

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

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Course Correcting Your Incentive Program

October 2, 2019

Metropolitan Water District

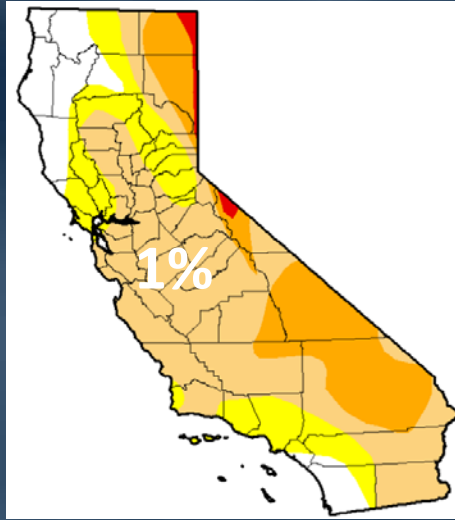


Drought Conditions Leading to 2015

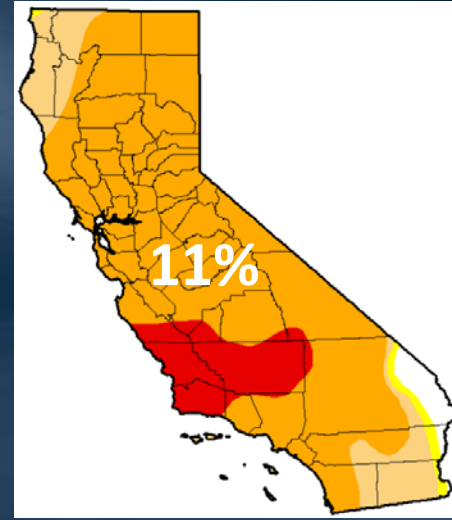
OCT 2011



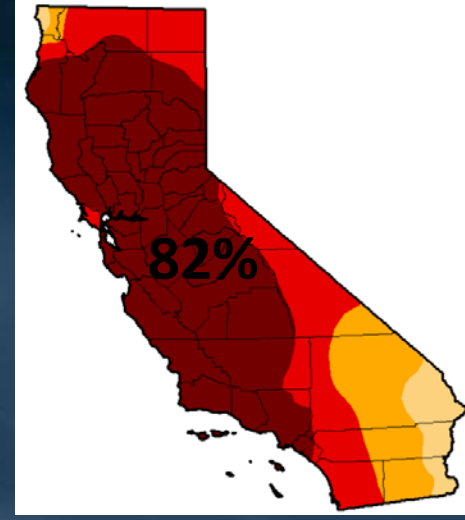
OCT 2012



OCT 2013



OCT 2014



None

Abnormal

Moderate

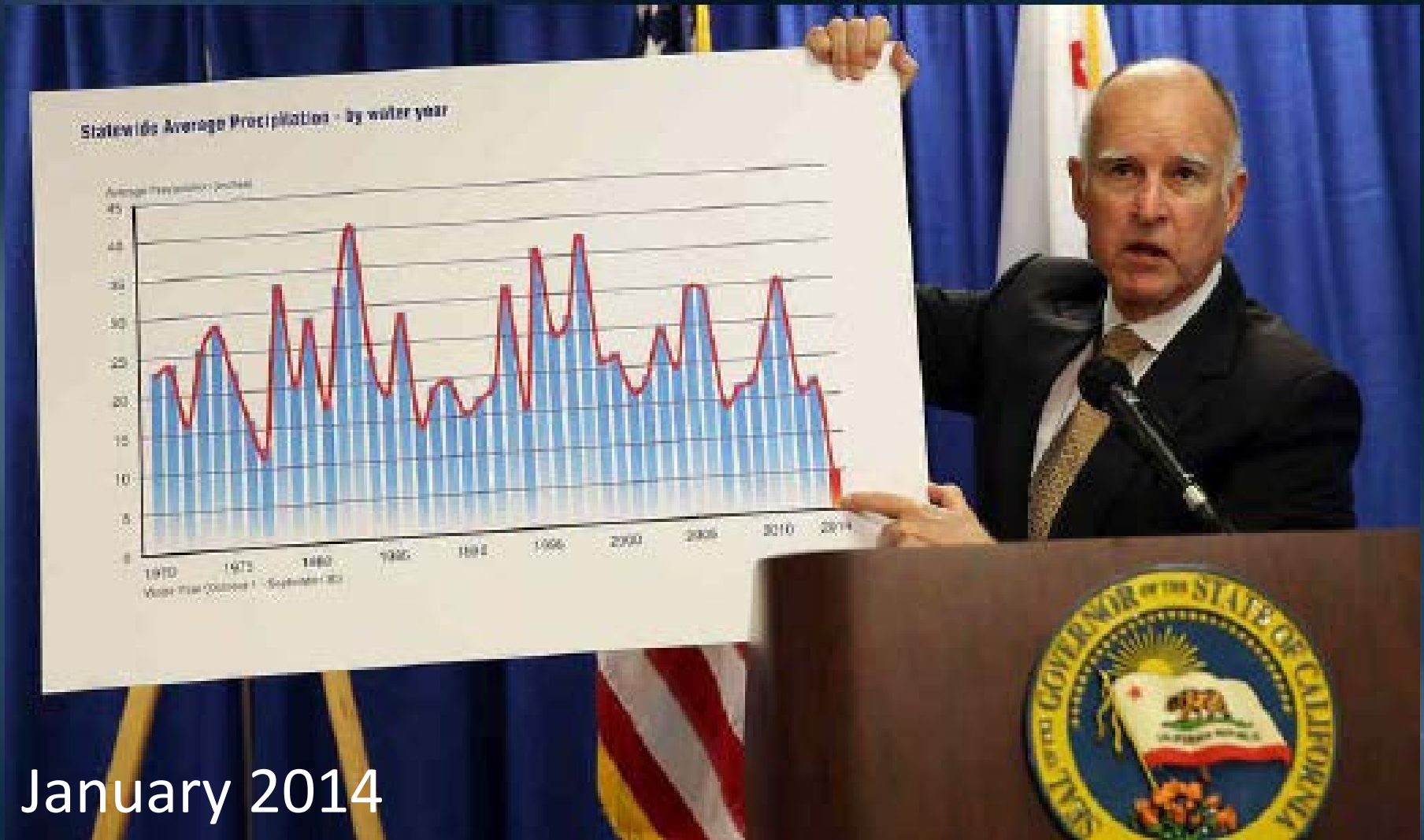
Severe

Extreme

Exceptional

Extreme and Exceptional Intensity Percentage

Governor Declares Drought Emergency



Phillips Snow Course

Gov. Brown Issues Call For Mandatory 25%
Water Reduction With No End In Sight
For Drought



April 1, 2015

First time in 75
years with no
snow

History of Turf Removal Program

- Member Agency Administered program in 2008
- Initially \$0.30/Sq. Ft.
- Increased to \$1/Sq. Ft. with grant funds in 2011
- Board approved maintaining rebate at \$1 when grants ended in 2013



Budget Growth



Southland water district OKs \$350 million more for lawn-replacement rebates



From
here

Denise Hurst of Long Beach shows the drought-tolerant garden she planted with the help of a city program that offers rebates of \$3.50 per square foot for residents who tear up their water-guzzling lawns and plant drought-resistant plants. Board members of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California voted Tuesday to add \$350 million to the district's lawn-removal rebate program. (Nick Ut / Associated Press)

Southland water district ends popular lawn-removal rebate program



to

there

Ruben Hernandez removes turf to make room for a 12-foot decomposed granite pathway at the Miller Coors brewery in Irwindale. (Gary Friedman / Los Angeles Times)

Regional Turf Removal Program

- January 2014 - Launched
- May 2014 - Board increased rebate to \$2/Sq. Ft as important drought response
- July 2014 – Staff implement additional policies for “Large Turf” reservations over \$100,000
 - Detailed site maps
 - MWD site inspections before and after
 - Rebates limited to project costs
 - Allowance for reservations over 120 days

