

Water Waste Regulations Revisions per AB1572

August 18, 2026

City Council

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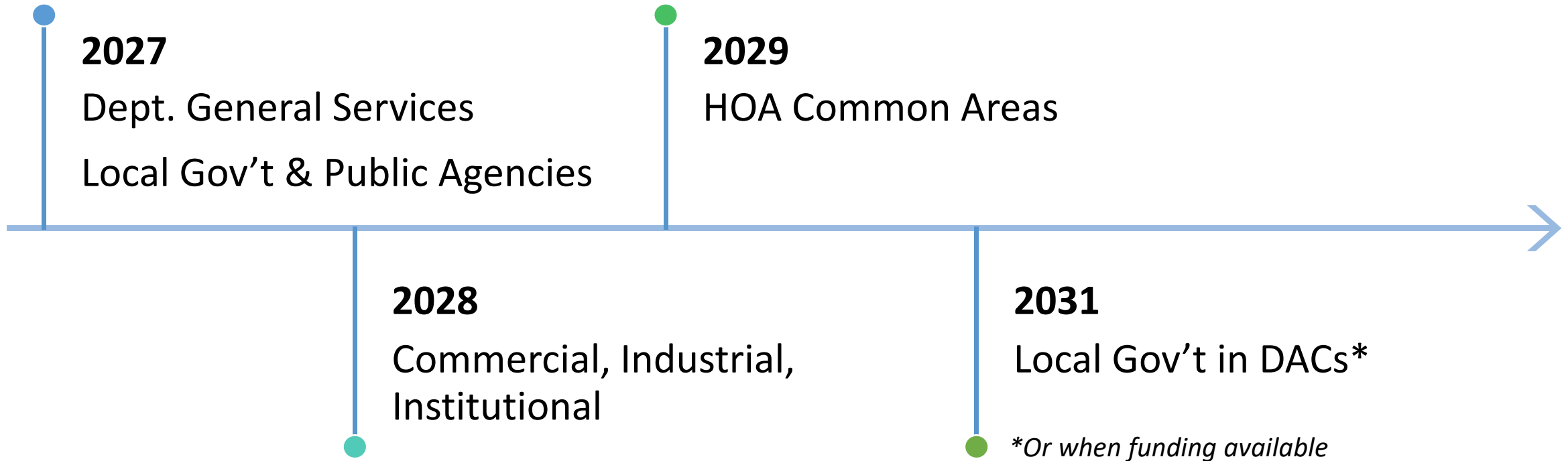
AB 1572 – Executive Summary

- Signed into law in 2023, AB 1572 prohibits potable water use for irrigating nonfunctional turf (NFT) on commercial, industrial, institutional (CII) properties, and HOAs.
 - Exemptions: tree irrigation, public parks, cemeteries, and health/safety needs.
- By **January 1, 2027**, the City of Santa Rosa must update city code to address AB 1572 compliance and notify impacted customers.

AB 1572 – Purpose

- California faces persistent drought and climate change impacts on water supplies.
- AB 1572 builds on previous conservation legislation (SB 606 & AB 1668).
- Potable water use for nonfunctional turf is considered wasteful and unsustainable.
- The ordinance ensures compliance with state law and supports long-term conservation goals.

AB 1572 Compliance Timeline



What is Nonfunctional Turf?

- Nonfunctional turf refers to an irrigated lawn that is purely decorative and not regularly used for recreation or public/ community gatherings.

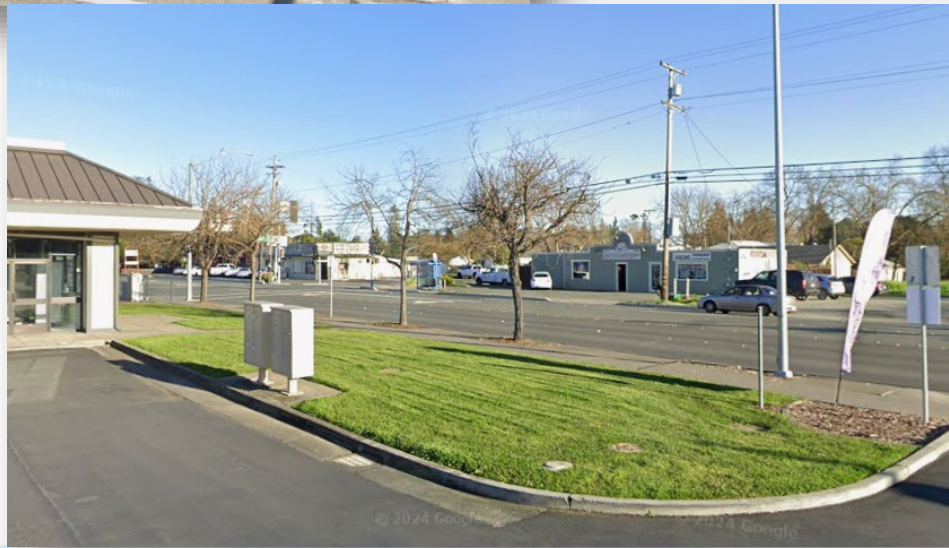
“If the only time you walk on the turf is to mow it, it is considered nonfunctional.”



