CITY OF LONG BEACH

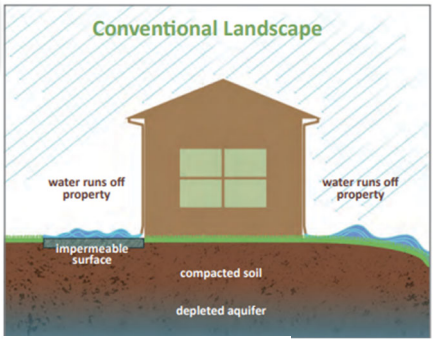
Community Development Department
Planning Bureau
411 W. Ocean Blvd, 3rd Flr, Long Beach, CA 90802
562.570.6194 | longbeach.gov/lbcd/planning/

Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO)
PRESCRIPTIVE Compliance Checklist

INTRODUCTION

About 40% of the water Californians use at home is used outdoors. Large water savings can be gained by efficient landscape design, installation, management, and maintenance. This is accomplished by choosing climate adapted plants, improving soil conditions, using, and maintaining high efficiency irrigation equipment and managing the irrigation schedule to fit the plants' water needs as they are influenced by local climate. To increase water efficiency and better use a valuable resource, rainwater and stormwater collection and graywater and recycled water can replace or augment potable water use in landscapes.

The state of California governs landscape water efficiency standards through the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO). To find out more about Long Beach's landscaping regulations visit www.longbeach.gov/MWELO.



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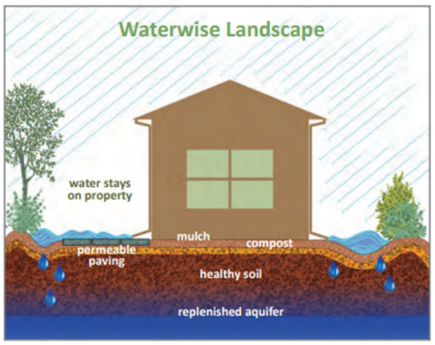

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APPLICABILITY

A MWELO permit is required if your project requires a building permit, plan check or design review and includes either:

- **New Construction projects** with a **total landscape area of 500 square feet** or more
  - New construction is defined as a new building with a landscape or other new landscape such as a park, playground or greenbelt without an associated building.
- **Rehabilitated Landscapes** with a **total landscape area of 2500 square feet** or more
  - Rehabilitated landscape is defined as any relandscaping project that requires a permit, plan check, or design review, and the modified landscape area (all planting areas, turf areas, and water features) is equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet.

For information on landscaping and rebates visit Long Beach Utilities. No MWELO permit required.

COMPLIANCE PATHWAYS

There are two pathways for MWELO compliance: Prescriptive or Performance.

- For landscape areas **between 500-2500 square feet, either Performance or Prescriptive** is required depending on the project scope.
- For landscape areas **2500 square feet or more, the Performance** pathway is required.

PROCESS

1) Determine your MWELO compliance pathway and review the appropriate checklist for your Landscape Documentation Package.
2) **Complete the Landscape and Irrigation Section** of the Building Permit Application and submit your completed application landscape package **in person** at the Permit Center.
3) Landscape Documentation Package review by the Planning Bureau.
4) Permit approval
5) Provide a copy of the Landscape Documentation Package and drawings to property owner.
6) **Initial rough irrigation inspection** at the start of work by Planning Bureau.
7) **Final Inspection** by Planning Bureau and **Certificate of Completion Package submittal**
8) Certificate of Completion Package approval

