Chapter 8.50 - LANDSCAPING INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE

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8.50.010 - Title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Lancaster Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.020 - Purpose and intent

In accordance with the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act (Government Code Sections 65591 et. seq.) the purpose and intent of this ordinance is to:

A. Promote the values and benefits of landscaping while recognizing the need to utilize water and other resources as efficiently as possible.

B. Use water efficiently without waste by setting a maximum applied water allowance as an upper limit for water use and reduce water use to the lowest practical amount.

C. Establish a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water efficient landscapes in new construction and significantly renovated projects;

D. Promote water management practices and water waste prevention for existing landscapes;

E. Implement water conservation policies contained in the city's general plan.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.030 - Definitions

For the purpose of carrying out the intent of this chapter, the words, phrases and terms included herein have the meaning ascribed to them in this article.

"Application rate" means the volume of water applied to a given area, measured in inches per minute, inches per hour, or gallons per hour.

"Applied water" means the quantity of water supplied by the irrigation system to the landscape.

"Anti-drain valve" means a valve located under a sprinkler head to hold water in the system to prevent drainage from sprinkler heads when the system is off.

"Certificate of completion" means the document required under Section 8.50.052 and 8.50.059.

"Certified landscape irrigation auditor" means a person certified to perform landscape irrigation audits by a recognized professional trade organization or other educational organization.

"Certified irrigation designer" means a person certified to design irrigation systems by a professional trade organization or other educational organization.

"Check valve" means a "one way" valve that prevents water from flowing backward through it. Spring loaded check valves are sometimes installed inside or at the inlet of sprinkler heads. The check prevents low head drainage.

"Common interest developments" means community apartment projects, condominium projects, planned developments and stock cooperatives per Civil Code Section 1353.8.

"Controller" means an automatic timing device used to remotely control valves or heads to set an irrigation schedule. A weather-based controller is a controller that uses evapotranspiration or weather data. A self-adjusting irrigation controller is a controller that uses sensor data (i.e., soil moisture sensor).

"Development proposal" shall mean an application for approval of a specific plan, subdivision, conditional use permit, site plan review, tentative tract map, parcel map or any other discretionary development permit or entitlement application which has been filed with and is pending consideration by the city.

"Drip irrigation" means any non-spray low volume irrigation system utilizing emission devices with a flow rate equal to or less than two gallons per hour.

"Ecological restoration project" means a project where the site is intentionally altered to establish a defined, indigenous, historic ecosystem.

"Effective precipitation" or "usable rainfall" means the portion of total precipitation that is used by the plants.

"Emitter" means a drip irrigation emission device that delivers water slowly from the system to the soil measured as gallons per hour.

"Established landscape" means the point at which plants in the landscape have developed significant roots growth into the soil. Typically, most plants are established after one or two years of growth.

"Estimated applied water use" means the portion of the estimated total water use that is derived from applied water, as described in the current city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards.

"Estimated total water use" means the annual total amount of estimated water needed to keep the plants in the landscaped area healthy. It is based upon such factors as the local evapotranspiration rate, the size of the landscaped area, the types of plants and the efficiency of the irrigation system, as described in the current city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation standard.

"ET adjustment factor" means a factor that, when applied to reference evapotranspiration, adjusts for plant factors and irrigation efficiency, two major influences upon the amount of water that needs to be applied to a target landscape. A combined plant mix with a site-wide average of 0.5 is the basis of the plant factor portion of this calculation.

"Evapotranspiration rate" means the quantity of water evaporated from adjacent soil and other surfaces and transpired by plants during a specific time.

"Flow rate" means the rate at which water flows through pipes, valves, or emission devices, measured in gallons per minute, gallons per hour, or cubic feet per second.

"Hardscape" means any durable surface material (pervious and non-pervious). Hardscape shall be considered in the determination of the maximum applied water allowance and storm water runoff flows.

"Hydrozone" shall mean a portion of the landscaped area having plants with similar water needs that are served by a valve or set of valves with the same schedule. A hydrozone may be irrigated or non-irrigated. For example, a naturalized area planted with native vegetation that will not need supplemental irrigation once established is a non-irrigated hydrozone.