NFT Examples



Business Parks
Deadline: Jan. 2028



HOA Common Areas
Deadline: Jan. 2029

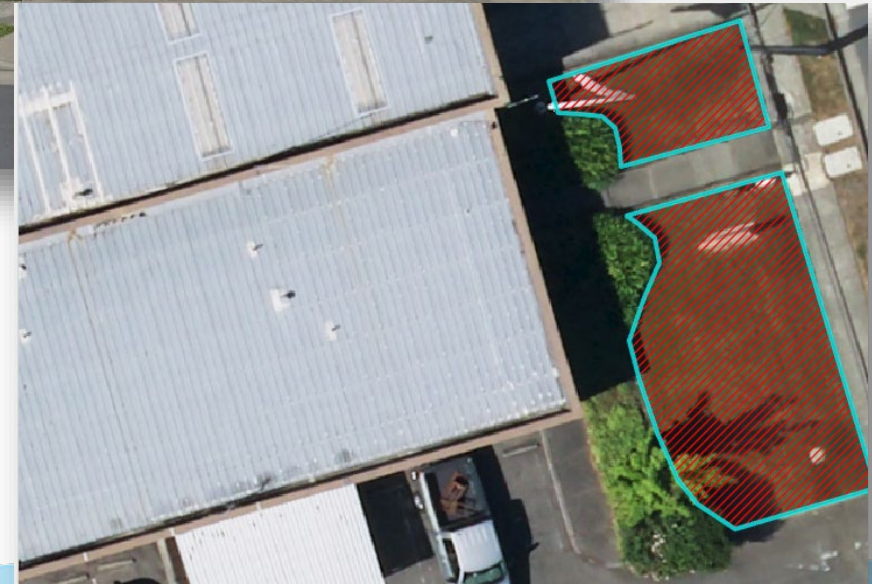
City of Santa Rosa Owned Facilities Compliance

- The City of Santa Rosa has **174 city-owned irrigation accounts**:
 - **141** attributed to city owned parks or recreation parcels, and
 - **33** attributed to all other city owned parcels.
- GIS review and select site reconnaissance conducted to identify areas of NFT with potable irrigation. A total of **two sites** identified as meeting compliance criteria.
- Parks and recreational areas deemed excluded due to “functional” turf designation and presence of established trees.

Santa Rosa Facilities Compliance – Fire Station #3

- Approx 1,000 square feet of NFT
- Estimated landscaping costs (\$7-11/sq. ft) = \$7,000 - \$11,000

**Note: Project would qualify for \$1,000 Cash-For-Grass rebate*



NFT Communication Plan

- Notification letters mailed to all affected accounts (Aug 2026)
- WaterSmart branded fact sheets and guidance documents
- City webpage: www.srcity.org/NFT
- City email: NFT@srcity.org
- Commercial landscape transformation resources (in development):
 - ✓ Groundcover alternatives
 - ✓ Irrigation modifications and best practices
 - ✓ Low-cost approaches – sheetmulching demonstration

WaterSmart Rebates



Cash for Grass Rebate

Low-water landscapes can be vibrant, beautiful gardens! We can help offset some of the costs of your new garden with our rebate program, \$1/sq ft of lawn removed!

Commercial: \$10,000 annually/ meter



Irrigation Efficiency Rebate

Is your controller from the 1980s? Have you been thinking of converting your spray system to drip irrigation? You may be eligible for a rebate.

Commercial: \$1,000 lifetime cap/meter

Water Waste Regulations

- Santa Rosa City Code Chapter 14-21 Water Waste Regulations adopted by City Council in 1999*
- Purpose: *To promote the efficient use of potable and recycled water by prohibiting water uses which constitute water waste.*
- Enforcement – City may:
 - Issue a written warning
 - Issue administrative fines
 - Disconnect water service

*(Ord. 2023-014, 11/14/2023, Ord. 3845 § 7, 2007; Ord. 3426 § 2, 1999)

Water Waste Regulation – Proposed Revisions

- Definitions (§ 14-21.020):
 - 13 added (*verbatim of statute*)
 - “water waste” includes new reference to potable irrigation of NFT
- Prohibition of irrigating nonfunctional turf (§ 14-21.050):
NEW (*verbatim of statute*)
- Enforcement (§ 14-21.060): Reference to NEW prohibition, enforcement mechanism not modified.

**See Attachment 2 in agenda package*



Budget Impacts

- Adoption of this ordinance has no immediate budget impact.
- Potential long-term costs: customer compliance support, enforcement, and monitoring.
- Future funding requests will follow normal budgetary approval process.

Timeline for Approval

- ✓ WC Subcommittee – Overview of Code Changes (May 18th)
- ✓ BPU - Recommendation to Council (June 18th)
- ✓ City Council – Ordinance Introduction & Public Hearing (August 18th)
- City Council - Second Reading and Adoption of Ordinance (September 15)
- Proposed Effective Date (October 16 – *31 days following second reading*)



Recommendation

The Board of Public Utilities and Santa Rosa Water recommend that the Council approve the first reading and introduce an ordinance amending Santa Rosa City Code Chapter 14-21 Water Waste Regulations to include clarifying definitions, a prohibition for irrigating nonfunctional turf with potable water, compliance deadlines per affected property type, enforcement provisions, and make other clarifying changes. This item has no impact on current fiscal year budget.

QUESTIONS?

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING