



## SPRING 2015

### **Members of the San Mateo Park community:**

We are happy to bring you updates and news through our annual newsletter. We hope to accomplish a few initiatives this year. We are very appreciative of your support through dues and donations.

We are super busy this year working on street tree plantings and island restorations, and supporting our trees with supplemental watering. We again have committed substantial association funds for the dry season watering program for more than 100 trees to avoid tree loss, since the city does not have budget for watering. We all will be dealing with mandatory water reductions, and we devote a major part of this newsletter to that topic. If you see trees in stress, we hope that you will water them or let us know so we can expand our watering schedule. The funds you have provided us through dues will help us to avoid any tree loss.

We have a new updated website I encourage you to visit for info about San Mateo Park. As you know, the board is always interested in hearing from you, and we can be contacted at [Board@sanmateopark.org](mailto:Board@sanmateopark.org). We are looking to develop a more formal process to reach out to new residents to welcome them to San Mateo Park. We are looking to provide more e-newsletters as needed to keep you updated on current news and events.

Best Regards,  
Virginia McIsaac, SMPNA Board President

### **Cal Water activates next stage of drought response plan**

A 16% required reduction from 2013 baseline is effective June 1. Bayshore district achieved 11% in the last year, leaving 5% to go. No household will be required to go below 6 CCF per month (150 gallons per day)

Restrictions continue on outdoors water use, prohibiting any runoff of landscape watering, use of open hoses, cleaning sidewalks with hoses, etc. Outdoor watering is limited to 2 days a week and before 8am or after 6pm (drip systems exempted). See more at [CalWater.com](http://CalWater.com) ([www.calwater.com/conservation/drought/](http://www.calwater.com/conservation/drought/))

### **Water restrictions based on overall water district, not our neighborhood**

Cal Water Bayshore District includes San Mateo and cities such as Brisbane, South San Francisco and Redwood City that have smaller average lot sizes. Average water use for single family homes across the entire Bayshore district is around 250 gallons per day (gpd). Brisbane uses 175 gpd, Redwood City 292.

Household indoor use seems to average 150-200 gallons per day. It is primarily driven by size of household, efficiency of fixtures and household habits. Conservation sites suggest targeting 40 gpd per person. (This translates to about 1.6 CCF/person/month or 6.4 CCF on your water bill for a 4 person household.)

## Water restrictions (continued)

Water usage in all water districts is strongly correlated with lot size. Using 7,000 square feet (sf) average lot size (about 1/6 of an acre):

- 14 Peninsula districts with average lot sizes of less than 7,000 sf use an average of 270 gpd
- 13 Peninsula districts with average lot sizes 7,000 sf or more use an average of 407 gpd.

Hillsborough, Portola Valley and Woodside use an average of over 700 gpd. Their lot sizes average about 1/2 acre. They each have mandated restrictions of 36% (compared to our 16%).

San Mateo Park lot sizes ranked by size show the midpoint of the list at about 1/4 acre (the median). The average lot size in San Mateo Park is over 1/2 acre. Lot sizes in San Mateo Park are similar to those 3 water districts that mandated 36% reductions. It would not be surprising if San Mateo Park water use was similar.

At this point, we are not measured that way. Water districts are wrestling with how to be equitable in water cutbacks. Large lots with trees and shrubs contribute both to scenic beauty as well as wildlife habitat, absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> gases and other benefits. Water agencies have discussed targeting individual homes with high water usage instead of using district averages for conservation.

### **DIRECTORS, SAN MATEO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

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Margaret Handlery	(Secretary)	343-2455
Katherine Jones	(Treasurer)	558-8787
Dave Pearson	(Communications)	343-6418
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Cliff Robbins	(At Large)	208-2624
Kimball Statler	(Trees and Islands)	548-2427
Zehra Vahanvaty	(City Issues)	867-7920

San Mateo Park Website  
[www.sanmateopark.org](http://www.sanmateopark.org)  
Donations? Click on Contribute  
Join SanMateoPark.Nextdoor.com  
[www.nextdoor.com/join](http://www.nextdoor.com/join) Use Code: FCPYDB

## San Mateo Park: Why we enjoy it

When we re-launched our website we included a page on what makes San Mateo Park a great place to live. We listed what we most often hear from residents about what they like the most: walking in the neighborhood, a park-like feel created by the street and island trees, peace and quiet, great neighbors.

