

## LADWP

In June of 2015, I received an insulting letter from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power telling me that I was using too much water, similar to the email that I received from them a few months later, which is included here toward the end.

I spent three hours on the phone unable to connect to anyone at LADWP who knew anything. I then wrote the letter and sent the photos on the following pages.

When five months later, I received the email at the end of this document, I again sent the same letter and photos to LADWP demanding a response this time. My response follows the email.

LADWP is threatening to “Publish my name” as a way to embarrass me into reducing water use. Since I have done all that I can and my landscape, which cost a lot of time and money to install, is dying, embarrassing me will not result in reduced water use. I will sue Mr. Adams and the LADWP for libel.

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, before you publish my name in an attempt to embarrass me, you had better know the facts, and have deep pockets.

LADWP  
PO Box 51111  
Los Angeles, CA 90051-0100

June 14, 2015

Dear Sir,

I am very upset by this insulting letter that I received from LADWP. When I designed my landscape and irrigation system eight (8) years ago, I did it with the intent to conserve water and several years before our current drought and mandatory cutbacks. I spent some time designing it to conserve water. I have numerous zones so each gets just what is needed for that zone. Sprinklers are arranged to minimize watering of walkway.

I have many times tried to resolve these issues with DWP, but they are not cooperative. One day I spent three hours on the phone with DWP trying to understand your one size fits all rules. No one at DWP understood the regulations, how they were derived, or even what bubbler and water efficient sprinklers were. All anyone could tell me was, "Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, 4 pm - 9 am, 8 minutes" like well trained parrots. I want to meet with the person who developed these water inefficient, one size fits all, unrealistic rules that do not have a basis in hydraulics, plants, native California plants, or sprinkler systems. They are completely arbitrary, inefficient, and contradictory.

These rules are completely arbitrary based only on 8 minutes. There is a big difference between 8 minutes with a fire hose and 8 minutes with a drip. The water allotments should be based on gallons per plant (or area of plant) per month. Not all plants require water on the same schedule.

My part of town is given a higher allotment because it's the hottest, driest, windiest part of town, yet we are still given the same 8 minutes to apply this larger allotment. This is silly. You acknowledge that we need more water, but don't allow more time to apply it. These rules are arbitrary and based only on a simple minded key to save water by not using it.

You encourage people to plant water conserving native plants, then refuse to acknowledge that even new California natives need extra water the first few years. Then you develop a water schedule that will kill the very plants that you are encouraging people to plant. Native plants want an occasional deep soak, but you only allow a frequent shallow moistening. Half of the native California plants that I have planted in the last six years have died. Any water used on a plant that dies is wasted water. I've even lost cactus.

Eight minutes, three times a week might be acceptable for turf grass, but it is not the proper way to water plants with deep roots. You want people to use plants with deep roots that can survive droughts, then mandate we water them like grass. Does the person who wrote these rules have only turf grass in his/her property?

One of your unthinking bureaucrats accused me of wanting an exception so that I could have a "lush landscape." I resent this insulting statement by someone who hasn't even seen my dry,

dying, desolate landscape. Of my approximately 9,000 square feet of dirt, almost half receives little or no sprinkler water. My lawn is 900 square feet on the front hill and 300 square feet around a large tree in the corner of my vegetable garden, 1,200 total. These I water eight minutes two to three times a week. My only "lush" corner, of about 500 square feet, gets watered 24 minutes once a week ( $8 \times 3 = 24$ ). My 1,200 square foot vegetable garden gets watered once or twice a week, depending on how recently I planted - there is also drip irrigation in the vegetable garden that is used when necessary. The bubblers and drips run longer one to four times a month because they are conserving sprinklers and were never designed to deliver adequate water in a short period of time, but are designed to deliver adequate water at a rate that will soak in and not be wasted.

I replaced a new sprinkler line with a new line to water only half of what was previously watered. California wild flowers now grow in the unwatered half.

I have a number of shrubs and trees watered with bubblers. These bubblers deliver water to the base of each plant slowly so that it does not blow away, spray onto leaves to evaporate, or erode the hill. When I contacted the manufacturer to ask how many bubblers can be on a single line, I was told "It doesn't matter, just run them longer." Now every time I run these water conserving bubblers, my neighbor complains that I am running them more than 8 minutes. 25 heads in eight minutes comes to twenty seconds per tree, this isn't enough. After three years, these 50 trees still are not established and are almost bare because they have never received adequate water. If they aren't tied to the fence, they blow over in the heavy winds because they still have no roots.

