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Jurupa Community Services District imposes water conservation measures

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The Press-Enterprise

MIRA LOMA - The Jurupa Community Services District board of directors on Monday passed a water-conservation ordinance.

Effective immediately, customers may not water between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., cannot hose down driveways or sidewalks, and must repair leaks.

The vote was 4-1.

Director Ken McLaughlin, who said he did not believe it was appropriate for the district to assume the role of "water police," cast the dissenting vote.

"I want to educate people. I want to partner with people to let people know what's the right thing to do," McLaughlin said. "I don't want to be getting into fines or ticketing people."

But other directors said a tougher approach was needed in a time of diminishing water supplies.

"The days of turning on the sprinkler for your kids at 2 in the afternoon are over," director Betty Anderson said.

No one from the public addressed the board.

At the suggestion of director R.M "Cook" Barela, customers who waste water will receive two warning notices before being cited.

The community services district became the latest Inland water agency to adopt measures aimed at getting customers to cut use because of California's drought.

The cities of Corona, Moreno Valley and San Jacinto already have water conservation ordinances in place, and the Rubidoux Community Services District might adopt a similar ordinance by the end of the year.

The ordinance lays out four levels of drought conditions, with Level 1 outlining a series of voluntary use restrictions to achieve up to a 10 percent water reductions.

Levels 2, 3 and 4 would have to be activated by a vote of the board. The levels -- labeled "drought alert," "drought critical," and "drought emergency" -- would impose mandatory restrictions such as limiting lawn and landscape watering to three days per week, banning the use of ornamental fountains and requiring residents to take their cars and vehicles to commercial car washes, which often use recycled water.

Violations of the ordinance can bring fines ranging from $100 to $500 or installation of a flow-restricting device; or administrative or criminal penalties.