### **Beautiful trees and islands**

- Street Trees: Healthy, clear of litter and weeds
- Landscaping: beautiful, fitting in arid climate
- Ground covers or permeable material instead of macadam on sidewalks and walkways

### **Pleasant Walkability**

- Clear, passable sidewalks
- Stroller suitability
- Tree roots not unsafe
- Parking off street when possible
- Sidewalk access cleared of branches, ivy, etc
- No litter (dog or other)

### **Charming history and architecture**

- McLaren design of islands, park like setting
- 100+ year heritage, variety of architecture
- R1-A zoning, allowing preservation and density growth

### **Peace and quiet, privacy and convenience**

- Neighbors knowing neighbors
- Friendly neighbors who watch out for each other and their properties
- Dogs controlled for barking and late night noise
- Minimal noise before 8 am and later than 6 pm
- Minimal use of leaf blowers
- Nextdoor website participation

### **Safe driving**

- Driving slowly for safety around islands
- Understanding island traffic flow. Drive as if each intersection in the circle is a yellow caution light. Yield to cars already in or entering the circle when you arrive.
- Paying attention to street sign arrows showing proper traffic patterns

### **Park School**

- School property respected
- Dogs not allowed for sanitary reasons

What would you add to the list? What do you disagree with? Send us a note at

[Board@sanmateopark.org](mailto:Board@sanmateopark.org) or post ideas at [www.SanMateoPark.org](http://www.SanMateoPark.org) Click Neighbors

**What San Mateo Park residents can do about water restrictions:**

**Indoors:** do all the right things: shorter showers, fewer flushes, efficient fixtures, full loads, no water left running, fix leaks, etc. Cal Water minimum guaranteed *total* water use is 6 CCF per month (150 gallons/day). Much of that will be needed indoors. A target for indoors use: 40 gallons per person per day (1.6 CCF / person / month). Your indoor use goal? \_\_\_\_\_.

For the most significant impact, we must address our outdoor areas.  
Assess the water needs of your landscape. Design as if the 36% reduction might be coming:

**For every 100 square feet of landscaping: Annual Water Needs**

		A		B	= A x B/100
Type of landscape	Inches/year	CCF/yr	Gallons/yr	Your area?	Your water needs
Lawns & high water use plants	26"	2.17	1,625		
Moderate water use plants	14"	1.17	875		
Low water use plants	6"	0.5	375		
Your Landscape Totals					

**Assess your annual water deficit in CCF:**

Landscape water needs (table):	
Indoor use:	
Add for total water needs:	
Your water bill allocation (or use 6 CCF as goal);	
Your water deficit/surplus:	

Determine most economical, highest impact and most sustainable actions you can take

Install rainwater capture systems to store water for summer use on landscape

Install laundry to landscape system to use greywater for landscape

Redesign landscape for lower water use:

Most likely, replace the lawn

Install drip instead of spray

Create zones of similar water use plants

Mulch under plants (less evaporation)

Design for WELO (Water Efficient

Landscape Ordinance) even if doesn't apply.

Create catch basins and permeable surfaces to maximize ground absorption

**What should our objectives be, both for the SMPNA and for individual residents?**

- Keep San Mateo Park beautiful.

- Top SMPNA priority is the long-term viability of our island and street trees. We will ensure those are taken care of (and we assume you'll provide extra funds as needed)
- Residents might also focus on trees planted within the last 3-4 years or otherwise exhibiting signs of stress.

**How would we handle a 36% reduction?**

Most importantly, keep the landscape elements that define the park: trees, shrubs, hedges, canopies

- Let go of the thirsty plants, lawns
- Invest in technologies and tools to capture and reuse more water.

We are hoping that SMP residents will find a way to maintain the beauty of their property while adjusting to new realities.

