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Turn back the clock on water waste

California American Water encourages customers to turn off their sprinklers when they turn back clocks

Sacramento (October 30, 2009) – Daylight savings time ends in the United States on Sunday, November 1 when clocks are set back one hour at 2:00 a.m. local daylight time, which becomes 1:00 a.m. local standard time. With the rainy season just getting underway, California American Water is launching a public awareness campaign to remind local residents to turn their sprinklers off – a simple step that can be done when you turn the clock back – to protect the environment while saving water and money during the winter months.

Irrigation experts encourage outdoor water users to reduce their irrigation run times and frequencies during the fall and early winter.

“Many of us continue to irrigate more than we need in September, October and November,” said California American Water general manager Andy Soule. “When compared to the peak water needs of June and July, outdoor water use in November should be reduced by 60 to 75 percent. Shorter days mean less sun - and your plants need less water.”

According to Soule, water company employees spot residents and businesses with their sprinklers running while it’s raining every year. “Not only do we see it happening, we see bills with hundreds or even thousands of gallons of daily water use, and when folks are using that much water in December or January, there’s only one likely explanation,” Soule said. “Sprinklers running in the winter account for a tremendous amount of water waste.”

“We want our metered customers to know they can avoid high water bills by controlling their outdoor use,” Soule said. “It’s good for their pocketbooks and good for the environment.”

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In fact, it's also good for home landscaping. Too much water can be more damaging to plants than drought. Landscaping experts estimate that 90 percent of plants killed die from overwatering. Soggy soil can prevent nutrients and air from reaching plant roots, inviting unwanted diseases such as root rot.

If there is a long break between rains, California American Water recommends manually watering landscape with a hose and a low-flow hose nozzle. One way to test if soil needs watering is by pushing a screwdriver into the ground. If it goes in easily, the soil is moist and doesn't need water.

California American Water offers a myriad of water and money saving programs for all its customers, including up to \$100 rebates on water efficient appliances.

Customers can also sign up for a Water Wise home or business water survey, where a company conservation specialist will go out to the residence and conduct a comprehensive water audit for free. The representative will check the property for leaks and other areas of potential water savings and provide the customer with an in-depth report on their water usage in addition to providing tips on things they can do to save water. Customers can visit the website, www.californiaamwater.com or call our conservation hotline at (916) 568-4201 for more information.

California American Water, a wholly owned subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), provides high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to more than 600,000 people.

Founded in 1886, American Water is the largest investor-owned U.S. water and wastewater utility company. With headquarters in Voorhees, N.J., the company employs more than 7,000 dedicated professionals who provide drinking water, wastewater and other related services to approximately 15 million people in 32 states and Ontario, Canada. More information can be found by visiting www.amwater.com.

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