

Check out our California Tan Living Well and Thriving During a Drought

Here at the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation, we are doing everything we can to reduce water use... but we're not forgetting our mission.

We're committed to preserving natural and cultural resources, especially when those resources are scarce. We also remain committed to offering high-quality recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages – in sync with the County's overarching vision to build a healthy, safe and thriving San Diego.

We've completed [dozens of projects](#) in recent years to reduce, reuse or recycle water. Some examples include the installation of smart irrigation devices at 20 County parks, saving 30-million gallons of water per year; opening three award-winning aquatic playgrounds built on recirculating filtration systems, which also serve as public cool zones; and replacing grass with drought-tolerant synthetic turf at seven sports complexes.

Now, faced with the worst drought since the early 1990s, we've coordinated a unified approach to water conservation by collaborating with 19 area water agencies and 16 city parks and recreation teams to launch conservation projects across 50,000 acres of park land. Partner cities include Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, El Cajon, Encinitas, Escondido, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Oceanside, Poway, San Diego, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach and Vista.

A common challenge at multiple locations is lawn maintenance. Grass needs a lot of water to stay green, making irrigation a prime opportunity for water conservation.

We surveyed all of our lawns – considering whether an area would become unsafe without grass or ineffective for sports and social occasions – and from there, identified areas that could offer great recreational experiences without the benefit of grass underfoot.

If you see more gold than green during your next park visit, don't worry! It means you've stumbled across one of our water conservation tactics in action. We are consciously allowing some of our lawns to return to their natural state, showing off their "California tans."

We all have a role to play in the preservation of this precious natural resource. Thank you for doing your part to reduce water use as we work to provide you with an even healthier and more sustainable parks system.

For more information on water conservation at County parks, visit www.sdparks.org . Bookmark the page and stay tuned for updates as new projects commence.

Another great resource is the San Diego County Water Authority, accessible online at <http://www.sdcwa.org/>.