

# DESERT CITIES HOA COUNCIL

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## Recap of Meeting July16, 2015

### HOA Members Represented

Aldea	Mira Vista
Canyon Sands	Montage at Mission Hills
Cathedral Canyon #1	Personalized Property Management
Cathedral Canyon #2	Professional Landscape Services
Cathedral Canyon #8	Rio del Sol – Las Casitas
Cathedral Canyon #12	Sun City Palm Desert
Cathedral Canyon #17	Terra Lago
Cathedral Canyon #18	Versailles
	Versailles Condominiums

**Welcome:** Mike Traidman, Chair

**Treasurer's Report** – Current treasury balance \$157.00

**Guest Speakers** – David Koller – Coachella Valley Water District  
“Water Use Restrictions”  
David Hemp – Coachella Valley Water District  
“Update on Chromium-6 and Effects on Users”

**Guest Speaker** - Mike Traidman welcomed David Koller

David handed out two Information Papers “Mandatory water restrictions are now in effect” and “We’re Serious about **Saving 36%**” both by Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD).

David began with the observation that we are in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of a drought – the worst drought in history. Last year the Coachella Valley received 5% of its normal allocation of water from the State Water Project. This year we will receive 20%.

State reservoirs release stored water during the summer to maintain stream flows and agriculture. Lake Orville was full 3 years ago, it is currently empty.

CVWD has plenty of water. The aquifer has approximately 39 million acer-feet (ac-ft.) of water (an acre-foot would be a football field with 1 foot of water on it). The valley normally receives 300 to 400,000 ac-ft. of water from the Colorado River; 150 ac-ft. from the State Water Project; millions and millions of gallons from recycling for the 52 golf courses currently connected and more water from conservation programs.

The Governor has ordered the State Water Resources Board to implement a 25% reduction in statewide water usage. They have chosen to implement multi-tiered levels of reductions from 4% to 36%. Coachella Valley is one of the areas required to achieve a 36% reduction.

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The CVWD Board adopted drought penalties and new water-use restrictions on May 12, 2015. A partial list of restrictions is listed below (exceptions for health, safety and sanitary needs).

- Do not irrigate outdoors during or within 48 hours of measurable rainfall.
- Repair broken sprinklers within 24 hours, fix leaks as soon as possible
- Do not cause water runoff by overwatering
- Use a hose with a shut-off nozzle when washing your vehicle or windows
- Serve water in restaurants only upon request
- Do not wash down driveways, patios or sidewalks
- All landscaping in front of newly constructed buildings must use only drip irrigation or micro-spray
- Increased water budget for over-seeding is eliminated
- Water features and fountains that do not recirculate water are prohibited

Details about violations and fines:

CVWD will continue to prioritize working with customers to quickly resolve violations. After a written warning, customers will be liable for fines on their bill starting at \$50. For a complete list of restrictions and recommendations, visit [www.cvwd.org/CVsavings36](http://www.cvwd.org/CVsavings36). If you have questions call (760)391-9600.

Starting June 2015 (reflected on your July bill) those who do not meet the conservation target will be penalized. CVWD is asking all customers to limit Tier 2 water use to 36% below their water budget. Your water budget can be found on your monthly bill for the last several years.

While many agencies across the state are prohibiting watering on certain days and at certain times during the day, CVWD is not using this approach. They believe that their customers can better maintain their landscapes, while meeting the 36% reduction, with decreased daily watering.

Drought penalties and your water bill:

Tier 1 Indoor – There are no penalties for customers who remain in Tier 1, which is designed to cover all indoor water use. – Rate \$1.01 per 100 cubic feet =748 gal (ccf)  
Tier 2 Outdoor – Customers are being requested to limit use to 36% below their water budget – Rate \$1.12 per ccf + \$2.51 per ccf penalty for exceeding 64% of water budget  
Tier 3 Inefficient – 105% - 150% above water budget – Rate \$1.68 per ccf + \$3.34 per ccf penalty  
Tier 4 Excessive - 151% - 250% above water budget – Rate \$2.24 per ccf + \$5.01 per ccf penalty  
Tier 5 Wasteful – 250% or more of water budget – Rate \$4.48 per ccf + \$10.03 per ccf penalty

About 45% of residential customers (higher users) will be impacted by drought penalties.