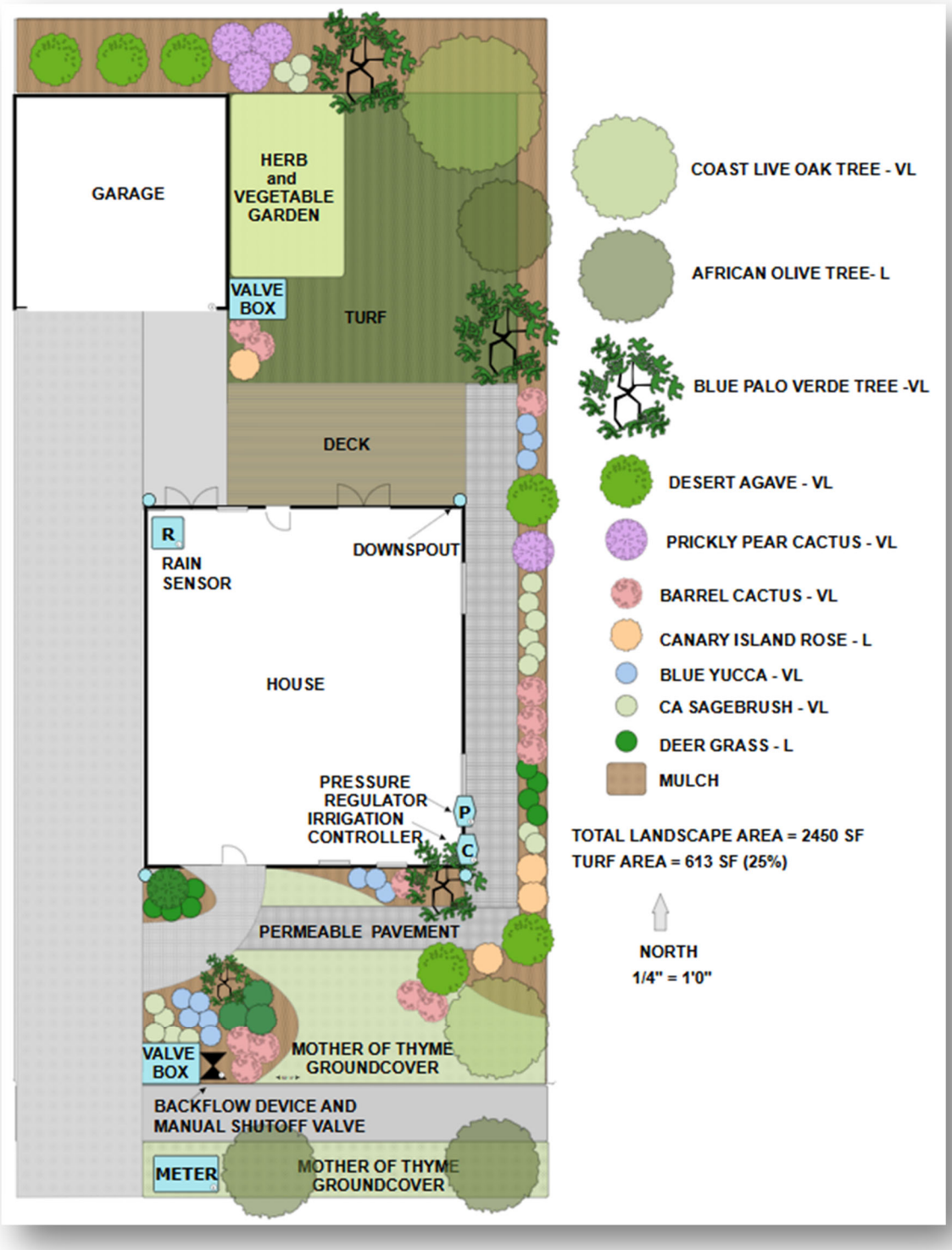
Part 1: LANDSCAPE PACKAGE COMPONENTS – PRESCRIPTIVE PATHWAY

Submit a Landscape Documentation package which includes the following:

- *Building Application that includes:*
  - ☐ Date
  - ☐ Project Applicant
  - ☐ Project Address
  - ☐ Total Landscape Area in square feet including special landscape, turf and plant areas)
  - ☐ Project Type (residential, non-residential, new or rehabilitated landscape)
  - ☐ Water Supply Type (potable, recycled, well)
  - ☐ Water Supplier
  - ☐ Applicant Signature
- *Landscape Design Plan that includes:*
  - ☐ Plot plan including lot, structures and landscape
  - ☐ Location of irrigation components including:
    - ☐ Water meter
    - ☐ Irrigation controller
    - ☐ Pressure regulator
    - ☐ Manual shut-off valve(s)
    - ☐ Backflow device
  - ☐ Total landscape area (sq. ft.)
  - ☐ Breakdown of turfgrass and a plant legend
    - ☐ Plants must be identifiable by botanical name, common name or cultivar
    - ☐ Indicate compliance with all requirements in Part 2

Need ideas for your landscape plans? Visit our partner Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's waterwise garden website for landscape plant lists, irrigation tips, maintenance schedules and more, specifically designed for Southern California climates.

Sample Landscape Plot Plan



Part 2: LANDSCAPE PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS – PRESCRIPTIVE PATHWAY

The following requirements are mandatory and must be documented in the Landscape Package.

Compost and Mulch

- ☐ **Compost** rate of **at least four (4) cubic yards per 1,000 square feet to a depth of six (6) inches** into the landscape area. (Soils with greater than 6% organic matter in the top six (6) inches of soil are exempt from adding compost and tilling).
- ☐ A **minimum three-inch (3) layer of organic mulch** shall be applied to all exposed soil surfaces of planting areas except in turf areas, creeping or rooting groundcovers, or direct seeing applications where mulch is contra-indicated.

Plant Material

- ☐ For **residential landscapes**, climate adapted plants that require occasional, little, or no summer water (**WUCOLS category "L" or "VL") for 75%** of the plant area excluding areas using recycled water. WUCOLS Plant Search Database
- ☐ For **non-residential landscapes**, climate adapted plants that require occasional, little, or no summer water (**WUCOLS category "L" or "VL") for 100%** of the plant area excluding and areas using recycled water. WUCOLS Plant Search Database
- ☐ Parkway trees shall be chosen from the Public Works Approved Street Tree List

Turfgrass

- ☐ For **residential landscapes**: turf shall **not exceed 25%** of the landscape area.
- ☐ For **non-residential landscapes**: turf is **prohibited** unless recycled water is used.
- ☐ **Turf shall not be planted on sloped areas** that exceed a slope of one foot vertical elevation change for every four feet of horizontal length.
- ☐ **Turf is prohibited in parkways**
- ☐ **Must be irrigated by sub-surface irrigation** that creates no overspray/runoff.

Irrigation Systems

- ☐ For **non-residential projects** with landscape areas of 1,000 sq. ft. or more, **a dedicated irrigation meter** or private submeter(s) to measure landscape water use are required.
- ☐ **Automatic irrigation controllers** are required and must use either **evapotranspiration** (weather-based) or **soil moisture** (sensor-based) data and utilize a **rain sensor**.
- ☐ **Irrigation controllers** shall be of a type that **does not lose memory** if the power source is lost.
- ☐ **Pressure regulating devices**, which may include pressure boosters or reducers, shall be installed to ensure the dynamic pressure of the system is within the recommended pressure range.
- ☐ **Manual shut-off valves** (such as a gate, ball or butterfly valve) shall be installed as close as possible to the point of connection of the water supply.
- ☐ **Landscape areas less than 10 ft in width** in any direction shall be **irrigated with subsurface irrigation** or other means that produce no water waste, runoff or overspray.
- ☐ **Non-rotating spray sprinkler bodies** are required to meet the standards described in the California Code of regulations, Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 4, Section 1605.3(x).
- ☐ **All irrigation emission devices** must meet the requirements set by ANSI in the 2020 ASABE/ICC 802 Landscape Irrigation Sprinkler and Emitter Standard
- ☐ **All sprinkler heads** installed in the landscape must document a low-quart distribution uniformity of 0.65 or higher using the protocol defined in 2020 ASABE/ICC 802 Standard.

Part 3: PERSCRIPTIVE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION PACKAGE – Page 1 of 2

The Certificate of Compliance Package is completed to certify that the landscape project has been installed in accordance with MWELO and is **submitted to the Planning Bureau at final inspection**.

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Date: _____

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Name		Company	
Project Applicant		Street Address	
Email Address		City	
Phone		State	Zip Code

PROJECT

Street Address		City	
State		Zip Code	
Parcel Number		Lat-Lon (optional)	
Water Purveyor		Water Supply Type	

PROPERTY OWNER or DESIGNEE

Name		Company	
Additional Name		Street Address	
Email Address		City	
Phone		State	Zip Code

IRRIGATION SCHEDULING PARAMENTERS

Check that the following are accepted and understood:

- ☐ All irrigation schedules shall be developed, managed, and evaluated to utilize the minimum amount of water required to maintain plant health and prevent water waste.
- ☐ Irrigation scheduling shall be regulated by automatic irrigation controllers.
- ☐ Overhead irrigation systems shall only be scheduled between 4 p.m. and 9 a.m.
- ☐ Water landscape a maximum of 10 minutes per station per watering day, or to the point of runoff, whichever occurs first.
- ☐ No watering landscape during the first 48 hours after rainfall.
- ☐ No watering landscape or using water that results in runoff that flows onto neighboring properties, sidewalks paths, roadways, parking lots or structures.

To find more information on current water use restrictions or the Water Shortage Level visit Long Beach Utilities

Part 3: PERSCRIPTIVE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION PACKAGE – Page 2 of 2

Complete the following tables or attach all required parameters used to set the automatic irrigation controller for each of the following: the plant establishment period, the established landscape and temporarily irrigated areas. Include as many sheets as necessary.

Plant Establishment Period			
Irrigation Type		Root Depth setting	
Irrigation Interval (days)		Plant Type setting	
Irrigation Run Times (min)		Soil Type	
Number of Cycle Starts		Slope Factor setting	
Amount of applied water in a month (gal)		Shade Factor setting	
Application Rate (in/hr)		DU or IE setting[1]	
Established Landscape			
Irrigation Type		Root Depth setting	
Irrigation Interval (days)		Plant Type setting	
Irrigation Run Times (min)		Soil Type	
Number of Cycle Starts		Slope Factor setting	
Amount of applied water in a month (gal)		Shade Factor setting	
Application Rate (in/hr)		DU or IE setting[1]	
Temporarily Irrigated Areas			
Irrigation Type		Root Depth setting	
Irrigation Interval (days)		Plant Type setting	
Irrigation Run Times (min)		Soil Type	
Number of Cycle Starts		Slope Factor setting	
Amount of applied water in a month (gal)		Shade Factor setting	
Application Rate (in/hr)		DU or IE setting[1]	

[1]**Distribution uniformity** (DU) is a metric that provides a measurement of how evenly irrigation water is applied to an area. **Irrigation efficiency** (IE) is a metric that reflects the amount of water that is beneficially used by plants compared to the amount of water that is applied by an irrigation system.

CERTIFICATE OF INSTALLATION

Landscape Documentation Package Date Submitted: _____ Date Approved: _____

"I/we certify that based upon the periodic site observations, the work has been completed in accordance with MWELO and that the landscape planting and irrigation installation conform with the criteria and specifications of the approved Landscape Documentation Package"

☐ Where there have been significant changes made I the field during construction, these "as-built" or record drawings shall be included in the Certificate of Completion package.

☐ A diagram of the irrigation plan showing hydrozones shall be kept with the automatic irrigation controller for subsequent management processes.

Primary Designer of Record Signature (professional practitioner or applicant who designed the landscape) **Date**