I started with almost no vegetation and have added plants in phases over several years so that I am only applying extra water to establish new plants in small areas at a time. Since much of these new plantings have never received adequate water, many are still struggling.

My site is hilly. I use the low flow drips and bubblers to deliver water slowly so as to not erode the slope and to allow the plants adequate time to soak in the water that would otherwise run down the hill. And you tell me I am irresponsible for this.

I can replace my water conserving sprinklers with a new system that will deliver large quantities of water evenly in 8 minutes, but it will use more water, erode the hillside, and will over water or underwater some plants.

Aside from landscape water, we haven't washed the cars in several years, don't run water unnecessarily when washing or brushing teeth, maintain the plumbing, have low flush toilets, don't hose down hard surfaces. There are plants that are only watered when I change aquarium water or with the bucket I fill when waiting for hot water. When I wash vegetables, I save the water for the compost boxes which are otherwise too dry to compost properly. I very much resent being told that I am wasting water.

Sincerely  
Kenneth Larson - San Fernando Valley Native

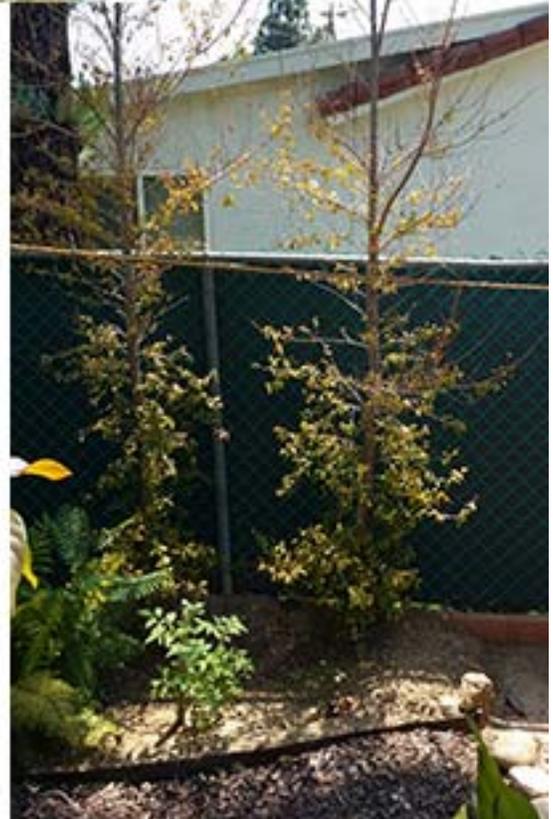


Large parts of my yard get watered once a week, once a month, occasionally, or only when it rains. LADWP is telling me to cut back to twice a week as a way to use less water. This is all too “lush” for LADWP.



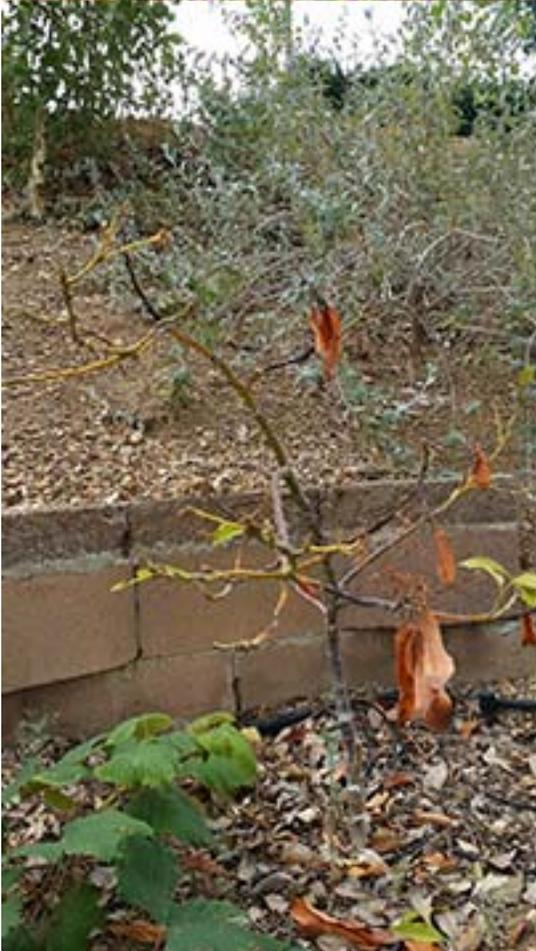


I planted these 50 trees three years ago, before the drought. They have received so little water that they have yet to be established and still have no roots or foliage. LADWP says that I should cut back on water.





