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Newport Beach Encourages Voluntary Water Conservation

NEWPORT BEACH, Ca. – The City of Newport Beach is asking residents to voluntarily reduce water use by 10 percent to help conserve water and potentially stave off mandatory water use restrictions next year.

After two consecutive years of below-average rainfall, very low snowmelt runoff in Northern California, a prolonged drought in the Colorado River basin, and environmental issues in the San Joaquin Delta, conserving water is essential to sustaining California's water supplies.

"We are in a statewide drought and we don't know how long it will continue," explained Utilities Director Steve Myrter. "Every gallon we save today is a gallon stored for the future."

There are no mandatory water use restrictions in Newport Beach, but community members are highly encouraged to reduce the amount of water they use inside and outside their homes and businesses. Practical ways to conserve water include covering pools and spas to slow evaporation; using brooms to clean outside areas instead of spraying them down; adjusting landscape irrigation according to weather conditions and watering no more than once every three to four days; and setting irrigation controls to only water landscapes for brief periods between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m.

The City of Newport Beach offers several water use efficiency programs for residential and commercial appliances and devices. For more information about the programs or water conservation, please call 949-644-3214 or log onto www.watersmartnewport.org.

The city is also a co-sponsor of the Water Innovation Now contest, a partnership between the University of California, Irvine, UNESCO, and the Orange County Department of Education. The contest challenges students from kindergarten through twelfth grade to create presentations via PowerPoint, video, or poster board that demonstrate innovative solutions to the water crisis. Contest entries are due on October 31, 2008. WIN contest details, including a list of prizes, are available at www.win.ocde.us.