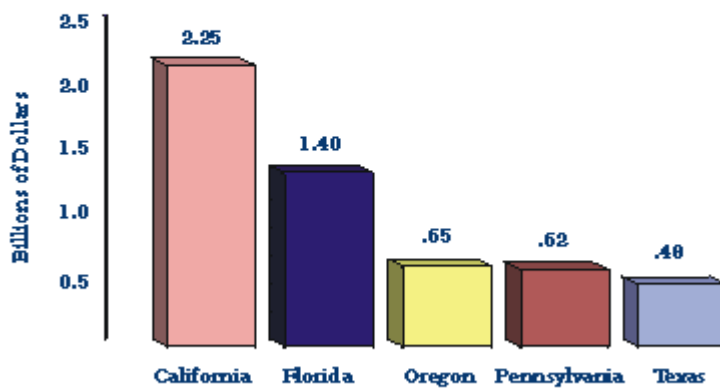
(as a result of related lost sales, unemployment, etc.)

- Material sales and delivery
- Service providers (cafes, dry cleaners, service stations, etc.)
- Sales and use taxes
- Trucking and other transportation

## Five Leading States

Sales by State

Total Horticultural Sales = \$10,599,298,000



Source: 1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties

## A Major Provider of Jobs

The American nursery and landscape industry employs more than 600,000 workers during peak seasons. Growers employ at least 45,000 workers year-round and 105,000 during peak seasons. Net farm income is the **highest** of any production specialty in domestic agriculture. At an annual average of \$53,589, nursery and greenhouse income is **four times higher** than the national average (\$13,458). Landscape and retail firms employ nearly 500,000 full-time, part-time and seasonal workers.

### Additional Resources:

#### Research

- “1997-2002 Professional Landscape, Lawn and Tree Care Services.” American Landscape and Nursery Association (ALNA). See chart on following page.  
([www.anla.org/pdffiles/LAWNlandscape1997\\_2002.prn.pdf](http://www.anla.org/pdffiles/LAWNlandscape1997_2002.prn.pdf))

#### Web Sites

Two USDA sites provide monthly update information on specific sectors and state-by-state information:

- “Horticulture Related Quick Facts, 1998 Census of Horticultural Facts.” USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).  
([www.nass.usda.gov/census/census97/horticulture/quickfacts](http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/census97/horticulture/quickfacts))
- “Calendar” USDA Economics and Statistics System (ESS), Mann Library, Cornell University.  
([www.usda.mannlib.cornell.edu](http://www.usda.mannlib.cornell.edu) – click on “Calendar”)

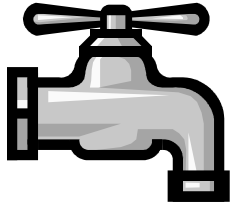
## 1997-2002 Professional Landscape, Lawn and Tree Care Services

Services Hired:	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002	
	%	Mil.	%	Mil.	%	Mil.	%	Mil.	%	Mil.	%	Mil.
Lawn/Landscape Maintenance	14	14.3	13	13.7	14	14.9	15	16.3	16	17.8	18	19.4
Landscape Installation/Construction	2	2.0	2	2.4	2	2.6	2	2.8	3	2.9	3	3.2
Landscape Design	1	1.1	1	1.2	1	1.3	1	1.6	2	1.8	2	2.1
Tree Care	5	5.6	4	4.1	5	4.9	6	5.9	7	7.1	8	8.6
TOTAL (Mil. Households)	22	22.4	20	21.4	21	22.1	21	22.9	22	23.8	23	24.7
<b>\$ Average Spent</b>	<b>1997</b>		<b>1998</b>		<b>1999</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>2001</b>		<b>2002</b>	
	\$		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$	
Lawn/Landscape Maintenance	\$533		\$581		\$540		\$543		\$547		\$550	
Landscape Installation/Construction	\$1,772		\$2,630		\$2,825		\$3,035		\$3,260		\$3,502	
Landscape Design	\$889		\$742		\$879		\$1,043		\$1,236		\$1,465	
Tree Care	\$434		\$411		\$421		\$431		\$441		\$452	
\$ TOTAL (Average Household)	\$647		\$855		\$925		\$1,000		\$1,082		\$1,170	
<b>\$ Total Spent</b>	<b>1997</b>		<b>1998</b>		<b>1999</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>2001</b>		<b>2002</b>	
	\$ Bil.		\$ Bil.		\$ Bil.		\$ Bil.		\$ Bil.		\$ Bil.	
Lawn/Landscape Maintenance	\$7.6		\$7.9		\$9.0		\$9.7		\$10.4		\$10.7	
Landscape Installation/Construction	\$3.6		\$6.3		\$7.3		\$8.4		\$9.7		\$11.2	
Landscape Design	\$1.0		\$9		\$1.3		\$1.7		\$2.3		\$3.1	
Tree Care	\$2.4		\$1.7		\$2.9		\$3.2		\$3.5		\$3.9	
\$ TOTAL (Average Household)	\$14.6		\$16.8		\$20.5		\$23.0		\$25.9		\$28.9	

