

California Adopts Strict Rules to Reduce Lawns Amid Drought

The logo for "Turf" features the word in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A green grass blade graphic is integrated into the letter 'u'.The logo for "Tree Services" is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A small green leaf icon is placed above the 'i' in "Services". Below the main text is the tagline "Taking Tree Care to New Heights" in a smaller, lighter font.The logo for "Turf DesignBuild" features the word "Turf" in a small, orange, sans-serif font above the word "Design". "Design" is in a black, sans-serif font, and "Build" is in a large, bold, orange, sans-serif font.The logo for "PLOW" is in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly slanted to the right.

Source: www.TurfMagazine.com

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The era of lush, green lawns adorning new California homes moved a dramatic step closer to ending Wednesday, July 15.

Drought-tolerant plants must dominate lawns around new homes and businesses across California under new regulations unanimously approved by the [California Water Commission](#).

The new rules effectively limit the amount of turfgrass around newly constructed homes to 25 percent of landscaped area. Under prior rules, turfgrass could take up about one-third of landscaped area.

The restrictions will apply to all homes with more than 500 square feet of landscaped area—essentially, all new, single-family, detached homes in the state. Old rules only applied to new homes with more than 2,500 square feet of landscaped area. California homes, on average, feature about 2,500 square feet of landscaping, state officials said.

The new restrictions also effectively eliminate any turfgrass or other thirsty plants around new commercial and public development, with a few exceptions, state officials said.

Gov. Jerry Brown ordered the [California Department of Water Resources](#) to strengthen landscaping restrictions as part of his drought executive order in April. Beginning in December, municipalities will have to adopt rules that are at least as strict as the state's new "model ordinance."

The new rules will have little impact on existing residential landscaping, state officials said, but will apply to existing homes that undertake a project requiring permits and involving at least 2,500 square feet of landscaping. That would limit the impact of the rules on pool construction, among other projects, officials said.

The rules are designed to further reduce the amount of water used for outdoor landscaping, which accounts for roughly half of urban water consumption in California. They complement Brown's April order prohibiting the use of potable water to irrigate landscapes of new homes and buildings unless drip or microspray systems are used. The new regulations also require efficient sprinkler nozzles in irrigation systems, mostly ban turf in street medians and encourage use of recycled water.

Even without the new rules, Sacramento-area residents reduced their water use by 35 percent in June, the first month of mandatory statewide conservation, compared with June 2013, according to an analysis released Wednesday by the [Regional Water Authority](#), which represents two dozen water providers in the greater Sacramento area.

Read more [here](#).