Turf Removal Program Objectives

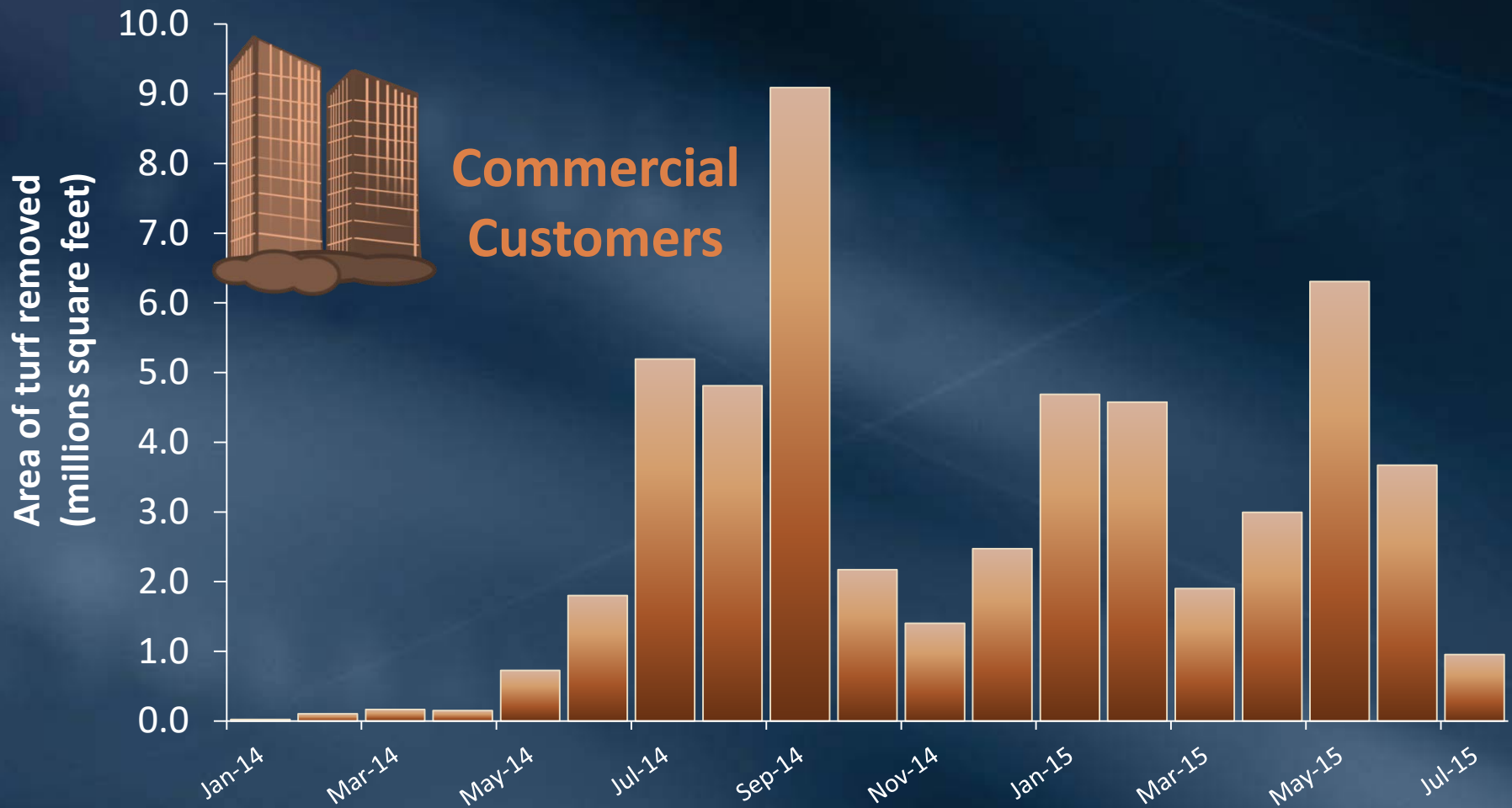
- Accelerate the region's ability to comply with 20% water use reduction by 2020
- Increase public awareness of water efficient landscaping
- Transform the market toward more efficient outdoor water use practices
- Act as an option for increased water savings during critical drought periods