There will be continuing rainy years and dry years. 2015 is an opportunity to invest in landscapes that thrive in our typical Mediterranean (dry summer) climate, rather than requiring water resources beyond our means. Lawns aren't sustainable. Colorful, interesting water-wise plants are available to retain the beauty. Cactus and succulents are

## San Mateo Park can do (continued)

enjoyed by many, but not everything needs to be southwestern natives. Plan now, prepare soon, plant in the Fall.

Right now, you might have an allowance of 24 CCF month (~600 gallons per day) due to your past history. Water agencies wrestle with equitable restrictions and water distributions. They may target specifically high water users on an absolute basis rather than % reductions.

Keep more water that hits your property on your property:

- Rainwater capture in barrels or tanks

- Absorbent permeable landscapes
- Capture sump pump discharges

Re-use household water for outdoor use

- Grey water Laundry to Landscape systems
- Bucket brigade (or pre-legal systems) for shower water, kitchen rinse/wash water
- Use bio-compatible soaps if you do this.

A great resource for the transition is Laura Allen's book, The Water Wise Home.

Available at bookstores and San Mateo Library. [www.SanMateoPark.org](http://www.SanMateoPark.org) has more ideas.

Dave Pearson, Director

## Water Math

- Water agencies deliver and bill for water in units of CCF (one hundred cubic feet)
- 1 cubic foot of water = ~7.5 gallons
- 1 CCF = ~ 750 gallons
- 1 CCF /month = ~ 25 gallons per day
- 6 CCF /month (150/gallons/day) is the current minimum guaranteed monthly water usage
- "Normal" rainfall in San Mateo is about 18" annually. Drought years? Half or less...
- 1,000 sf of roof receives 15 CCF of rainfall (11,250 gallons): some could be stored
- An 8 foot tall, 8 foot diameter round tank holds 4 CCF or 3,000 gallons.
- A 4 foot tall, 4 foot diameter round tank holds 0.5 CCF or 375 gallons.
- Greywater Laundry to landscape system: 8 gallons per load @ 3 loads per week @ 52 weeks = ~ 1,250 gallons annually for top loading washers
- Greywater Shower system: 5 minute showers @ 2 gallons/minute = 10 gallons per shower @ 3 person household each showering daily: = ~ 11,000 gallons annually
- An acre is 43,560 square feet. An acre-foot is 436 CCF or 327,000 gallons. Water agencies use acre-feet when they analyze reservoir capacity.

## Emergency Preparedness: Water sources

Let's talk about that water you've stored in case of an emergency, such as an earthquake, when water mains may be broken or tap water tainted.

### How much water do you need?

One gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation (minimum 3 day supply). Children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more water.

A medical emergency might require more water.

Don't forget your pets! They need water; plan accordingly. (Pack a water bowl in your emergency kit for your dog or cat!)

### Storing water

You may well have a stash of bottled water somewhere in your house – now is the time to check the expiration labels. If it's commercially bottled "spring" or "drinking" water, the American Red Cross recommends that you can keep it stored for a year as long as the container isn't opened. Once opened, use it immediately.

### **Water does not keep forever!**

Water can be treated with water purification tablets. Water not commercially bottled should be replaced every six months. You may have a 55 gallon water barrel you treated with a water preserver concentrate that lasts five years. Check the date – if the water is over five years old, use the water in your garden and refill the barrel, using a new bottle of water preserver. Be sure to label the new date five years out so you will remember to refill it if you haven't used it before then. Just don't waste that 55 gallons of water!

### **If you get caught short of clean water:**

Do you know the location of your residence's incoming water valve? You'll need to shut it off to stop contaminated water from entering your home if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines. Check radio or TV news to see if a "boil water" notice has been issued. If necessary, use the water in your hot-water tank, pipes and ice cubes. As a last resort, you can use water in the reservoir tank of your toilet (not the bowl).

**Water in your home's pipes:** let air into the plumbing by turning on the faucet in your house at the highest level. A small amount of water will trickle out. Obtain water from the lowest faucet in the house until the stored supply is depleted.

