

Your questions answered about the new watering rules

Despite a wetter-than-normal July, August came and went with little meaningful rainfall — and forecasters say there's not much relief in sight. And so year five of San Antonio's current drought marches on.

On the plus side, the new watering rules are helping. Since Stage 3 was declared in June, SAWS customers have been using less water and average water bills are lower.

As a reminder, new Stage 3 watering hours for sprinklers — in-ground and hose-end — are **5-10 a.m. and 9 p.m. to midnight on your watering day**. You can still water with a hand-held hose any time, any day.

Here are answers to a few common questions about the new rules.

Can I water earlier than 9 p.m. to midnight if I don't have an in-ground sprinkler system? Yes! If you water with a hose-end sprinkler, you can apply for a variance at saws.org/hose to water earlier in the evening. (Tip: Call 210-704-SAVE to schedule a free irrigation consultation and earn a \$450 rebate to permanently remove your irrigation system — even if it's not working!)

What's the difference between hand watering and hose-end sprinkler use?

Hand watering means you're holding the hose to apply water. That's allowed any time, any day. Hose-end sprinklers are placed on the ground and left operating for some period of time. Soaker hoses are similar. Both can only be used on your assigned watering day during approved times.

Can I get a variance to water newly installed grass and avoid the surcharge?

No, laying down new grass at this time is discouraged and variances will not be provided unless the site is new construction. Even if you hand water your new grass, the surcharge will still apply.

Can I do any new landscaping during the drought?

Yes, but plan carefully to make sure you'll be able to hand water what you plant. September through November is the best time to plant trees, evergreen shrubs and WaterSaver perennials. It's also a great time to expand your deck or patio with our Outdoor Living Rebate. Remember: In-ground irrigation (including drip) should not be in new WaterSaver planting areas.



Fall planting season is on the horizon

It may not feel much cooler, but the days are getting shorter. That makes it the perfect time to enhance your outdoor living space and make water-saving changes to ease your budget.

Landscape lacking shade? Now's the time to get some trees in the ground. The milder temperatures provide excellent conditions for the roots to begin growing.

Craving color? Try these stunners:

- **Firecracker plant** makes a statement in bold

red that hummingbirds love, too.

- **Gulf muhly grasses** look magical in fall, with dainty pink seed heads waving in the breeze.
- **Fall aster** is a pop of purple perfect for pollinators.

Ready to get started? Through Oct. 15, SAWS residential customers can apply for up to four \$100 WaterSaver coupons to replace some of that thirsty lawn with colorful, drought-tolerant plants.

Apply today at GardenStyleSA.com/coupons.



Event Calendar

Second Thursday at the McNay

Oct. 10

McNay Art Museum
6000 N. New Braunfels Ave.
mcnay.org/event

Second Saturday Habitat Work Day

Oct. 12

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center
10750 Pleasonton Road
mitchelllake.audubon.org

Tree Walk: Urban Forestry Tour

Oct. 17

San Antonio Botanical Garden
555 Funston Place
sabot.org/events

Muertos Fest

Oct. 26-27

Hemisfair
630 E. Nueva St.
muertosfest.com



Customer Service and 24-hour Emergency
210-704-SAWS (7297)
saws.org/waternews

Maximize microclimates for outdoor comfort

Imagine traversing your landscape as an ant or other small bug. Would it seem like traveling from the depths of a cool forest to a blazing hot desert?

Microclimates occur where topography, light, water, heat, wind and soil conditions vary.

With a little microclimate know-how and smart landscape design, you can maximize your comfort and enjoyment outdoors.

- Planting a tree can help cool your yard during the hottest months.



- Buildings and fences provide shade and protected areas that are warmer in winter as they hold and radiate heat.

- Native shrubs help block the view of neighbors while providing habitat for wildlife.
- Shade structures like slats or lattices allow breezes to flow.

It takes a bit of trial and error to find the right plants for the right places. But it can add beauty and create a harmonious,

comfortable outdoor space.

Manholes smoking? That's aquifer protection in action.

As part of SAWS' ongoing effort to protect the quality of our Edwards Aquifer drinking water supply, the utility is testing sewers in the Recharge Zone.

Contractors are flowing a non-toxic smoke through sewer lines — including those on private property — to locate breaks that could leak sewage.



A notice will be placed on every door before testing begins, and you don't need to be present for testing to occur. Workers will not enter your home or business, but they may temporarily access your yard. Securing your pets may be necessary for a short period of time.

Smoke testing will take place through the first part of 2025. To learn more, visit saws.org/smoke.

Monarch Butterfly Festival takes flight Oct. 5

Immerse yourself in the educational event that celebrates migrating monarchs, pollinators and the ecosystems that sustain them during the annual festival Saturday, Oct. 5 at Brackenridge Park.

Activities include monarch tagging demos, educational booths, a monarch migration obstacle course and the "People as Pollinators"



experiment where everyone becomes a pollinator for the day!

The free event happens 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is held in partnership with Blooming with Birdie and supports the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and the City of San Antonio as a Monarch Champion City.

For more information about the festival, visit brackenridgepark.org.