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COMMUNITY, LOCAL NEWS

The Solana Center for Environmental Innovation shares water conservation tips

California has suffered three consecutive years of drought, leading 97 percent of the state to experience severe drought conditions, according to the United States Drought Monitor.

by Sarah Berjan
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by Photo via Unsplash

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The state's Water Resources Control Board has implemented several measures among local water authorities to curb water use among residents. The [Solana Center for Environmental Innovation](#), an Encinitas-based nonprofit organization focused on environmental protection, reminds residents that every drop counts.

According to Jessica Toth, executive director of the nonprofit Solana Center, California is experiencing one of its worst droughts in the past hundred years. Nearly 60 percent of the state is in an extreme drought situation.

“We need to start thinking about how this affects all corners of our communities, because when food is wasted, so are all of the resources that went into producing it—land, labor, fuel, energy, and most of all water. Wildfires become a bigger threat because of these drought conditions. Inflation also plays a factor, as residents are grappling with high prices and need effective, low-cost ways to decrease their water bill,” Toth said.

In order to help curb water use and prevent exacerbating California's dire situation, the Solana Center for Environmental Innovation recommends that residents and business owners use the following water conservation tips:

- Collect rainwater and moisture from morning dew in an easy-to-install [rain barrel](#) and use that to water your plants, since this water is far better for your garden than chlorinated tap water.
- Use mulch and compost in your garden to reduce your watering needs by as much as 40 percent. Want to go even further? Learn to compost your food scraps, and use the nutrient-rich compost to make your garden healthy and water-efficient.
- Learn how to plant and care for drought-tolerant plants (Solana Center offers demos on-site at their headquarters in Encinitas)
- Set up a [greywater system](#) that diverts your used water from your sinks, showers, or even laundry to your garden and landscaping. Learn how to set one of these up, and find out more about rain barrels, cisterns

composting, and other water-saving techniques at Solana Center's regular Green Living Tours at their Encinitas headquarters.

- Stay informed about countywide rebates and financial incentive programs that will help you make your home more water efficient, such as installing rain barrels and rain gutters or replacing your lawn with water-smart alternatives.
- Be mindful of food waste by shopping smart and planning your meals. Giving leftovers a second chance as well as buying slightly damaged fruit and vegetables is also a major way to avoid having perfectly edible food end up in your garbage.

The Solana Center for Environmental innovation will be hosting an "All About Worms" workshop on Aug. 13 from 10 a.m.- 12 p.m. at San Ysidro. The vermicomposting workshop will teach community members how to turn food waste into nutrient-rich casting for gardens, and the benefits of composting with worms.

According to the Solana Center, wasted food consumes 5.9 trillion gallons of fresh water, 140 millions acres of cropland, and 35.5 million tons in landfills.

[Click here to register for the All About Worms workshop.](#)