



Reducing Nutrient Runoff

How Nurseries Can Help Keep The Rainbow Creek Watershed Clean

The Rainbow Creek Watershed is home to many nurseries just like yours. Activities conducted as part of operating a nursery can cause excess nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus, to end up in Rainbow Creek and impact water quality throughout our watershed. Because of this, **nurseries are required to reduce nutrient contributions to protect water quality.**

To help nurseries meet nutrient reduction goals, the County of San Diego has identified several practices to adopt that reduce nutrient contributions and prevent pollution in our watershed. There are four main categories: Nutrient Management, Personnel Training & Record Keeping, Erosion & Runoff Management, and **Irrigation Management** (summarized below). For full details on these particular goals and information on all management goals, please visit www.projectcleanwater.org/download/rainbow-creek-nutrient-reduction-and-management-plan/.



IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE: Improve the efficiency of your irrigation to minimize wasted water and prevent water from leaving your property (runoff).

Excess water used to irrigate plants can run off from your property, carrying fertilizers, sediment, and trash with it that contaminates local waterbodies. Properly managed irrigation systems can prevent this type of pollution by reducing runoff from your property. The following practices will assist in meeting your irrigation management goals that help protect our watershed.

PRACTICES:

- ❑ Conduct an irrigation audit annually to determine where upgrades, improvements, and/or repairs are needed.
- ❑ Create water zones by grouping pot sizes and/or plant types that need similar watering requirements & adjust equipment to match water needs.
- ❑ Use watering equipment with zone-appropriate flow rates; don't combine different flow types in one zone.
- ❑ Move plants as close together as possible to avoid watering surrounding areas & replace a plant with another once one has been removed.
- ❑ Adjust irrigation schedules when the weather changes and based on plant needs.
- ❑ Maintain your irrigation system & regularly check emitters to ensure the system is only watering plants and not surrounding areas.



DID YOU KNOW?

Making small changes like moving plants closer together and creating water zones can save you hundreds of gallons of water per year, which means more money in your pocket!

