

Free Landscape Class

Please join us for one of our free Saturday morning classes to learn more about how you can save water and money.

Rainwater capture/Graywater Workshop – from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, August 16, 2014. This workshop is sure to answer all of your questions related to rainwater and graywater systems. You will learn how to install your own systems according to permit standards in Ventura County.

Please RSVP early at rmerckling@casitaswater.com or (805) 649-2251 Extension 118.

Workshops will be held at Oak View Park & Resource Center (formerly the Oak View Elementary School) located at 555 Mahoney Avenue. Attendees are encouraged to park in the parking lots instead of the street.



The Casitas Speakers Bureau provides an opportunity for customers and the community to learn more about water issues in the Western Ventura County area. Please contact Ron Merckling, Water Conservation and Public Affairs Manager, 805-649-2251, extension 118, to invite a speaker to your next community group or organizational meeting.

Please visit the new and improved Water Wise Gardening in Ventura County website at www.ventura.watersavingplants.com.



Your Board in Action
 Bill Hicks, Division I
 James W. Word, Division II
 Pete Kaiser, Division III
 Mary Bergen, Division IV
 Russ Baggerly, Division V
 The Casitas Board of Directors is scheduled to meet at 3:00 p.m. in the board room located in the main office at 1055 Ventura Ave., Oak View, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month.

Join the Casitas Municipal Water District Facebook page to get the latest updates on water conservation and the Lake Casitas Recreation Area at: www.facebook.com/fbsitecasitasmunicipalwaterdistrict.



1055 Ventura Ave.
 Oak View, CA 93022
 805-649-2251
www.casitaswater.org



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CASITAS WATER NEWS

Summer 2014

Statewide Drought Requires Local Response

Western Ventura County's water resource systems will be stretched as the worse statewide drought in recent memory continues. By early summer, many local groundwater resources will reach historical low levels and groundwater pumpers will rely on Lake Casitas to meet local water demands. By the end of the summer months, Lake Casitas' storage will drop to below fifty percent for the first time since 1968. At fifty percent storage, Casitas will ask all water users in the district to further reduce non-essential water use.



Lake Casitas is currently at 58% of full.

"It is important for all water users throughout the district to begin to take extraordinary steps to curtail water usage," said Ron Merckling, public affairs/resource manager for Casitas. "Although, there are several years of water supply remaining, it is critical for all water users to take action now, the only water available for our service area is from local water supplies," said Merckling.

Western Ventura County is not alone in facing the drought. The current statewide drought is impacting most of the state's population and water systems. In many areas, water rationing and

crop fallowing are now in place due to the scarcity of water.

Casitas' district boundaries encompass a population of approximately 70,000 residents, 5,800 acres of agriculture, and a wide variety of commercial and industrial businesses that are served by more than eight different public and private water providers. If you are receiving this newsletter by mail, you are likely a water customer within the boundaries of the Casitas Municipal Water District.

Casitas' "Drought On/Tap Off" water conservation campaign

is aimed at making it as easy as possible for residents, businesses and farmers to save even more water. The campaign includes workshops, rebates for high water efficiency devices, and free agricultural, residential, and business water surveys. State resources on water conservation are also available at www.saveourH2O.org, or join the effort on Facebook and Twitter. Anyone interested in finding out more information about these incentives and programs is encouraged to visit Casitas' web site at www.casitaswater.org or call to call Ron Merckling at (805) 649-2251 Extension 118.



Homeowner Uses Free Casitas' Consultation to Save Water

Carole Iles, a resident in the Meiners Oaks Water District scheduled a free water survey offered by the Casitas Municipal Water District. "I wanted to remove my lawn to reduce my water consumption. I thought the survey might give me some good ideas so I scheduled a consultation through Casitas' free home water survey program," said Iles. She received a home water survey and a consultation with Cinnamon McIntosh, Casitas' Water Conservation Specialist, who offered advice on how she could save on both indoor and outdoor water use.