At left, my Bougainvillea that LADWP calls "lush". Above, my neighbor's Bougainvillea that LADWP says is the goal.



Left, second Avocado to die in this location. Right, first and second Avocado in this location.





## **YOUR COOPERATION IS URGENTLY NEEDED**

Dear LADWP Customer:

**Our records indicate that your residential water use is among the top 1% of all water users in the City of Los Angeles. While LADWP strives to keep customer records confidential, names, addresses and water usage of high water users like you may soon be required to be reported to the public and the media.** We are bringing this to your attention to urge you to take immediate action to reduce your water use and ensure you are complying with the City of LA Mandatory Water Conservation Ordinance.

Angelenos have answered the call to conserve during the drought and have achieved record water conservation levels, reducing overall water use by 16% over the past year. However, with your residential water use among the Top 1% of all customers, we strongly encourage you take immediate steps to cut your water use.

High water users are becoming increasingly the focus of public and media attention and there have been calls to publicly identify the City's highest residential water users. In addition, the LADWP regularly releases the identity of customers who have been found to have violated the water conservation ordinance. While your current status as an extremely high user has been withheld in accordance with current state public records law and the LADWP's customer privacy policy, changes to the City's water conservation ordinance could result in making your water use subject to disclosure in the future.

Act now and join the rest of Los Angeles in Saving the Drop. We all have a responsibility to do our part to conserve. Once again, **failure to reduce your water use could result in your name being publicly released.**

Please visit

[2. www.ladwp.com/wc](http://www.ladwp.com/wc) for more information about the City of Los Angeles' water conservation ordinance, water conservation tips and rebate programs. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the LADWP Customer Relations Office at 1-800-499-1544.

Thank you,

Martin L. Adams  
Senior Assistant General Manager – Water System

### **Key Provisions of the City of Los Angeles' Water Conservation Ordinance:**

- Outdoor watering is allowed three days per week: Odd-number address are allowed to irrigate on Monday, Wednesday, Friday;

- Even-number address are allowed to irrigate on Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday
- All watering is prohibited from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.;
- Watering with sprinklers is limited to 8 minutes per station per watering day;
- No water runoff, such as from leaks, vehicle washing, or excessive irrigation;
- No washing down of hardscape, such as walkways, driveways, and parking areas;
- Outdoor watering during periods of rain is prohibited;
- Allowing leaks from any pipe or fixture to go unrepaired is prohibited;
- Ponds and ornamental water features must use a recirculating system.

Please Note: Although the current ordinance allows watering three days a week, LADWP is urging all customers to reduce outdoor watering to two days a week, and to check for water leaks indoors and out.

Saving water will help protect our water supply and reduce your costs as well.

# # #

*Please do not reply to this email. This email box is not monitored. If you would like to contact us, please visit [www.ladwp.com/ContactUs](http://www.ladwp.com/ContactUs) so that your email can be directed to the appropriate section.*

Martin L. Adams  
Senior Assistant General Manager - Water Systems  
PO Box 51111  
Los Angeles, CA 90051-0100

November 20, 2015

Mr. Adams,

Your email was as insulting as the letter that I received a few months ago. It is obvious that no one at DWP knows much about water use.

Half of the customers in LA are in apartments with no landscaping.

Of the other half, 75% of customers have smaller landscape areas.

Of the remaining 12 % of customers who have same or larger yards, only about 10% are in the hottest, driest, windiest section of the city requiring extra water to be even with the rest of the city.

So 1.2% of the customers are comparable to my need. So, even if my water use were the same as the rest of the city on a relative basis, I would be in the top 1%.

Your letter is insulting.

Please **reread** the letter that I sent 5 months ago. I am still awaiting a response.

Kenneth A. Larson  
Angry customer.

PS, I've already published your email and my letter.

WARNING: Do **not** publish my name unless you **also** publish my letter or I will get angrier and take all possible legal action!!!

AND I DEMAND A RESPONSE TO MY LETTER THIS TIME, stop hiding you DWP cowards.

I requested a meeting in my first letter and have not yet received a response to my request.

Stop threatening and talk.