

Make every drop count

The big news continues to be the ongoing drought in California, which is interesting since we rarely get any rain from April through November. Once we got half way through January we started feeling uncomfortable and things did not improve in February and March. The [snow pack](#) is at about 1% of average for this time of year (May 2, 2015). So the news is not good.

The news for next year, however, is another story. Yes, we were disappointed this year, expecting at least some El Niño conditions to hold through the winter, but next year... Well, I'll let you decide for yourself: Cliff Mass Weather Blog, [Is a Strong El Nino FINALLY coming?](#)

Nevertheless, it will take more than one year - even if we have a wet rainy season - to catch up. Water scarcity is likely to be our new normal, and so I feel like I'm fiddling while Rome burns when I describe the changes I am making to Wild Suburbia. Still, each step we take is important, and if more of us go after the low-lying fruit, we can make a big difference. Here are the changes that I have been working on recently.

1. The parkways are free of grass and require nearly no supplemental water at all.
2. Only two small patches of St. Augustine grass remain, one in the front, one in the back.
3. Vegetable gardens are watered with temporary low-volume systems on timers.
4. Only two of the four front yard irrigation zones are used.
5. The east zone in the front yard waters the deodar tree and the lawn beneath - in that order of importance. I changed the Rainbird rotors to Hunter MP2000 rotators. I was never able to get the Rainbird rotors to apply water without misting. Watching the water spray out into the air was painful. I was sure about 20% never reached the ground even though I water at night.
6. All sprinkler heads in the front yard were checked and repaired (alas, there was a broken pvc pipe).
7. Sprinkler heads were moved on the east side for more even coverage of the lawn and less water to the low water-use border plants along the sidewalk.

Pictures of the work done follow.

Here's hoping that the deodar thrives while my water usage continues to decline.