Residential Interest in Turf Removal



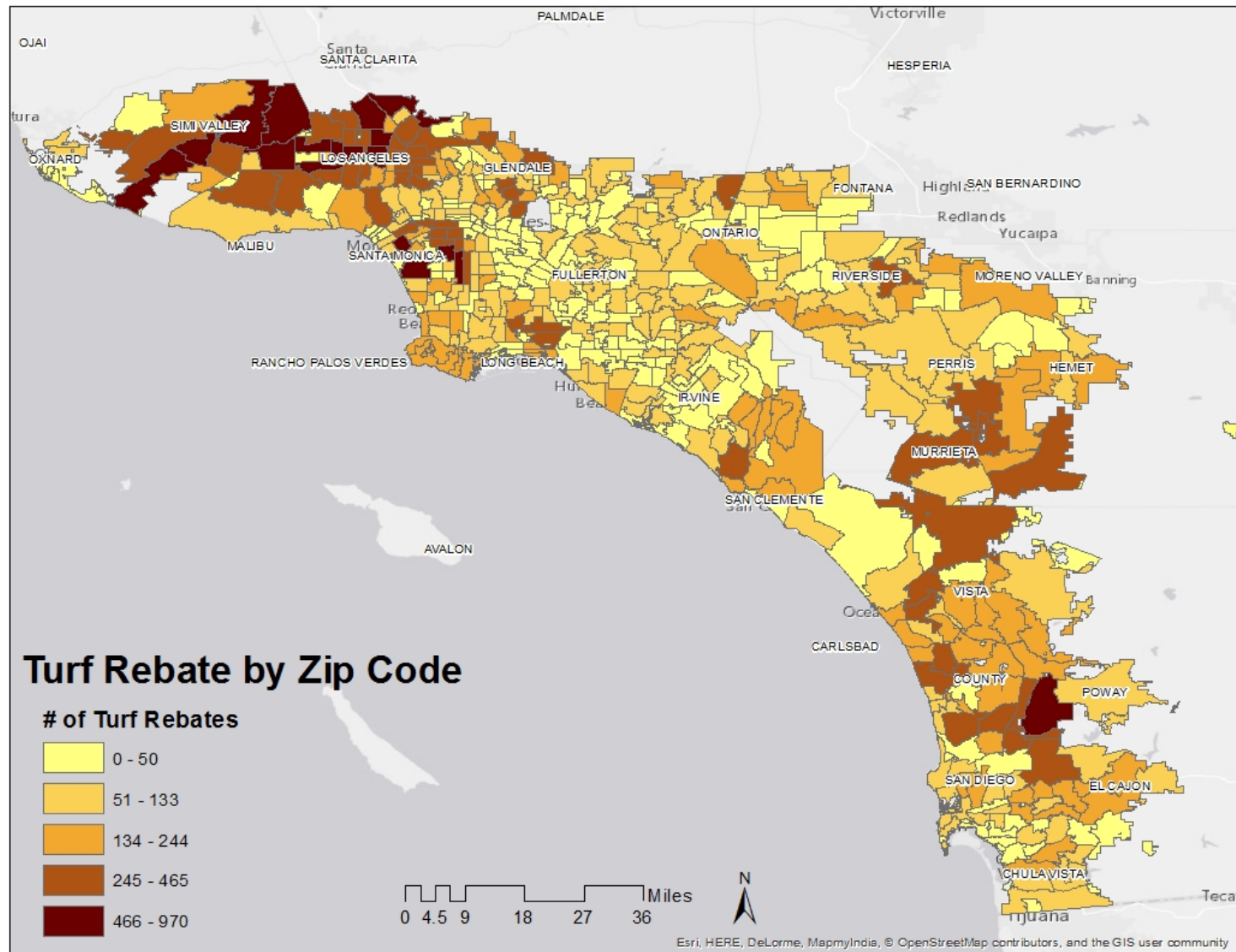
Date indicates when application was submitted. All projects indicated have been completed.