**Water in your hot-water tank:** be sure the electricity or gas is off, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot-water faucet. Do not turn on the gas water heater or electricity when the tank is empty.

### **Do not drink water from:**

Radiators, hot water boilers (home heating system), or water beds (fungicides added to the water or chemicals in the vinyl may make water unsafe for use)

### **Can you drink swimming pool water?**

Sources agree that water from swimming pools and spas can be used for personal hygiene, cleaning, and related uses. Under certain conditions, drinking swimming pool water may be safe, if you treat the water properly. Immediately following a disaster, and for a period of days, most swimming pool water will

be in fairly good condition, assuming the owners have been properly maintaining their pools. Depending on the outdoor temperature, and time of year, after a few days without filtering or additional chlorine, the pool water will begin to deteriorate and begin to grow some algae. This deterioration can be greatly minimized if the pool is immediately covered after losing power. Some pool owners already have covers; if you do not, a sufficient size tarp will work (a good preparation to make). A cover will help keep sunlight from breaking down the existing chlorine in the water. Chlorine breaks down fairly quickly when exposed to the UV rays in sunlight. Normally, the chlorine level should be kept at about 3 to 5 ppm (parts per million), while 4 ppm or less is considered safe to drink. You can check this with a swimming pool test kit. For even better safety, treat it prior to drinking by boiling it for one minute. This hypothetical discussion though presumes that you are without power, so boiling may be a challenge. Think, 'camp stove'. It is also a great idea to filter the water with a quality drinking water filter, which will remove bacteria and pathogens and make it taste better.

When the pool pump will not operate, chlorine tablets floating around in their dispenser container will help to keep some level of chlorine in the pool. But without filtration and agitation, its effectiveness will be diminished.

While you don't want to rely on a swimming pool for a backup source for drinking water, it may be reasonable to use as a drinking source if it was reasonably maintained, properly treated and you take your own safety precautions. Note that neighbors' pools might be less well maintained.

**Tip of the Day:** It's a good idea to label and date all stored water bottles or containers!

Sources: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/earthquakes/food.asp> and Ken Jorgustin, Modern Survival Blog, <http://modernsurvivalblog.com/preps/drinking-swimming-pool-water-in-an-emergency/>

Katherine Jones, Director

## Thanks to our generous donors in 2014!

All your efforts are truly appreciated. As you know, dues are entirely voluntary and are not a condition of membership in the SMPNA. But the funds do support our many activities.

We recognize 3 levels of contributions. 1) Regular dues, 2) McLaren donors contribute \$100 or more, 3) Park Patrons are McLaren Members that contribute \$200 or more.

You can make your 2015 donation through the form at the end of this newsletter or by using PayPal. Use the "Donate Now" page on our website, and it will bring up the PayPal interface. All contributions are eligible as tax deductible to charitable organizations. We are an IRS 501(c)(3) public benefit tax exempt organization: IRS ID# 56-2631949

WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY. APOLOGIES FOR ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS.

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*We strongly encourage the use of Paypal. A link can be found on our website: [sanmateopark.org](http://sanmateopark.org)*

If you prefer to send a check (payable to SMPNA), please fill out the form below and mail to:

SMPNA  
P.O. Box 1271  
San Mateo, CA 94401

As always, dues are voluntary and are not a condition of membership. Please note that dues will be credited for tax purposes and recognition for the calendar year in which they are received. Your contribution is tax deductible (IRS ID#56-2631949)

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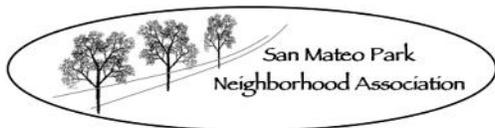
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DUES: \$50 \_\_\_\_ McLaren members: \$100 \_\_\_\_ Patron: \$200 \_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS: email [board@sanmateopark.org](mailto:board@sanmateopark.org) or comment below.

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P.O. Box 1271  
San Mateo, CA 94401

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 2015  
DUES? YOUR TREES NEED  
YOU!**