

MANDATORY CONSERVATION
Schedule No. 14.1
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is my allocation?

Your drought allocation is 85% of your 2019 usage for each billing period (equals a 15% reduction from 2019 usage).

What if I wasn't a customer in 2019?

If you are a single-family residential customer, but were not a customer in 2019, your drought allocation is shown in the following table.

Drought Allocations for Single-Family
Residential Customers Without 2019 Usage History
(all values in ccfs)

January	7	July	12
February	6	August	10
March	6	September	10
April	6	October	9
May	7	November	8
June	11	December	7

If you are other than a single-family residential customer and you were not a customer in 2019, you do not have a drought allocation, but you are expected to reduce your water usage to a minimum, eliminating any waste of water.

I always conserve water and I can't or shouldn't be expected to reduce my usage by 15%.

In recognition that some single-family residential customers conserve water at all times, the minimum monthly drought allocation has been set to 6 ccfs (12 ccfs per 2-month billing period). The California Public Utilities Commission considers 6 ccfs per household per month to be an essential usage amount.

What happens if I use more than my allocation?

All water used in excess of the allocation will be billed at two times the uniform quantity rate of \$3.4902 per ccf or \$6.9804 per ccf.

For example, if your allocation for the 2-month billing period is 22 ccfs and you used 30 ccfs, all 30 ccfs will be billed at the regular rates, plus the 8 ccfs over the allocation will be billed again at \$6.9804 per ccf.

What if there are more people in my house now than in 2019?

If you believe your drought allocation is unfair, you may submit a request for relief to Great Oaks in writing if you have been assessed any excess usage surcharges on your bill. You must submit your request before your payment is due, not after it is due. You should explain in detail all reasons for the requested relief and submit any evidence you want Great Oaks to consider when responding to your request. Great Oaks will respond in writing.

If you disagree with Great Oaks' decision, you may file a complaint with the California Public Utilities Commission.

You must pay your bill during any pending appeal or risk your service being discontinued for nonpayment.

What if I have a business in my home?

If you are a single-family residential customer with a business in your home, you are still expected to reduce water usage in the same way as everyone else. If you believe this is unfair, you may appeal any excess usage surcharges.

Can I be charged for non-essential or unauthorized use of water?

Yes. If you use water for one of the non-essential or unauthorized uses listed on Schedule No. 14.1, you will first receive a warning to stop the non-essential or unauthorized use of water.

If you ignore the warning and continue the same non-essential or unauthorized use of water, you may be charged a \$25 unauthorized use surcharge on your bill.

If you continue the same non-essential or unauthorized use of water, additional unauthorized usage surcharges may be applied to your bill, each in an amount \$25 higher than the last surcharge.

Different non-essential or unauthorized uses of water may result in separate surcharges.

What are non-essential or unauthorized uses of water?

Here is the complete list from Schedule No. 14.1:

- a. Use of potable water for more than minimal landscaping, as defined in the landscaping regulations of the jurisdiction or as described in Article 10.8 of the California Government Code in connection with new construction;
- b. Excessive use of water: When a utility has notified the customer in writing to repair a broken or defective plumbing, sprinkler, watering, or irrigation system and the customer has failed to effect such repairs within five business days, the utility may install a flow restriction device;
- c. Use of potable water that results in flooding or runoff in gutters or streets;
- d. Individual private washing of cars with a hose except with the use of a positive action shut-off nozzle. Use of potable water for washing commercial aircraft, cars, buses, boats, trailers, or other commercial vehicles at any time, except at commercial or fleet vehicle or boat washing facilities operated at a fixed location where equipment using water is properly maintained to avoid wasteful use;
- e. Use of potable water for washing buildings, structures, driveways, patios, parking lots, tennis courts, or other hard-surfaced areas, except in the cases where health and safety are at risk;
- f. Use of potable water to irrigate turf, lawns, gardens, or ornamental landscaping in violation of local ordinances or government-imposed outdoor watering restrictions;
- g. Use of potable water for street cleaning with trucks, except for initial wash-down for construction purposes (if street sweeping is not feasible), or to protect the health and safety of the public;
- h. Use of potable water for construction purposes, such as consolidation of backfill, dust control, or other uses unless no other source of water or other method can be used;
- i. Use of potable water for street cleaning, unless for reasons of health and safety;

- j. Operation of commercial car washes without recycling at least 50% of the potable water used per cycle;
- k. Use of potable water for watering outside plants, lawn, landscape, and turf areas in violation of applicable state or local ordinances when this Schedule is in effect;
- l. Use of potable water for decorative fountains or the filling or topping off of decorative lakes or ponds in violation of applicable state or local ordinances. Exceptions are made for those decorative fountains, lakes, or ponds that utilize recycled water;
- m. Use of potable water for the filling or refilling of swimming pools in violation of applicable state or local ordinances;
- n. Service of water by any restaurant except upon the request of a patron; and
- o. Use of potable water to flush hydrants, except where required for public health or safety.

Are there any other actions Great Oaks may take if I use too much water or use water for non-essential or unauthorized purposes?

Yes. If a customer exceeds the drought allocation in three consecutive billing periods, Great Oaks may install a flow-restricting device on the service line. The flow-restricting device will provide a minimum of 3 ccf of water per person per month.

Only Great Oaks may remove the flow-restricting device and there are charges for removing the flow-restrictor from \$45 for meters of 1" and smaller to \$90 for meters up to 3" in size or more for even larger meters (actual cost).

I rent my home and my landlord won't let me change the automatic sprinkler setting. What should I do?

You should advise your landlord that City of San José ordinances prohibit outdoor watering except during certain times. Make sure your landlord knows the watering restrictions are mandatory and demand, in writing, that your landlord comply with the law and the drought allocations. If, despite your effort, your landlord refuses to comply and you are assessed excess usage or unauthorized usage surcharges, use the appeal procedures to request relief. Submit any correspondence with your landlord and a copy of any lease provisions preventing you from reducing water use.