Commercial Customers Also Interested



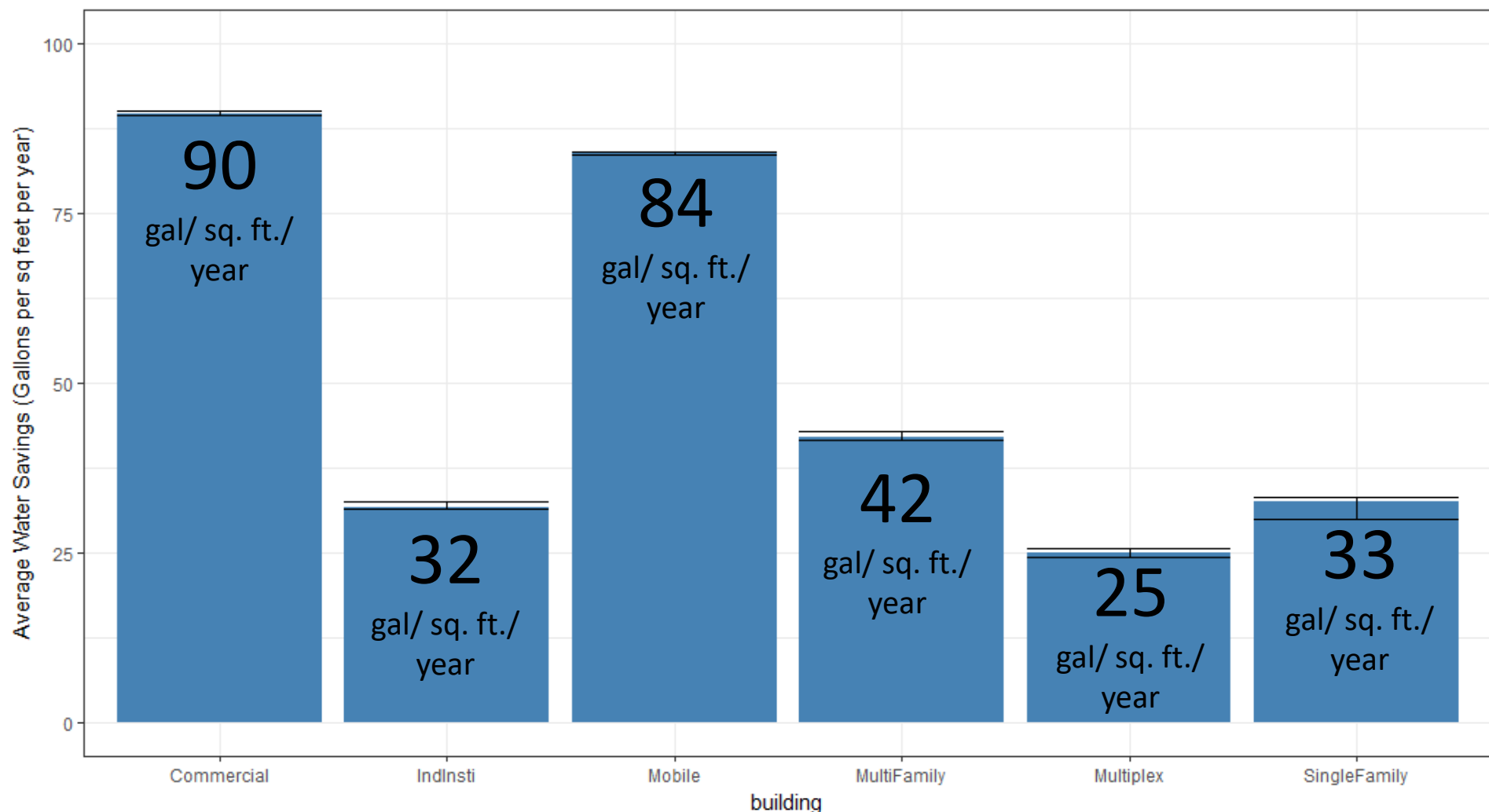
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Turf Removal Distribution



Average Water Savings

(Gallons per square feet of turf removed per year)





**LESSONS
LEARNED**



Program Size

Hard to implement:

- Percent of plant coverage
- Design plans
- Native only
- Inches of mulch
- Pre-post inspection
- Sheet mulching



What to do next?