"Infiltration rate" means the rate of water entry into the soil expressed as a depth of water per unit of time (i.e., inches per hour).

"Irrigation efficiency" means the measurement of the amount of water beneficially used divided by the amount of water applied. Irrigation efficiency is derived from measurements and estimates of irrigation system characteristics and management practices.

"Landscape documentation package" means the documents required under Section 8.50.054.

"Landscape area" means all of the irrigated planting and turf areas, water features and up to ten (10) percent of the square footage of pervious non-irrigated planting areas in a landscape design plan subject to the maximum applied water allowance (MAWA) calculation. The ten (10) percent of non-irrigated planting area shall be added to the low water use hydrozone area, used in the landscape documentation package. The following is not included in the landscaped area: footprints of buildings or structures, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, decks, patios, gravel or stone walks, other pervious or non-pervious hardscape and other non-irrigated areas designated for non-development (i.e., open spaces). Excessive uses of impervious areas are discouraged as it will increase storm water runoff. Designated recreation areas and areas permanently and solely dedicated to edible plants such as orchards and vegetable gardens are subject to the MAWA with an ET adjustment factor not to exceed 1.0.

"Landscape architect" means a person who holds a license to practice landscape architecture in the state under the authority of Government Code Section 5615 (Landscape Architects Practice Act).

"Landscape contractor" means a person licensed (i.e., C-27 license) by the state to construct, maintain, repair, install, or subcontract the development of landscape systems and facilities per Business and Professionals Code, Section 7058 and 7059.

"Landscape irrigation audit" shall mean a process to perform site inspections, evaluate irrigation systems and develop efficient irrigation systems. At a minimum, the audit shall be in accordance with the California Landscape Water Management Program as described in the landscape irrigation auditor handbook, the entire document that is hereby incorporated by reference. (See landscape irrigation auditor handbook, Department of Water Resources, Water Conservation Office, 2004)

"Landscape project" means a project, for the purposes of this ordinance, meeting the requirements under Section 8.50.040.

"Low volume irrigation" means any irrigation system with a flow rate equal to or less than 0.75 inches per hour, including drip irrigation, subsurface drip, micro-sprinklers and similar irrigation systems.

"Low water use plant material" shall mean trees, shrubs and ground covers that survive with a limited amount of supplemental water, as recommended by the city of Lancaster plant list, or as identified in the most recent edition of the following publication: Sunset Western Garden Book, Sunset Books, Lane Publishing Co., Menlo Park, California.

"Maximum applied water allowance" means, for design purposes, the upper limit of annual applied water for the established landscaped area as specified in the current city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards. It is based upon the area's reference evapotranspiration, the ET adjustment factor and the size of the landscaped area. The estimated applied water use shall not exceed the maximum applied water allowance.

"Mined-land reclamation projects" means any surface mining operation with a reclamation plan approved in accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975.

"Mulch" means any organic material such as leaves, bark, straw or inorganic mineral materials, such as rocks, gravel and decomposed granite, left loose and applied to the soil surface for the beneficial purposes of reducing evaporation and suppressing weeds.

"Operating pressure" means the pressure at which an irrigation system is designed by the manufacturer to operate.

"Overspray" means the water that is delivered beyond the target area, wetting pavements, walks, structures, or other non-targeted areas.

"Plant factor" means a factor that, in combination with irrigation efficiency, when multiplied by reference evapotranspiration, estimates the amount of water used by plants. For purposes of this ordinance, the plant factor of low water use plants ranges from 0.0 to 0.3, the plant factor of moderate water use plants ranges from 0.4 to 0.6, and the plant factor of high water use plants ranges from 0.7 to 1.0.

"Precipitation rate" means the rate of rainfall measured in inches per hour.

"Project applicant" means the individual or entity submitting a landscape documentation package required under Section 8.50.054, to request a permit, plan check, or design review from the city. A project applicant may be the property owner or his/her designee.

"Rain sensor" or **"rain sensing shutoff device"** means a component that automatically suspends the irrigation event when it rains.

