

## SAM – ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

### LANDSCAPING PRACTICES

1821.5

(New 10/2015)

State building and facility managers will adopt the following landscaping practices:

- Reduce landfill waste material and water use;
- Promote the purchase of sustainable plant and maintenance materials; and
- Maintain a healthier outdoor environment.

These practices apply to all grounds and building exterior maintenance and landscape projects occurring on site\* and will be followed by on-site staff participating contractors and vendors. They include:

- A. Existing Landscapes: Should be maintained to survive the drought with reclaimed water whenever possible. Protect high priority landscape elements such as existing trees, ground covers and shrubs. Protect all slopes from erosion. Convert conventional spray heads or rotors to drip and/or low precipitation rate nozzles. A minimum three inch (3") layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed soil surfaces of planting areas except in turf areas, creeping or rooting groundcovers, or direct seeding applications.
- B. Existing Lawns: During a declared drought, low priority landscapes such as lawns without trees shall be watered only to the extent to a minimum to control dust and erosion. The University of California, Davis publication, Managing Turfgrasses during Drought, provides useful information on warm-season and cool-season grasses in California. Trees in lawn areas that provide shade to buildings and hardscapes are high priority. Add drip irrigation around the drip line of the tree or water slowly and deeply with a trickling hose to increase survival rate. Trees can develop Phytophthora root rot if soil around their base remains wet for long periods. To prevent excessive growth, do not fertilize lawns. Follow the US Composting Council guidelines when using compost to retain moisture on existing lawns.

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*\* Refer to latest version of the California Department of Water Resource's model water efficiency landscape ordinance, section 490.1(e) for exceptions.*

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(Continued)

### LANDSCAPING PRACTICES

1821.5 (Cont. 1)

(New 10/2015)

- C. Low Water Use Landscape: All new and rehabilitation landscape projects shall comply with the latest version of the California Department of Water Resource's model water efficiency landscape ordinance ([MWELO, 2015 Revision](#)).
- D. Irrigation: Installation of irrigation sub-meters, flow meters, master valves and smart irrigation controllers are recommended. Overhead irrigation shall be scheduled between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. unless weather conditions prevent it. If allowable hours of irrigation differ from the local water purveyor, the stricter of the two shall apply. Operation of the irrigation system outside the normal watering window is allowed for auditing and system maintenance. Observe irrigation cycles and if water is running off, adjust irrigation timers to run for less time, but more frequently (as allowed). Establish a water budget for the landscape based on the plants, landscape area and local climate, and schedule irrigation based on the weather, soil type and to meet the water budget. ([Click here for cycle and soak methods.](#))
- E. Sustainable Grounds and Landscape Maintenance Practices: Sustainable landscaping practices produce significant economic and environmental benefits. Savings include reduced labor, water and fertilizer cost, lower hauling expenses and disposal fees. Standard landscaping practices include grass- cycling, lawn aeration, mulching, and composting practices that enhance the soil. These practices increase the water-holding capacity of soil, reduce erosion, and conserve water. Where appropriate, choose plants that are native or of low water use and are non-invasive to the area; consider mature plant size as it relates to available planting space to reduce pruning needs.
- F. Erosion, Sedimentation Control and Storm Water Retention: Follow recommendations for prevention of erosion, storm water pollution and reducing peak runoff found in 5.106.1 Storm Water Pollution Prevention (p.31), 5.106.10 Grading and Paving (p.34) in the [2013 California Green Building Standards Code](#) (or current edition). Where possible, incorporate A5.106.2 Storm Water Design (page 100) and A5.106.3 Low Impact Development (LID)(page100).