

July 29, 2015



## Drought Advisory #3 – El Niño

As you know, we are experiencing what is defined as a “prolonged drought” as our water levels are at historical lows and water conservation efforts are making new history. This requires rigorous and continued education to remain a viable and pro-active landscape company in the future. LaBahn’s Landscaping continues to stand with the San Diego County Water Authority and the State of California; we hope for and acknowledge an El Niño this year would be helpful but we would need **10 El Niño wet seasons in a row** to recover from the severity of this drought. The last page shares the update on available rebate status.

We invite you to join our **web and weather-based smart water management platform**, in partnership with ETWater. Avoid manually turning timers on and off by changing to Weather Based timers, installing soil moisture sensors, and flow control! The next two pages include a helpful infographic and additional details on this technology. **CALL US NOW TO EVALUATE YOUR SITE POTENTIAL.**

Due to the prolonged drought we are experiencing, and restrictions for watering, we are reevaluating how we handle the irrigation timers that need to be manually adjusted when it rains. In the past the policy was to turn the timers off, however, at 10 minutes\* of irrigation water per week we can no longer honor this as blanket policy. Accounts not equipped with rain sensors or weather based smart timers, following any rain events, we will be turning off timers based on the professional opinion of our landscape technicians and route supervisors. They know your property and how your plant material behaves best. Please find below how we will handle your timers, as per the number of service days we are at your property, until further notice:

### 4-5 service days per week

Timers are turned off on the first service day following the rain event as we can turn them back on as soon as it’s needed.

### 2-3 service days per week

Soil will be evaluated at the first service day and timers will be turned off, if needed.

### 1 service day per week or less

Timers will not be automatically turned off as doing so under the restrictions could leave your property without water for too many days. Certain stations may be turned off during your next service day, if over-saturation is found, or if it’s needed. Should you wish to have your community make an exception to this protocol, please call the office. **Of course, if there are several rain events back to back, the timers will be turned off until your landscaped areas need water again.**

As a service company, we are always happy to take your specific direction as well, should it fall outside of our advised protocol. If you would prefer the irrigation timers to be turned off following any/all rain events *-including non-service days such as weekends-* please let your account manager or the office know.

\*10 minutes is 5 minutes per day at 2 days per week, for regular irrigation nozzles. Stream rotors, drip, and micro spray heads are **exempt from the run-time restrictions and are set to water as long as your water district allows!** Rebates available for some of these water sensing technologies. See the updated checklist to develop your long and short term drought plan of action for each property on the last page of this advisory.

COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SPECIALISTS

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# SMART IRRIGATION

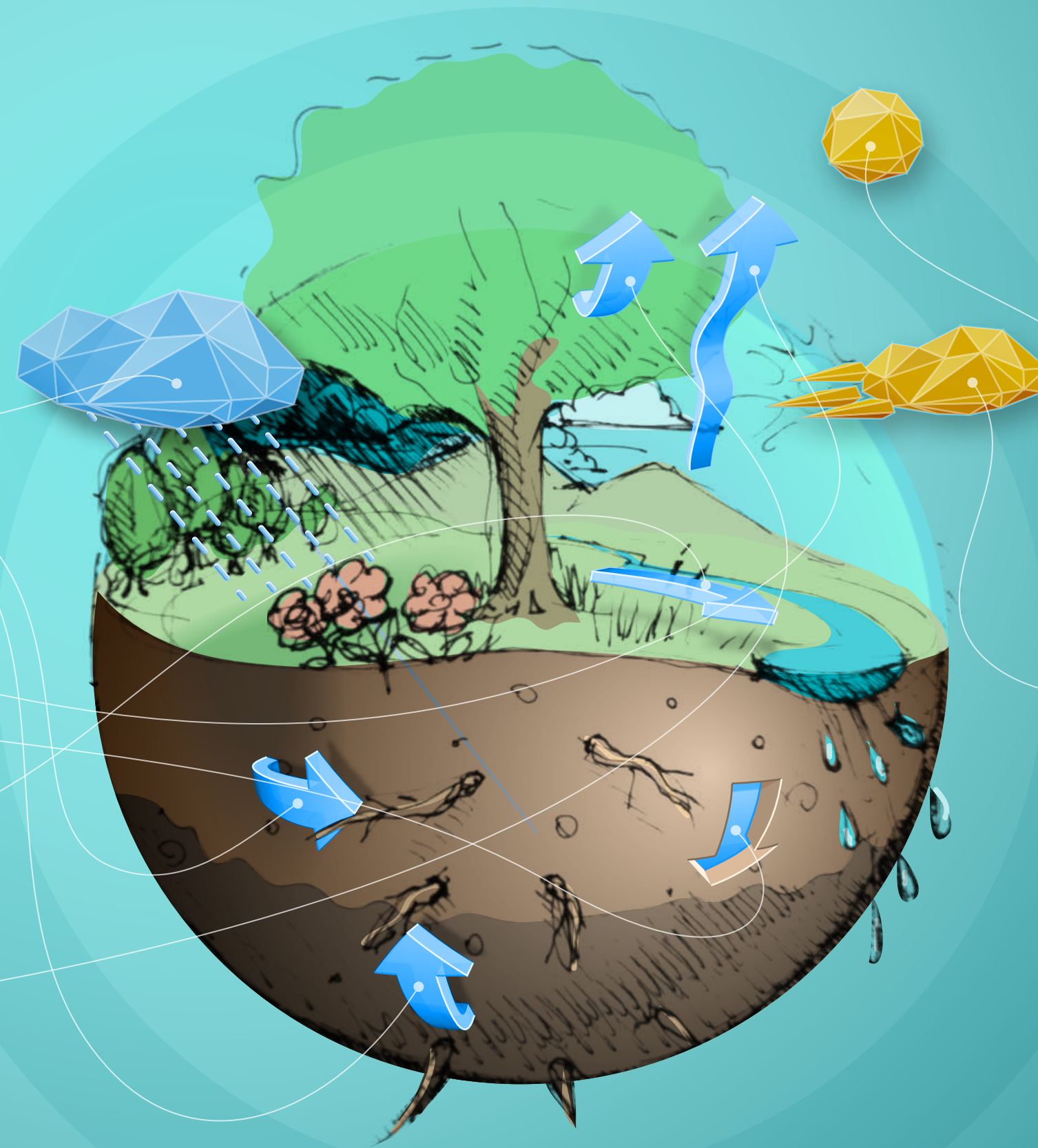
## IRRIGATING IN HARMONY WITH THE WEATHER™

