

Planning, Building & Environmental Services



Zoning Text Amendment

Emily Hedge, Planner III



Agenda

- Introduction – State MWELO
- Background – Current County Code
- Proposed Ordinance – Text Amendment
- Recommendation – Next Steps



Introduction

- The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) is a statewide water efficiency regulation for new development and retrofitted landscapes.
- California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 23, Division 2, Chapter 2.7 Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance



Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance



Low water using plants, mulch, and efficient irrigation save water while making habitat for pollinators. DWR/2015

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.

New development and retrofitted landscape water efficiency standards are governed by the [Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance \(MWELO\)](#). The MWELO is also referenced by [Title 24, Part 11, Chapters 4 and 5 CalGreen Building Code](#). All local agencies must adopt, implement, and enforce the MWELO or a local Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) that is at least as effective as the MWELO. Usually, local agencies that adopt WELOs create a more stringent ordinance than MWELO.

Background – Current County Code

- In 1992 the Napa County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 1029 to add Napa County Code (NCC) Chapter 18.118 (Water Conservation Regulation for Landscape Design).
- This local program was implemented through Landscape Guidelines, adopted by Resolution No. 92-161.



Background – Current County Code

- Chapter 18.118 of the NCC and the Landscape Guidelines have not been amended since 1992.
- DWR amended portions of the MWELO in 2009, 2015, and 2025.
- MWELO is comprehensive and contains more up to date practices and data sources.



Proposed Ordinance – Text Amendment

- Primary proposed change
 - Include direct reference to California Code of Regulations.
- Benefits
 - Standardized documents simplifies review process for staff.
 - Standardized documentation for the annual reporting to DWR.
 - Code language does not become inconsistent with State regulations.
 - Removes the need to go through the Text Amendment process to update County code following future revisions to the MWELO.



Proposed Ordinance – Text Amendment

- Attachment A “Proposed Ordinance - Redlined” presents the proposed edits, shown in strikethrough and underline.
- Attachment B “Proposed Ordinance - Clean” shows the final ordinance language, should the ordinance be amended as proposed.



CEQA – Categorically Exempt

- Class 8 (“Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment”) which may be found in the Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA 14 CCR §15308; and
- The General Rule in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the proposed action may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore the CEQA is not applicable. See Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA 14 CCR §15061(b)(3).



Recommendation

- Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
- Find the proposed amendments exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Categorical Exemptions
- Adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 18.118 (Water Conservation Regulations for Landscape Design) of Title 18 (Zoning)



Thank you

Emily Hedge

emily.hedge@countyofnapa.org



@countyofnapa