- Program ended completely in 2016
- MWD Board returns to Water Supply Watch Condition
- Alliance for Water Efficiency audit
 - Add staff
 - Reconvene Program Advisory Committee to discuss a new turf program

Landscape Transformation Program

- Multi-pronged approach to maximize water utilization and conservation
- Plant density requirements
- Incorporates watershed components to capture runoff
- Water efficient irrigation

NEW!



LANDSCAPE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

COMING SOON!

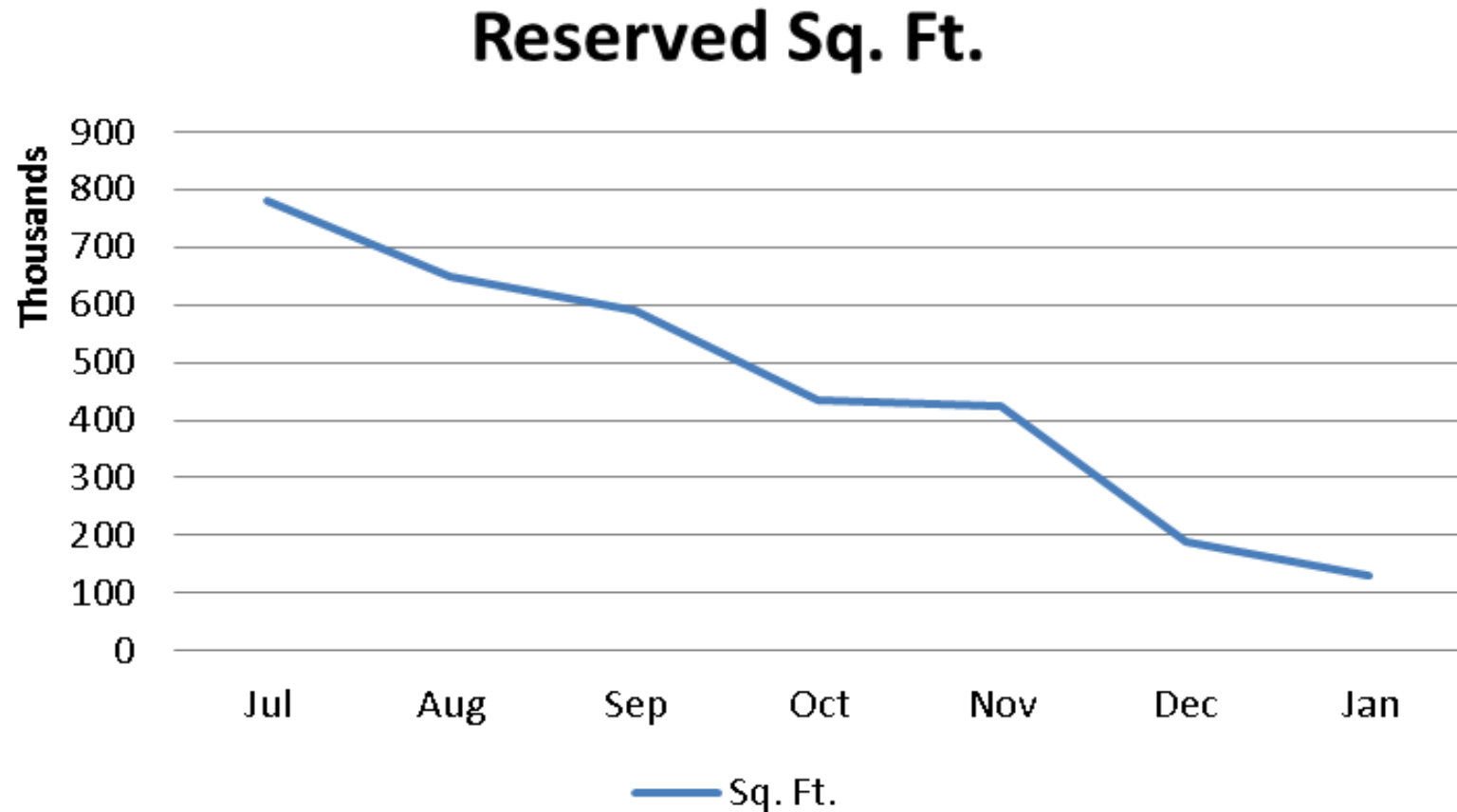
Replace your existing lawn with a drought-resistant landscape and receive a rebate. Click below to find out more.