### PLAN TO HIRE PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE, LAWN OR TREE CARE SERVICES IN 2003

Professional Services	Households	
	%	Mil.
Lawn/Landscape Maintenance	16	17.4
Tree Care	7	7.6
Landscape Installation/Construction	3	3.3
Landscape Design	2	2.1
Don't Know	11	11.9
None	66	71.6
Plan to Hire Services (Net.)	23	24.9

Source: ANLA



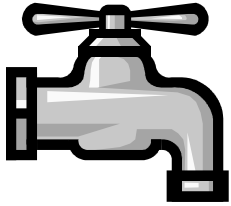
## Water Conservation Tips for the Consumer

### Indoors

- Repair all water leaks in toilets and faucets immediately. One drop per second wastes 2,400 gallons of water a year.
- Place a bucket inside the shower to collect “warm-up” water. This otherwise wasted water is great for container plants.
- Install water-saving toilets, faucets and showerheads; ***water savings would equal about 5.4 billion gallons a day*** if every American home did this.
- Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Scrape dirty dishes instead of using the dishwasher pre-rinse cycle.
- Run dishwashers and washing machines on full loads only.
- Limit disposal use by composting garbage.

### Outdoors

- Use an automatic timed sprinkler system to water your yard. It is the most efficient water system because it controls the amount of water. It can also be set to run overnight or in the early morning when temperatures and winds are at the lowest levels, reducing the amount of evaporation. What’s more, these systems allow you to adjust to different application rates for different types of plants—all automatically adjustable to changing weather conditions.
- Install a drip irrigation system. Slow watering can save up to 60% of all water used in lawn and garden areas.
- Spike or aerate lawns to ensure maximum penetration.
- Use pressurized irrigation systems—they deliver water more efficiently than any other method to lawns, gardens and crops.
- Use a broom or blower on sidewalks and driveways instead of a hose.



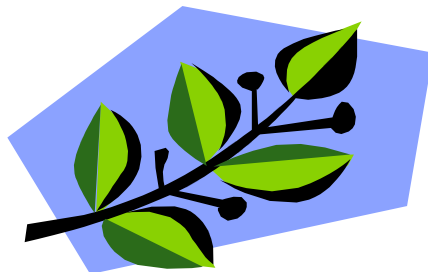
## Water Conservation Tips for the Consumer

### Outdoors (continued)

- Utilize soil moisture measurement devices. They monitor the amount of water in the soil available to plants and will turn irrigation watering on or off as appropriate to maximize plant growth while minimizing water use.
- Properly prune or trim trees, shrubs and other woody plants to maximize the plants' health and minimize invasion by pests.
- Remove dead or dying plants and all weeds that compete for available water.
- Wash cars with a bucket of water. Do not let the water run while washing your car. Use a nozzle or hose-end turn off valve. If possible, drive your vehicle onto the lawn so excess water can be absorbed into the landscape.
- Use pool covers to reduce evaporation. In arid climates, an average-sized swimming pool loses about 1,000 gallons of water per month if left uncovered.
- Avoid using sprinklers for play; this accounts for an incalculable loss of water.
- Water landscapes infrequently, but more deeply.
- Loosen soil around plants occasionally, or mulch the soil surface to cut down on water evaporation.
- Move container plants to sheltered areas, away from excess wind and sun.
- Maintain sharp blades on pruning shears and lawn mowers.
- Repair all water leaks on hose couplings, bib leaks and similar connections as soon as detected.
- Purchase plants that have scientifically documented low water requirements.

# The Environmental Benefits of Landscaping

- Grass, trees and plants reduce soil erosion—a major cause of water pollution by pesticides, fertilizers and sediment.
- One tree removes 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air every year and it can produce enough oxygen for a family of four to live on—about 13 pounds annually.
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- Healthy turf is a strong asset in fire prevention.



## The Economic and Life Enhancing Benefits of Landscaping

American homeowners were asked to identify the most important benefits of a residential or commercial property that has a well-maintained lawn and landscape. They ranked the benefits as follows.



### ***Homeowners Identify and Rank Benefits of Landscaping***

- Adds beauty and relaxation for the family, employees or visitors (54.0%)
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