"Recreational area" means portions of parks, playgrounds, sports fields, golf course, or schoolyards in public and private projects where turf provides a playing surface or serves other high use recreational purposes.

"Recycled water or reclaimed water" means treated or recycled waste water of a quality suitable for nonpotable uses such as landscape irrigation and water features. This water is not intended for human consumption.

"Reference evapotranspiration" or "ETo" means a standard measurement of environmental parameters that affect the water use of plants. ETo is given in inches per day, month, or year, and is an estimate of the evapotranspiration of a large field of four-to-seven-inch tall, cool season turf that is well-watered. Reference evapotranspiration is used as the basis of determining the maximum applied water allowances so that regional differences in climate can be accommodated.

"Rehabilitated landscapes" means any modification to existing landscaping that requires a permit, plan check, or design review and meets the requirements of Section 8.50.040.

"Runoff" means water that is not absorbed by the soil or landscape to which it is applied and flows from the landscape area. For example, runoff may result from water that is applied at too great a rate (application rate exceeds infiltration rate) or when there is a slope. Grading and landscape shall be designed to minimize runoff.

"Soil moisture sensor or sensing device" means a device that measures the amount of water in the soil.

"Soil texture" means the classification of soil based on its percentage of sand, silt and clay.

"Sprinkler head" means a device that delivers water through a nozzle.

"Static water pressure" means the pipeline or municipal water supply pressure when water is not flowing or at rest.

"Station" means an area served by one valve or by a set of valves that operate simultaneously.

"Turf" means a groundcover surface of mowed grass. Annual bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, red fescue and tall fescue are common cool-season grasses. Bermuda grass, kikyu grass, seashore paspalum, St. Augustine grass, zoysia grass and Buffalo grass are common warm-season grasses.

"Valve" means a device used to control the flow of water in the irrigation system. It may also mean all of the sprinklers or emitters in a line controlled by the valve.

"Water use efficiency statement" means a narrative summary of the water use efficiency practices to be applied in a landscape project.

"Water conserving plant species" means a plant species identified as using less water than plants in the same water use category.

"Water efficient landscape worksheet" means the document described in the current city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.040 - Applicability

A. Except as provided in subparagraph B herein below, this chapter shall apply to the following:

(1) All new construction and rehabilitated landscaping for public agency and private development projects with a landscape area equal to or greater than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet; therefore requiring a permit, plan check, and/or design review;

(2) New construction and rehabilitated landscapes which are developer-installed in single-family and multi-family residential projects with a landscape area equal to or greater than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet requiring a permit, plan check, and/or design review;

(3) New construction and rehabilitated landscapes which are homeowner-provided and/or homeowner-hired landscaping in single-family and multi-family residential projects with a landscape area equal to or greater than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet, therefore requiring a permit, plan check, and/or design review;

(4) Existing landscapes with a landscape area equal to or greater than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet are limited to Sections 8.50.070 and 8.50.081

(5) Cemeteries. Recognizing the special landscape management needs of cemeteries, new cemeteries are limited to completing the water efficient landscape worksheet and the landscape and irrigation maintenance schedules found in the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards and to meeting the requirements of Sections 8.50.061 and 8.50.062. Existing cemeteries are limited to the provisions of Section 8.50.071. Where recycled water is reasonably available, as determined by the director of public works, all cemeteries shall use recycled water for landscape irrigation purposes;

(6) All existing improved properties that are purchased by the city under the home foreclosure program for resale as low-moderate income homes.

B. This section shall not apply to:

(1) Registered historical sites;

(2) Ecological restoration projects that do not require permanent irrigation systems;

(3) Mined-land reclamation projects that do not require a permanent irrigation system;

(4) Any project with a landscaped area less than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet;

(5) Any project whose landscaping and water features is supplied solely from recycled water systems;

(6) Homeowner-provided and homeowner-hired landscaping at single-family and multi-family residential projects less than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet.

C. Required Approval for Projects. No development proposal shall be approved unless the person or entity authorized to grant approval therefore finds that the project satisfies the criteria set forth in the provisions of this chapter.

D. Processing Procedures and Submittal Requirements. As a condition of approval for any development proposal, the applicant shall submit landscape plans meeting the requirements listed below to the planning department for review.