[Learn More](#)



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Program Activity



Success or Failure?

- Program goals
 - Water savings
 - Sustainability
- Expectation v. Reality
 - Drought v. Non-drought periods
 - Budget
 - Application numbers
- Marketing



Member Agency and Participant Feedback

Per sq. ft. incentive

- Not enough to motivate customers to action

Maximum square footage

- Does not allow for full yard conversions
- Limits mid-size commercial conversions

Five plants per 100 sq. ft.

- Expensive and difficult to achieve

Requiring front yards first

- Confusion in areas without traditional front yards

Name of the program

- Can be confusing to customers

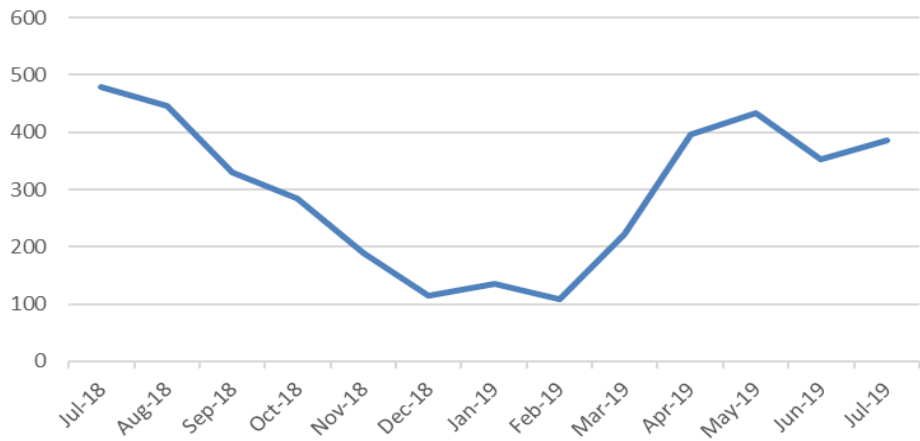
Turf Replacement Program

- Decrease plant density requirement
- Increase square footage and incentive amount
- Name change
- Kept stormwater capture requirement
- Increased promotion of CA natives and organic materials

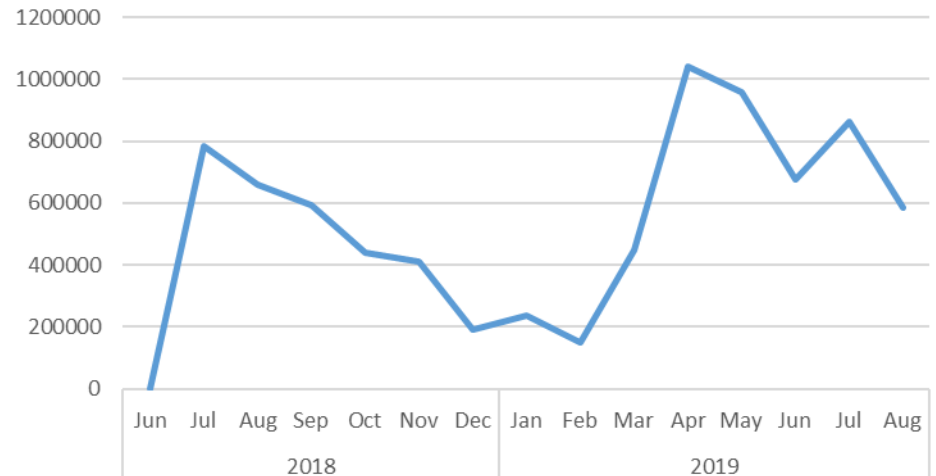


Results

Number of Applications



Reserved Sq Ft



How do I know when to change my program?

- Clearly define program goals and expectations
- Ease of implementation v. high participation
- Quality of projects v. quantity of projects
- Marketing and resources are helpful but not guarantees of success
- FEEDBACK!



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