Even well users must prove they reduced use by 25%. CVWD well in June had reduced use by 26%. Desert Water Agency reduced by 40%. Mission Springs reduced by 12%.

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Some changes CVWD recommends to help save water:

- Set your irrigation controller to use 36% less water on grass
- Invest in a pool cover to reduce evaporation, especially during summer
- Water early morning or after the sun has gone down
- Install a weather-based smart controller
- Avoid planting spray-irrigated annual flower beds

Rebates and incentives:

- Turf removal rebates for residents, businesses and golf courses (\$1 per sf, up to \$25,000 per project)
- Smart controllers - Free for residential customers; 50% cost reimbursement for businesses and HAOs
- Efficient sprinkler nozzles - 26% more efficient, rebate \$4/per nozzle
- Free water conservation kits for homes
- High efficiency toilet rebates for residents \$100 per replacing toilet installed prior to 1992, businesses condos and apartments up to \$144per toilet
- Free pre-rinse nozzles and water brooms for businesses

CVWD paid a total of \$3.2 million last year in rebates. Landscapers say they cannot keep up with the demand for turf conversion.

Question (Q): Court in San Juan Capistrano ruled the penalties for wasteful users must be proportional to cost of service

Answer (A): Penalty rate established by rate consultants because requirement for bigger pipes, meters, etc.

Q: If a HOA exceeds the 36% target, can they apply the excess saving to over-seeding?

A: No

Q: People identified as abusing (stick yellow flags), if reported, will CVWD send inspector into a gated community?

A: Yes, inspector must identify who the offender is (who responsible for water meter servicing excess use), approach in friendly manner, tag with door hanger. Many times this is a complex process to identify responsibility.

Q Will they pay for converting brown turf?

A: Yes, but only if it has recently been green

Q: Is there any analysis/forecast of when/if surcharges going to be reversed (e.g. gasoline extra taxes, when supply increased, taxes stayed)?

A: Yes as soon as over, Governor will eliminate. Note: Governor only directed shortage measures for one year February 2015 to February 2016, must be renewed to continue.

Q: What are the main segments that use water in the valley?

A: Agriculture 50%, Cities 36% and golf 4%

Q: Why do new developments continue getting approved?

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A: CVWD maintains long range plans to accommodate all likely development in the future. New developments have significant restrictions on water use.

**Guest Speaker** - Mike Traidman welcomed Kevin Hemp

Kevin provided two handouts “Coachella Valley Water District Chromium -6” and “SB 385: Chromium-6 Compliance Period” both by Coachella Valley Water District. Kevin then talked from a PowerPoint presentation.

Kevin began with providing a perspective on the chemical element Chromium. It is the 21<sup>st</sup> most abundant element. It forms the 9<sup>th</sup> most abundant compounds in the earth.

Serpentine is the California State Rock, it is found along faults. It is described as a spotted, mottled mostly dull green rock resembling a serpent’s skin. It is considered an attractive rock, suitable for ornamental stonework. Polishing can produce a marble-like sheen. Often referred to as “Verde Antique” or “Serpentine Marble”, it is used to craft small items such as bookends, paper weights and jewelry; and larger items like counter tops and floor tiles.

Today, the Federal government regulates “total Chromium”. They make no distinction between its two forms Chromium-3 (Cr3, Trivalent Chromium) and Chromium-6 (Cr6, Hexavalent Chromium). California is the first state to specifically regulate Cr6.

Cr3 is an essential trace mineral for the human body. We cannot live without Cr3. It is in multi-vitamins. It enhances the action of insulin. Without Cr3 the body would be unable to metabolize carbohydrates, fats and portions.