E. Residential Landscaping. As a condition of approval for any residential development proposal, the applicant shall submit landscape plans for all areas other than footprints of buildings or structures, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, decks, patios, gravel or stone walks, other pervious or non-pervious hardscape and other approved non-irrigated areas designated for non-development (i.e., open spaces); including front, rear and side yards.

(Ord. No. 928, § 1, 7-28-09; Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.050 - Provisions for new construction or rehabilitated landscapes

Landscape projects subject to Section 8.50.040 are also subject to all of the provisions set forth in the provisions of this chapter unless explicitly exempted, and shall meet the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards which shall be adopted by separate resolution of the city council.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.051 - Compliance with landscape documentation package

Prior to construction, the project applicant shall submit a landscape documentation package to the city public works department that meets all the criteria and specifications of this chapter. The specific format of the documentation package shall comply with the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.052 - Compliance with the certificate of completion

A. The project applicant shall:

(1) Prior to backfilling, have a licensed landscape architect, certified irrigation auditor, or licensed landscape contractor conduct a preliminary field observation of the irrigation system;

(2) Upon project installation, have a licensed landscape architect or licensed landscape contractor conduct a final field observation for the approval of the certificate;

(3) Upon project installation, have a certified irrigation auditor conduct a landscape irrigation audit as required under Section 8.50.062

(4) Submit the signed certificate of completion to the city for approval;

(5) Receive the certificate of occupancy or equivalent from the city;

(6) Submit copies of the approved certificate of completion to the local retail water purveyor and the property owner or his/her designee.

B. The city will:

(1) Receive the signed certificate of completion from the project applicant;

(2) Conduct a field inspection of the project;

(3) Approve the certificate of completion;

(4) Issue a certificate of occupancy, or equivalent, to the project applicant.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.053 - Waivers and variances

The director of public works may administratively waive or modify one or more requirements of the ordinance when unusual difficulties make their strict application impossible or impracticable, and upon determination that the waiver or variance is consistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.054 - Landscape documentation package

The landscape documentation package shall include those documents contained within the current city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.055 - Soil management plan

A soil management plan that addresses the soil attributes of the project site shall include a laboratory soil analysis and an on-site assessment with a statement of recommendations by a qualified soil

specialist. A soil management plan meeting the following criteria shall be submitted as part of the landscape documentation package:

A. A laboratory soil analysis of soil samples from the project site, prior to installation, that evaluates physical and chemical properties shall be required. At a minimum, the soil analysis report shall include:
   (1) Soil texture (percent clay, silt, sand), indicating the percentage of organic matter;
   (2) Approximate soil infiltration rate (either measured or derived from the soil texture infiltration rate tables). A range of infiltration rates shall be noted where appropriate;
   (3) pH;
   (4) Total soluble salts;
   (5) Other soil physical or chemical properties relevant to improving water use efficiency and maintaining plant health (e.g., conductivity, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sodium, sulfur, etc.);

B. A laboratory soil analysis may be excluded if a qualified soil specialist or scientist provides a certified statement addressing reasons for not completing such a soil analysis;

C. Prior to installation, an on-site soil assessment by a qualified soil specialist that identifies soil attributes or conditions that may minimize water use efficiency or limit plant growth shall be required. The on-site soil assessment shall:
   (1) Identify planting or turf areas that may need amendment;
   (2) Provide a statement of recommendations to correct or improve soil conditions (i.e., applying organic compost as a soil amendment in planting and turf areas);
   (3) Conduct a further analysis of soil conditions (i.e., soil profile, hardpan, bulk density, soil toxicity, salinity, etc.), where applicable;

D. A project applicant shall implement the recommendations from the on-site soil assessment and apply any relevant information from the on-site soil assessment to the design plans.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.056 - Landscape design plan

For the efficient use of water, a landscape shall be carefully designed and planned for the intended function of the project. A landscape design plan meeting the following design criteria and specifications and the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards shall be submitted as part of the landscape documentation package.