"I was happy with all of the suggestions Cinnamon gave me. I saved water and removing the lawn improved my landscape," said Iles. Since implementing the recommendations in the survey Ms. Iles has noticed a reduction in her water use.

Anyone living in the Casitas district boundaries that is interested in getting a free home water survey is encouraged to email



Cinnamon McIntosh, Casitas' water conservation specialist, performs a free home water survey at the residence of Ms. Carole Iles.

cmcintosh@casitaswater.com or call (805) 649-2251 extension 110 to schedule an appointment.

Spruce Up Your Sprinkler System and Save

Now is the perfect time to spruce up your irrigation system before you ramp up your watering efforts this summer. To get started, follow these four simple steps: *inspect, connect, direct, and select.*



◆ **Inspect.** Check your system for clogged, broken, or missing sprinkler heads. If you're not the do-it-yourself type, look for an irrigation professional certified through a WaterSense labeled irrigation program.

◆ **Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes/hoses. If water is pooling in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak in your system. A leak as small as the tip of a ballpoint pen (1/32nd of an inch) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.

◆ **Direct.** Are you watering the driveway, house,

or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to your lawn or prized plants.

◆ **Select.** An improperly scheduled irrigation controller can waste a lot of water and money. Update your system's

schedule with the seasons, or select a smart irrigation controller to take the guesswork out of scheduling. Casitas offers rebates of \$250 for a smart irrigation controller, please see details on qualification requirements at www.casitaswater.org.

Learn more about maintaining a water-smart yard by visiting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense website at www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor.



Eagles Return to Nest at Lake Casitas

For the second year in a row, a pair of bald eagles hatched two chicks in a nest near Lake Casitas this spring. The last recorded nesting of Bald Eagles on Ventura County's mainland before last year's nesting at Lake Casitas was in 1922.

If you plan to visit the Lake Casitas Recreation Area to see the eagle nest it is VERY important not to disturb the nest. The nesting area is closed to vehicle, bicycle, and foot traffic (a 500 foot radius) to reduce disturbance to the eagles, which is located in a eucalyptus tree near Teacup #1, within the Lake Casitas Recreation Area. The best viewing location, located far enough



A nest with an adult eagle near Lake Casitas.

away to avoid disturbing the birds, is at Teacup #2, a picnic table area. There will likely be others there with spotting scopes to show you where the nesting is occurring. It is recommended that you bring a good pair of binoculars or a telescope.

Although bald eagles were delisted as federally endangered species in 2007, nesting and wintering Bald Eagles remain listed as endangered by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. They are also protected under both the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the federal Migratory Bird Act of 1918.

Protecting Lake Casitas Don't Move a Mussel

Casitas Municipal Water District recently adopted additional measures to stop devastating invasive mussels from moving into Lake Casitas in response to the continued spread of mussels in California lakes. Casitas' invasive quagga and zebra mussel protection program was already recognized as the most extensive anti-mussel prevention program in the state before these measures were adopted.

Casitas' Board of Directors in January 2014, extended the boat quarantine period from 30 to 35 days as an additional protective measure. When a boat owner comes to Lake Casitas they must accept an initial boat inspection. They then participate in a tamper proof tag program to assure their boats are not allowed to enter any other water body during a waiting period. In May, recreation staff completed an intensive two-day watercraft inspection and decontamination training. The training qualifies staff to be level I inspectors and decontaminators. It is

meant to improve inspections of boats that may be at risk of harboring invasive mussels.

Invasive mussels can be spread inadvertently from one water body to another by boaters and, once introduced, can rapidly devastate that water body with the formation of massive colonies that litter beaches, cling to boats and docks, clog and damage water intake equipment, and even cause a collapse in the population of sport fish. The spread of these invasive mussels has progressed from their first introduction into North American waters in the Great Lakes in 1988 all the way to their recent discovery in Lake Piru.

Casitas water quality staff analyzes water samples each month to ensure the lake remains free of invasive mussels. For questions, information and to make a boat inspection appointment, please call (805)-649-2233.