### You water your plants, but where does that water go?

The water wets the soil where the plant roots can absorb it. If it would just stay there, irrigation would be simple, but it doesn't.

It evaporates from the topsoil, and seeps down into the groundwater table (or out the bottom of your plant pot). Water that the soil couldn't absorb is lost as run off, and even water that the plant does absorb is lost through its leaves, through transpiration.

The good thing is we can calculate how much goes where. We need to know the plant, the soil, and most importantly the weather.



### What's the weather got to do with it?

The weather has a big impact on the rate at which water evaporates from the soil and transpires through the leaves.

Temperature and sun exposure, as well as wind and humidity, have the biggest impact. By tracking these as well as rainfall we can precisely calculate how much water must be replenished through irrigation to maintain proper soil moisture. Your typical irrigation timer won't do this for you, but a smart irrigation controller will, which could save you as much as 50% of your landscaping water, or more.

## What do we do with a “Weather Based” ETWater Smarter Technology?



### Weather Forecasting

Leveraging your precise coordinates, we use the most reliable and accurate weather services from the same sources that meteorologists and scientists use.



### Wireless Connection

Your service is connected to a Nationwide network of wireless service providers, and uses the latest 3G and 4G bandwidth and data speeds for the ultimate in reliability.



### Precise Watering

We know the amount of rain that fell at your site(s) and we combine this information with what we know about your landscape, and the plant types and you get the precise amount of water needed, not more.



### Events and Alerts

We track the events and activity at your location and receive alerts via text message or email when something has changed or needs our attention.



### Dynamic Scheduling

The water schedule can be fully automated, enabling adjustment or suspension when rain events occur, and accounting for the precise amount of water needed within specific time constraints.



### Mobile Access

We have the ability to monitor and control what is happening with remote access via any mobile device, and there are an advanced set of applications that let us program and customize your setup.

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## Property Drought Plan of Action Checklist

**Irrigation Cycle Adjustment** Ongoing - completed by LaBahn's maintenance

Schedule that optimizes water use by: short run times, considering soil type, weather and mature plant material. Follow and adjust clocks according to all regulatory mandates.

**Irrigation Audit & Repairs** Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Making basic repairs are **key** to saving water. Audits ensure efficiency by: fixing leaks, installing soil moisture sensors, and utilizing rebates for low-flow technologies and Weather Based irrigation. Upgrades and retrofits reduce water consumption now and forever. Call us for most recent irrigation recommendations. **Rebates available**

**Turf Removal, Xeriscape, Drought-tolerant Plants:** Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost of conversion is approximately \$4-\$9 per square foot and turns your property in to its own nursery! Provide yourself plant material for transplanting forever! Call us for full evaluation and proposal.

**Mulch** Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ Installed: \_\_\_\_\_

Retains moisture in landscaped areas, eliminates runoff, provides nutrients, mitigates weeds and pests.

**Drip Irrigation/Planter Irrigation** Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Root targeting irrigation reduces water usage by up to 50%. Separate turf irrigation stations from planter irrigation stations to maximize efficiency and coverage. Call us for proposal.

Each property has different needs and we're here to help you evaluate them. The purpose of this update is to keep you further informed and up to date on the drought, the latest technologies, and what is needed from our partnership in order for us all to be successful in mitigating liability and opportunities for fines on behalf of our properties. Copies of our original Drought Advisory from May 7<sup>th</sup>, and Drought Advisory #2 from June 1<sup>st</sup>, are located at [labahns.com/drought](http://labahns.com/drought).

Visit [www.socalwatersmart.com](http://www.socalwatersmart.com) for current rebate status. Rebates currently available to assist with handling rain events precisely and efficiently are summarized below. We do the paperwork FOR YOU!

- Soil moisture sensor - \$35 per station
- High efficiency rotating nozzles - \$4 per nozzle
- In-stem flow regulator - \$1 per filter
- Weather based or "smart" irrigation controller - \$35 per station
  - With self-adjusting weather-based schedules **achieving 20-50% water savings**, ROI may be just a few months
  - ET water manager web-based system for easy management, and remote operation. If an irrigation leak is reported we will be able to remotely suspend all irrigation to prevent further leaking
  - Remote monitoring of abnormal or excessive water flow means on demand response
  - EPA Water sensor approved

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