A. Criteria.
   (1) Plant Material.
      a. Plant material shall be selected from the city of Lancaster approved plant list or other approved source for the landscape, providing the estimated applied water use recommended for the project site does not exceed the maximum applied water allowance.
      b. A landscape design plan for projects in fire-prone areas shall address fire safety and prevention. A defensible space or zone around a building

or structure is required per California Public Resources Code 4291 (a) and (b). Fire-prone plant materials and mulches are to be avoided.

c. Invasive species of plants shall be prohibited near parks, buffers, greenbelts, water bodies and open spaces and are generally discouraged for landscape use.

d. The architectural guidelines of a common interest development, which includes community apartment projects, condominium projects, planned developments and stock cooperatives, shall not prohibit or include conditions that have the effect of prohibiting the use of low-water use plants as a group.

(2) Turf.

a. Turf is prohibited in commercial and industrial development proposals except where approved as a recreational area.

b. Turf is not to exceed 30% of the landscape areas in residential development proposals.

(3) Water Features.

a. Re-circulating water shall be used for decorative water features.

b. Where available, recycled water shall be used as the source for decorative water features.

c. Surface area of a water feature shall be included in the maximum applied water allowance (MAWA) calculation. The evaporation rate for all water features shall be equivalent to the evapotranspiration rate of a high water use plant.

d. Pool and spa covers are required.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.057 - Irrigation design plan

For the efficient use of water, the irrigation system shall be carefully designed and planned for the intended function of the project. The irrigation system and its related components shall be planned and designed to allow for proper installation, management and maintenance. The irrigation system design plan meeting the following design criteria and specifications and the City of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards shall be submitted as part of the landscape documentation package.

A. Criteria.

(1) System.

a. Dedicated (separate) landscape water meters shall be installed for all projects where the total landscape area exceeds five thousand (5,000) square feet.

b. Weather-based irrigation controllers, soil moisture based controllers, or other self-adjusting irrigation controllers, shall be required for all irrigation systems. The controller must be able to accommodate all aspects of the landscape and irrigation design plans.

c. All irrigation systems shall be designed to avoid excessive pressure. Water pressure regulators are required on all landscape projects. Static water pressure, dynamic or operating pressure and flow reading of the water supply shall be measured at the time of day the system will operate. These pressure and flow measurements shall be conducted at the design phase, if available, or prior to installation, if not available at the design phase.

d. If the static pressure is above or below the required dynamic pressure of the irrigation system, pressure regulators, or booster pumps, other devices shall be installed to meet the required dynamic pressure of the irrigation system.

e. Sensors (e.g., rain, freeze, wind, etc.), either integral or auxiliary, that suspend irrigation operation during unfavorable weather conditions shall be required on all irrigation systems, as appropriate for local climatic conditions.

f. High-flow check valves, or other technology to interrupt operation in high flow conditions created by irrigation system damage or malfunction, shall be required.

g. The irrigation system shall be designed to prevent runoff, low head drainage, overspray, or other similar conditions where irrigation water flows onto non-targeted areas, such as adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, hardscapes, roadways, or structures.

h. Relevant information from the soil management plan, such as soil type and infiltration rate, shall be utilized when designing irrigation systems.

i. The design of the irrigation system shall conform to the hydrozones of the landscape design plan.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.058 - Grading design plan

For the efficient use of water, grading of a project site shall be designed to minimize soil erosion, runoff and water waste. A grading design plan meeting the following design criteria and specifications and the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards shall be submitted as part of the landscape documentation package.

A. Criteria

(1) All projects where the total landscape area exceeds five thousand (5,000) square feet shall be designed to capture on-property run-off for a 10-year rain event through the use of earth berms, drainage swales, subsurface storage, or other approved methodology. Exceptions maybe granted for design features such as driveways, sidewalks and other features from which it is impractical to capture storm water flow.

(2) Grading of a project site shall avoid disturbing natural drainage patterns and avoid soil compaction in landscape areas.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.059 - Certificate of completion

A. The project applicant shall comply with the certificate of completion as specified under Section 8.50.052. See the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards for a sample of a certificate of completion.