It has been known, for over 100 years, that Cr6 can cause lung cancer if it is inhaled; therefore airborne Cr6 is highly regulated, at both the State and Federal level and simply not permitted. The instant Cr6 comes in contact with a “reducing environment” (such as saliva...or even stronger, your stomach acid) Cr6 is converted to Cr3 and is no longer harmful; but actually beneficial. Historically Cr6 has been classified as a “non-threatening element to public health”.

Cr6 is important to industry. Tanneries learned that leather tanned with a Chromium solution produced a superior, more resilient product. Chrome plating is not only attractive, but practical in that Chrome does not rust and serves as a protective armor against weathering. Chromium is needed to produce stainless steel. Chromium compounds are what make Emeralds green and Rubies red. Lasers cannot function without Chromium. And Chromium compounds are utilized in most paint colors.

Water Regulation in the United States:

Before 1974 there were four basic tests to determine if your water was clean:

1. Does it taste clean?
2. Does it smell clean?
3. Does it look clean?
4. Does it make you sick when you drink it?

If the water passed the tests, it was clean.

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The Federal Clean Water Act took effect in 1974. It sought to create a uniform drinking water standard across all 50 states, and, even today, attempts to do this by regulating the ORGANIC and INORGANIC constituents in drinking water. Until recently, the bulk of the focus was on the elimination of microbes that cause waterborne diseases like Cholera, Amoebic Dysentery, Cryptosporidium, Salmonella and Montezuma's Revenge. It turns out that the solution was fairly simple and cheap – Chlorine. Today new methods are gaining popularity: UV disinfection, Ozone and Reverse Osmosis.

Recently, with advancements in science, the focus has shifted to eliminating INORGANIC constituents from our water. Things like Arsenic, Uranium, and Fluoride to name a few, and now, also Cr6. The solution to eliminating inorganic constituents is LOTS OF MONEY. For example in January 2001 the new Federal standard went into effect for Arsenic in drinking water. CVWD had 6 wells that did not meet the new standard. It required building two new Arsenic removal facilities at a cost of \$18 million.

The Federal government standard for total Chromium (Cr3 plus Cr6) in drinking water is 100 parts per billion (ppb, approximately 100 drops within an Olympic size swimming pool). In 2014 California set a separate standard of 10ppb for Cr6. 30 of CVWD 96 wells do not meet this new standard. It is currently estimated that it will cost between \$200 million and \$500 million for compliance plus \$12 million to \$16 million in annual operation and maintenance. This would result in an increase of from \$20 to \$50 per month in the average monthly residential water bill.

Also, the new State standard allows zero time for meeting the new requirement. Senate Bill 385 (SB 385) has been introduced to allow a 5 year period for compliance. This was the period allowed by the Federal government for meeting the reduced Arsenic standard in 2001. This implementation period will also allow time to research alternative lower cost solutions; obtain supplemental funding for the project like State and Federal participation and/or grants to help reduce the cost to the CVWD customers.

Q: Is there a relationship between the level of the aquifer and Cr6 concentration?

A: No

Q: Are there standards for bottled water?

A: Yes, but they are established by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Drinking water standards are set by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board. The standards are different, for example FDA does not require Chlorine. That is why recently there was a major recall for Listeria contamination by one bottler.

Q: Does imported State Water Project water and Colorado River water have Cr6?

A: No, this is one reason why the wells in the vicinity of the recharging basins meet the Cr6 standards and why Desert Water Agency has no problems.

NOTE: CVWD has pre-written newsletter articles that can be copied and pasted into your HOA newsletters. You can follow this link to go straight to the articles:

<http://www.cvwd.org/253/Resources-Tools>

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**Forum:** None

**Handouts:** Other than those mentioned above, none

**Next Meeting** – Thursday, August 20, 2015 at the Cathedral City – City Hall

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Tom Tousignant, Recorder