



## Over 50% of residential water use is for landscape purposes.

Make your landscape water-wise. The WRASBC can show you how!

- Reference Library
- FREE Water Wise Landscape Plans
- Demonstration Garden (Dunne Park at 6th and Powell)
- Rebates on specific irrigation hardware
- Landscape classes
- FREE irrigation check
- Help with programming your irrigation controller

The next class will be about home composting. How much water you use is linked to the percentage of organic matter in your soil. Sustained plant growth requires slow release of water into the soil. Healthy plants in a moist bed rich in organic material need watering less frequently.

This class will be on **Saturday, April 16th at the Briggs Building, Room #1, 4th and San Benito Street**  
To register go to:  
<http://www.gavilance.com>  
Or call (408) 852-2801

You can also shop at the **Hollister's Downtown Associations Plant Sale & Garden Expo on Saturday, April 16th from 9am—2pm** in front of the Briggs Building. Experts will be on hand to guide you to purchase water saving plants. Come by the WRASBC booth.



## Where's all the Rain?

At the beginning of winter, there were high hopes this year's El Niño weather pattern, one of the strongest in recorded history, would give California a much needed shot of rain water, something that's been in short supply for years. This year is on track to be a rather normal year in terms of rainfall and snowfall totals.

Meteorologist Michelle Mead, with the National Weather Service in Sacramento says one "normal year" is not going to save California from a four-year drought. "It's definitely good to see, but we need a lot more to really wipe out the drought impacts of dried up wells, and water tables falling and things of that nature," says Mead. "That's not going to correct itself overnight, that's going to be years."

The drought conditions did improve slightly over the course of the rainy season. But now it's coming to an end, and the drought still lingers.

### Why didn't we get more rain and snow from this El Niño this winter?

Bill Patzert, climate expert at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, said a dry February doesn't mean El Niño has run its course, however. In the 1983 El Niño winter, "the big show really didn't happen until March and April. I'm still holding out hope."

Patzert said the timing of the precipitation varies with the intensity of the El Niño pattern, which is a function of warmer-than-usual water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. In 1998, the water temperatures peaked in November and much of the rain fell in February. In 1983, it peaked in January - as it did this year - and the bulk of the rain came in March and April.

El Niños are unpredictable and any long-range weather forecast is suspect. The nexus of warm water in the Pacific is further west than usual this year. That is a big factor in determining where the rain will fall. Often El Niño brings heavy rain to Southern California; this year it's been rainier in Northern California, and portions of the Pacific Northwest have gotten record precipitation.

It's not clear why the warm water is so far west this year, and it's not clear why that's creating such unusual weather patterns.

"We don't know all the answers," Patzert said. "This has sort of become the poster child that all El Niños are different."

Even if the rains return with a vengeance, Patzert doesn't expect El Niño to end the drought. "Everybody expected this El Niño to be the great...drought-buster, but that was never going to happen. No matter how successful the rainfall might be we were still going to be in a drought when it was all over...Lake Mead has never been this low before. Lake Oroville and Lake Shasta are not going to fill up no matter what."

So, the overall message is; **we need to be vigilant with our water conservation efforts.** Water will be in short supply this year no matter what happens in March and April. We saw dramatic water use reductions from our community over the summer, but this winter we have seen that effort slowdown.

Water Resources Association  
San Benito County  
30 Mansfield Road  
Hollister, CA 95023  
(831) 637-4378  
[www.wrasbc.org](http://www.wrasbc.org)

*Representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District, and San Benito County Water District.*

## WRASBC FREE Services & Rebates:



### Turf Removal Rebate

LOCAL FUNDING DEPLETED FOR  
TURF REMOVAL REBATE AS OF 8/1/15  
STATE FUNDING IS AVAILABLE. GO TO:  
[SAVEOURWATERREBATES.COM](http://SAVEOURWATERREBATES.COM)

### Landscape Hardware Rebates

The Water Resources Association has rebates on hose timers, rain sensors and MP Rotator irrigation nozzles and sprinkler bodies with pressure regulators. 50% rebate (up to \$100) on qualifying products.



### Free Water Wise Landscape Plans

The Water Resources Association has FREE water wise landscape plans. Three different garden design concepts (\$500 value). Installing a water wise garden will save water and money, plus they require less maintenance time.



### Home Water Survey (Our most popular service!)

The Survey includes: irrigation check, suggested watering schedule, **leak check**, showerheads and faucet aerators, high-quality hose nozzle, water softener assistance



### Water Softener Assistance and Rebate Program

Have a WRASBC technician inspect and check your water softener to make sure it is set properly for hardness levels. Rebates are available for those customers transitioning to an offsite regeneration service or demolishing their self-regulating water softener that uses salt or potassium. Rebates: \$250-\$300



### High Efficiency Clothes Washer Rebates (Ends June 30, 2016)

These washers use half as much water as traditional top loading clothes washers. These machines also use less detergent and help us protect our groundwater supplies. Energy Star ® rated clothes washers qualify. Rebate: \$100

### Toilet Program (Free Toilets or Rebates)

Customers that have toilets that are 1992 or older qualify. These older toilets use from 3.5—7 gallons of water for each flush. New toilets flush from 1.28—1.6 gallons per flush. The Water Resources Association has free toilets or a \$75 rebate is available when you purchase your own.



### Green Business Certification:

The WRASBC is working together with the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce, San Benito County Integrated Waste Management and PG&E to assist, recognize and promote businesses and government agencies that volunteer to operate in a more environmentally responsible way.



### Additional Programs:

A Water Conservation Specialist is available to give presentations at schools, Service Clubs & local community organizations. Learn about the Water Cycle, our local water supply and water issues locally / state-wide. Fieldtrips to the reclamation plant and water treatment plant can also be arranged.

**\* Special Rules & Conditions apply, call for details. Rebates are subject to available funds**