B. The certificate shall specifically indicate that:

(1) Plants were installed as specified;

(2) The irrigation system was installed as designed;

(3) An irrigation audit has been performed;

(4) Other criteria of this chapter have been met along with a list of any observed deficiencies.

C. The following shall be submitted with the certificate of completion:

(1) Irrigation schedule, see Section 8.50.060

(2) Landscape and irrigation maintenance schedule, see Section 8.50.061(C);

(3) Landscape irrigation audit schedule, see 8.50.062

(4) Irrigation audit report.

8.50.060 - Irrigation scheduling

For the efficient use of water, all irrigation schedules shall be developed, managed and evaluated to utilize the minimum amount of water required to maintain plant health. Irrigation schedules meeting the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards and the following requirements shall be submitted with the certificate of completion:

A. Irrigation scheduling shall incorporate the use of evapotranspiration data such as those from the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) weather stations or other validated weather data or soil moisture monitoring systems to apply the appropriate levels of water for different climates. See CIMIS data for Lancaster area in the city of Lancaster landscape and irrigation design standards; and

B. Where automated irrigation systems are installed, irrigation shall be scheduled between ten (10) p.m. and ten (10) a.m. between May 1 and October 31. If allowable hours of irrigation differ from the local retail purveyor, the stricter of the two shall apply. Hand watering of landscape areas is permissible where an automated system is not installed.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.061 - Landscape and irrigation maintenance schedule

A. Landscapes shall be maintained to ensure water use efficiency. A regular maintenance schedule shall be submitted with the certificate of completion. Maintenance schedules developed for new landscapes shall clearly indicate irrigation controller timing adjustment and inspection after the landscape establishment period.

B. A regular maintenance schedule shall include, but not be limited to, routine inspection, adjustment and repair of the irrigation system and its components; conducting water audits; prescribing the

amount of water applied per landscaped acre; aerating and dethatching turf areas; replenishing mulch; fertilizing; and pruning and weeding in all landscape areas.

C. Repair of all irrigation equipment shall be done with the originally specified components or their equivalents.

D. A project applicant is encouraged to implement sustainable or environmentally friendly practices for overall landscape maintenance.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.062 - Irrigation audits and audit schedules

A. At a minimum, all landscape irrigation audits shall be in accordance with the "irrigation association certified landscape irrigation auditor training manual (2004)," the entire document, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

B. All landscape irrigation audits and audit reports shall be conducted by a certified landscape irrigation auditor.

C. For new construction and rehabilitated landscape projects installed on or after January 1, 2010, the project applicant shall fulfill the following requirements for landscape irrigation audits:

(1) Submit a landscape irrigation audit report with the certificate of completion to the city;

(2) For landscapes equal to or greater than one acre, submit a schedule of landscape irrigation audits with the certificate of completion to the city;

(3) Implement the recommendations from the landscape irrigation audit report; and

(4) For landscapes equal to or greater than one acre, submit a landscape irrigation audit report every five years to the city.

D. For new construction and rehabilitated landscape projects installed after January 1, 2010, except for homeowner-installed, homeowner-provided landscape less than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet, the city or the water purveyor will fulfill the following requirements for landscape irrigation audits:

(1) Annually compare customers' maximum applied water allowances, which are found in the water efficient landscape worksheet submitted as part of the landscape documentation package, to customer's water use and identify customers whose landscapes exceed the maximum applied water allowance for at least one year, to the extent that customer water use information is available to the city: and

(2) Annually conduct landscape irrigation audits on a minimum of twenty (20) percent of the total customer landscapes identified in the paragraph above (customers whose landscapes exceed the maximum applied water allowance).

a. The city will obtain permission from the project applicant to access the property for the purposes of conducting a landscape irrigation audit.

b. The city's cost of conducting the landscape irrigation audit shall be paid by the project applicant.

c. The city of Lancaster shall make a good faith effort to obtain necessary water use information from the local retail water purveyor.

(Ord. No. 928, § 1, 7-29-09; Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.063 - Irrigation efficiency

For the purpose of determining the maximum applied water allowance, an irrigation efficiency is assumed. Irrigation systems shall be designed, maintained and managed to meet or exceed the design irrigation efficiency.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.064 - Recycled water

A. The installation of recycled water irrigation systems (i.e., dual distribution systems) shall be required to allow for the current and future use of recycled water, unless a written exemption has been granted as described in this section.

