

LESS LAWN MORE APPEAL

Fact Sheet: New Rules, New Opportunities for Property Managers

A statewide law—AB 1572—asks Property Managers to rethink unused lawn. Starting January 1, 2027, potable (drinking) water may no longer be used to irrigate nonfunctional lawn, which refers to irrigated lawn that is purely ornamental and not regularly used for recreation or public gatherings, such as lawn areas in parking lots or along rights-of-way, or near entrances.



Rockrose *Cistus spp*

This fact sheet explains what is changing and how to prepare.

Complying with the new rules is a smart investment in your property, your brand, and your community. It provides an opportunity to create vibrant landscapes that promote biodiversity, mitigate drought risks, showcase environmental stewardship, and enhance your property's reputation and resilience.

By taking early action, you can reduce water bills and pesticide use, access rebates, enhance the customer experience, and lead the way in creating sustainable, water-wise landscapes.

SAY GOODBYE TO WATER-THIRSTY LAWN, AND HELLO TO POSSIBILITIES

Envision What Can Be:

- More inviting and usable spaces
- Enhanced property values and visual appeal
- Supporting pollinators, shade, and local habitat
- Establishing a unique visual identity
- Reduced water use and lower water and maintenance bills
- Promoting climate resilience
- Complying with policy and securing the future of California's water

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T COMPLY?

Failure to comply with AB 1572's nonfunctional lawn irrigation restrictions can result in civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per day (California Water Code §1846). Enforcement specifics may vary by water agency; please contact your local provider for details.



WHAT IS NONFUNCTIONAL LAWN?

For commercial properties, this often includes:

- Entryway lawns
- Lawn along curbs, walls, or fences
- Medians in parking lots, between buildings, or near sidewalks
- Lawn with no specific use or purpose

IMPORTANT DATES:

January 1, 2028: Irrigation of nonfunctional lawns at CII properties must stop.

January 1, 2029: Irrigation of nonfunctional lawns at HOA common areas must stop.

You are technically not required to complete landscape conversions by these dates, but it is strongly encouraged that you prepare to protect any trees in the areas of nonfunctional lawn.

Contact your local water provider for help and advice.





Photo by Laurie Meyerpeter



Photo by Tece Markel



Photo by Christine Kohn

IDEAS FOR A BEAUTIFUL, WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE

Many Property Managers are using this transition to create colorful, water-wise landscapes that enhance the aesthetic of their properties. Ideas include:

- Native and low-water-use plants with seasonal color
- Shade trees and flowering shrubs
- Paths, benches, and gathering areas
- Rain gardens, bioswales, and dry stream beds
- Weather-based sprinkler timer, drip systems, and pressure regulators to optimize efficiency
- Theme-based landscaping areas such as “California Native Garden” or “Pollinator Oasis”
- Signage, such as plant markers or QR codes, that provides educational content reinforcing your property's commitment to sustainability

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

STEP 1: Identify Nonfunctional Lawn: Walk your properties and note any areas of lawn that are primarily decorative, irregularly shaped, and narrow.

STEP 2: Develop a Landscape Plan: Talk with your tenants and employees to develop a shared vision for the transformed areas. Contract with landscape professionals who have experience in creating low-water-use and water-wise landscapes.

STEP 3: Self-Certify Lawn Areas: Create a list of the functional areas of lawn. Develop a record of how each area is used and document planned changes to the nonfunctional areas.

STEP 4: Prioritize areas for transformation: Focus on areas with high water use, those with irregular dimensions (inefficient to irrigate), or high-visibility but nonfunctional areas, such as entrances and exits, that can be made into attention-grabbing landscapes.

STEP 5: Water Agency Rebates: Check with your local water provider to identify rebates and technical assistance for lawn replacement and irrigation upgrades.

REAL PROPERTIES, REAL RESULTS

Westfield Galleria in Roseville replaced over 150,000 square feet of lawn, roughly the size of three football fields, to create a stunning water-wise landscape. The Galleria received a rebate from the City of Roseville to help with the cost of transformation.



Photo by Westfield Galleria

- Saves an estimated 8 million gallons of water per year
- Improved curb appeal and visual look of the Galleria
- The new landscape uses fewer chemicals and supports local species
- Establishes Westfield Galleria Roseville as a concerned and responsible member of the community

Scan the QR code to watch an overview video on the transformation:



YOUR WATER PROVIDER IS HERE TO HELP

Many water agencies offer:

- Lawn replacement and irrigation rebates
- Free site visits and landscape reviews
- Sample plant lists and design templates
- Tree protection tips and irrigation strategies



NonFunctionalTurfCA.org