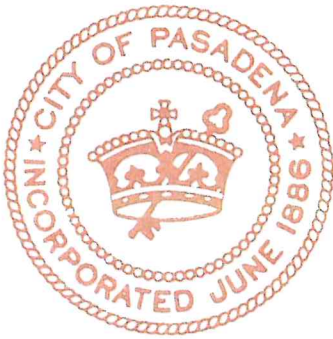




Agenda Report

August 31, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Municipal Services Committee (August 25, 2026)

FROM: Water and Power Department

SUBJECT: **DIRECT THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE AN ORDINANCE WITHIN 60 DAYS AMENDING CHAPTER 13.10 OF THE PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE TO INCLUDE NONFUNCTIONAL TURF WATERING REGULATIONS IN THE "DEFINITIONS" AND THE "PERMANENT WATER CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS" SECTIONS**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the action proposed herein is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15307 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of Natural Resources) and there are no features that distinguish the action from others in the exempt classes, and therefore, there are no unusual circumstances, and no other exception to the exemption applies; and
2. Direct the City Attorney to prepare and return with an ordinance within 60 days that amends Chapter 13.10 of the Pasadena Municipal Code ("PMC") to include nonfunctional turf watering regulations in the "Definitions" and the "Permanent Water Conservation Requirements" sections, as required by State Law and as described in this Agenda Report.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On August 25, 2026, the Municipal Services Committee considered the proposed actions and voted unanimously to approve staff's recommendation.

BACKGROUND:

Assembly Bill 1572 ("AB 1572") was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom on October 13, 2023. This legislation codified previous emergency water conservation

regulations put in place by the State Water Resources Control Board (“SWRCB”) during the 2020-2022 drought.

AB 1572 prohibits the use of potable water to irrigate nonfunctional turf (“NFT”) on commercial, industrial, and institutional (“CII”) properties, as well as public agencies, common areas of homeowners' associations (“HOAs”), and other specific entities as outlined in the legislation. NFT refers to decorative grass areas that do not serve a recreational or community purpose, such as turf in street medians, business parks, or office landscapes. The goal of this legislation is to prohibit the use of potable water to irrigate decorative grass areas, as continuing to do so does not align with the state’s ongoing efforts to reduce urban water demand, preserve critical water supplies, and mitigate the effects of climate change on California’s water resources.

The legislation phases in a statewide prohibition on the use of potable water to irrigate NFT under the following schedule:

- January 1, 2027: Applies to all properties owned by the Department of General Services, local governments, local or regional public agencies, and public water systems, except those located in disadvantaged communities.
- January 1, 2028: Extends to all other CII properties.
- January 1, 2029: Applies to common areas of HOAs, common interest developments, community service organizations, or similar entities.
- January 1, 2031: Extends to public properties in disadvantaged communities, contingent on the availability of state funding for turf conversion programs.

In addition to the statewide prohibition on potable water to irrigate NFT, AB 1572 requires public water systems to update local ordinances, regulations, or policies by January 1, 2027, to include the same prohibitions, and to notify customers by that date. PWP staff have been working with customers since 2023 to ensure they are aware of the upcoming requirements. Outreach includes workshops, emails, flyers, bill inserts, and site visits. Larger property owners (properties with more than 5,000 square feet of irrigated area) will be required to certify compliance with the SWRCB beginning in 2030 and 2031, depending on the property type.

Pasadena Water and Power is a public water system and must therefore update the PMC to reflect these new prohibitions, ensuring compliance with state mandates. In adherence with AB 1572, the following updates are recommended to Chapter 13.10.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

The proposed amendments aim to update language in Chapter 13.10 to be current and consistent with State Law. The recommended changes to the PMC are listed below:

- Add the following statement to Chapter 13.10.20 – Definitions, to incorporate and maintain consistency with the definitions in the appropriate section of the Water Code.

- “Any CAPITALIZED terms contained within this Chapter that are not defined in Chapter 13.10.20, are defined by Section 10608.12 of the California Water Code, as may be amended from time to time.”
- Amend Chapter 13.10.032 – Permanent water conservation requirements, to include the addition of items Q and R, aligning with regulatory language from AB 1572.
 - “Q. The use of potable water for the irrigation of NONFUNCTIONAL TURF located on COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, and INSTITUTIONAL properties (other than cemeteries) and on properties of HOMEOWNERS’ ASSOCIATIONS, COMMON INTEREST DEVELOPMENTS, and COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS or similar entities is prohibited as of the following dates:
 1. All properties owned by the Department of General Services, beginning January 1, 2027.
 2. All properties owned by local governments, local or regional public agencies, and public water systems, except those specified in paragraph (5), beginning January 1, 2027.
 3. All other INSTITUTIONAL properties and all COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL properties, beginning January 1, 2028.
 4. All COMMON AREAS of properties of HOMEOWNERS’ ASSOCIATIONS, COMMON INTEREST DEVELOPMENTS, and COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS or similar entities, beginning January 1, 2029.
 5. All properties owned by local governments, local or regional public agencies, and public water systems in a DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITY, beginning January 1, 2031, or the date upon which a state funding source is made available to fund conversion of NONFUNCTIONAL TURF on these properties to climate-appropriate landscapes, whichever is later.”
 - “R. Notwithstanding item Q, the use of potable water is not prohibited by this section to the extent necessary to ensure the health of trees and other perennial nonturf plantings, or to the extent necessary to address an immediate health and safety need.”

Amendments to Chapter 13.10 as approved by City Council will be included in the final version of the ordinance, which will be drafted by the City Attorney’s Office within 60 days of that direction by the City Council.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

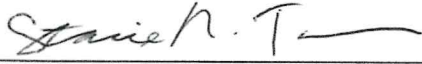
The proposed ordinance changes are consistent with the 2020 Water System and Resource Plan, the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan, the City of Pasadena’s Climate Action Plan goals to reduce potable water use, and the City Council Strategic Planning Goals to increase conservation and sustainability.

agencies, authorized by state law or local ordinance, to assure maintenance of a natural resource, such as water, where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the resource and no construction is included. The proposed action is necessary to comply with state law and aims to conserve water by banning the use of potable water to irrigate non-functional ornamental grass. No construction activities are included in this action.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended action does not have any immediate impact on the annual budget for the Water Fund. The ordinance itself fulfills the state-mandated requirement to prohibit potable water use for irrigating NFT and aligns with AB 1572 and Water Code section 10608.14. Any programs to be developed to support the implementation of this ordinance, including public education, incentive programs, and education classes, will utilize existing budgeted appropriations in the Water Fund (Fund 402). There is no impact to the General Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

 *for David Reyes*

DAVID M. REYES
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Water and Power Department

Prepared by:



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Water and Power Department

Approved by:



MATTHEW E. HAWKESWORTH
Interim City Manager