B. Irrigation systems shall make use of recycled water unless a written exemption has been granted by the city, stating that recycled water meeting all public health codes and standards is not available and will not be available in the foreseeable future.

C. All recycled water irrigation systems shall be designed and operated in accordance with all city and state codes.

D. If the irrigation water (recycled water or blended water) has electrical conductivity equal to or greater than three deci-Seimens per meter (dS/m) or three milli-mhos per centimeter (mmh/cm) or two thousand mg per liter total dissolved solids (TDS), a leaching fraction of up to ten (10) percent may be included in the MAWA calculation. The leaching fraction shall not exceed ten (10) percent of MAWA.

E. For more information on recycled water, see the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources "landscape plant salt tolerance selection guide for recycled water irrigation (2005)," the entire document, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

F. Recycled water used in landscaping and water features shall be exempted from water budget calculation requirements.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.065 - Public education

A. Publications. The city of Lancaster will provide information to owners of new, single-family residential homes regarding the design, installation, management and maintenance of water efficient landscapes.

B. Model Homes

(1) All model homes shall be landscaped to demonstrate, via signs and information, the principles of water efficient landscapes described in this ordinance.

(2) Signs shall be used to identify the model as an example of a water efficient landscape and featuring elements such as hydrozones, water efficient irrigation equipment and other elements, which contribute to the overall water efficient theme.

(3) Information shall be provided to prospective homeowners about designing, installing and maintaining water efficient landscapes. The information provided should also include potential cost savings associated with water conservation techniques.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.070 - Provisions for existing landscapes—Landscape irrigation audits

For existing landscapes installed before January 1, 2010, the following shall apply:

A. At a minimum, all landscape irrigation audits shall be in accordance with the "irrigation association certified landscape irrigation auditor training manual (2004)".

B. All landscape irrigation audits shall be conducted by a certified landscape irrigation auditor.

C. For existing landscapes equal to or greater than one acre (forty-three thousand five hundred sixty (43,560) square feet), the property owner or his/her designee of the landscape project shall fulfill the following requirements for landscape irrigation audits:

(1) Submit a landscape irrigation audit report every five years to the city; and

(2) Implement the water management and maintenance recommendations from the landscape irrigation audit report.

D. For existing landscapes equal to or greater than two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet, the city will fulfill the following irrigation audit requirements:

(1) Annually survey and compare customer's landscape water use to local reference evapotranspiration and identify customers whose landscapes exceed eighty (80) percent of local reference evapotranspiration for at least one year, to the extent that customer water use information is available to the city; and

(2) Annually conduct landscape irrigation audits on a minimum of twenty (20) percent of the total customer landscapes identified in the paragraph above.

a. The city will obtain permission from the property owner or his/her designee to access the property for the purposes of conducting a landscape irrigation audit.

b. The property owner or his/her designee shall pay the city cost of conducting the landscape irrigation audit.

c. The city shall make a good faith effort to obtain necessary water use information from the local retail water purveyor.

(Ord. No. 928, § 1, 7-28-09)

8.50.080 - Effective precipitation

The city does not have enough reliable annual precipitation to include in water budget formulae; consequently this portion of the formula has been eliminated.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.081 - Water waste prevention

Water waste resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation, such as runoff, low head drainage, overspray, etc., is prohibited. Similar conditions where water flows onto non-targeted areas, such as adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, hardscapes, roadways, or structures are also prohibited. Penalties for violation of these prohibitions shall be subject to city policy and procedure.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)

8.50.082 - Penalties for project applicants

The city may administer penalties to the project applicant for non-compliance with the ordinance, including, but not limited to:

A. Deny certificate of occupancy or equivalent until the certificate of completion has been submitted, reviewed and approved by the city;

B. Issue warning letters or citations;

C. Impose and collect monetary penalties or fines;

D. Administer an appeals process or equivalent;

E. Terminate water service.

(Ord. No. 907, § 1, 10-28-08)