

Statewide Market Research Survey: Landscape Water Use Efficiency

Marsha Prillwitz

**California Urban Water Conservation
Council**

**International Water Technology
Conference,
California State University, Fresno**

April 2, 2007

The Tipping Point, How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference, Malcolm Gladwell

- **Magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire**
- **Requires that one believes that change is possible, people can transform their behavior or beliefs in the face of the right kind of impetus**

Change Agents

- *Information, education, motivation, marketing (we are what we read, see, hear, feel)*
- **Legislation, regulation**
- **Incentives, disincentives**
- **Ethical inspirations**
- **Events & actions large & small, by groups & individuals**
- *New technology*

Action and Timing Tip Balance

- **9/11**
- **Hurricane Katrina**
- **Al Gore's "Inconvenient Truth"**
- **Internet, cell phones, i-pods, game boys, smart controllers**

Shift Happens, glumbert.com

- Living in times of exponential change
- 2.7 billion searches on Google / month
- Number of text messages sent daily exceeds the world's population (6.7 billion, 2007)
- 1 week of NY Times contains more info than a person in 18th century received in a lifetime
- New technological info doubling every 2 years

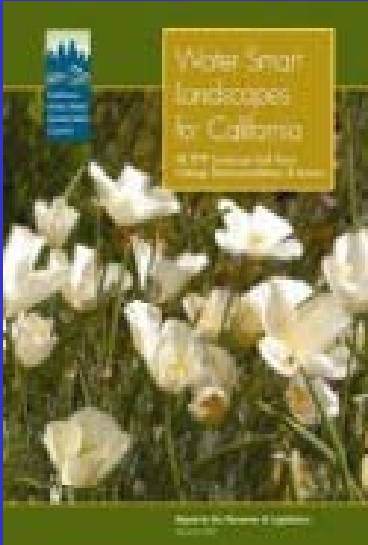
Rapid Changes in Technology, Society, Economy, Resources

- **1 in 8 couples married in 2006 met online**
- **1 in 2 workers have been with the same company for less than 5 years, 1 in 4 less than 1 year**
- **Today's students will have 10-14 different jobs by age 38**
- **Affect every aspect of life, including water and urban landscapes**

CHANGES IN CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPES

- **Legislative and regulatory actions**
- **Financial incentives**
- **Public information, education, and *marketing* efforts**

Water Smart Landscapes for California



- **AB 2717 Landscape Task Force Report, 2005**
 - **43 recommendations**
 - **78 actions**
 - ***CA can achieve water savings of 600,000 to 1 million acre-feet, enough for up to 2 million households at \$250-500/af***

AB 1881 (Laird)

- **Model Ordinance update by 1/1/2009**
- **Common interest developments cannot prohibit plant species**
- ***Irrigation equipment standards by 2010***
- **Landscape-only water meters new prop. > 5000 ft² by 2008**
- **Local ordinances “at least as effective as”**

Actions to Date

- **AB 1881** passed by Legislature 9/28/06, addresses 7 of the top 12 recommendations
- Revisions to **BMP 5**: reducing water budgets, **BMP 11**: defining water conserving rate structures, and **BMP 13**, water waste prohibition in process by CUWCC
- *USBR & CUWA funding statewide landscape water conservation marketing survey & public outreach plan*
- **CLCA, IA, CUWCC & others** pursuing training and certification programs

Statewide Marketing Survey and Public Outreach

- **Council contract with CSU, San Bernardino (IAR & WRI)**
- **to conduct a market research project that will explore and analyze customer behavior relating to landscape water use in all sectors (residential, multi-family, commercial, industrial and institutional)**
- **so that the Council, its partners and California water utilities can develop appropriate water conservation communication tools and strategies to reduce inefficient landscape water use**

Funding Partners

- **United States Bureau of Reclamation's Southern California Area Office**
- **California Urban Water Agencies**
- **California Urban Water Conservation Council**

Project Advisory Committee

- **Karen Arntzen, Contra Costa Water District**
- **Chris Dundon, Contra Costa Water District**
- **Fran Spivy Weber, Environmental Consultant**
- **Warren S. Gorowitz, Ewing Irrigation Products**
- **Lynn Lipinski, Met. Water Dist. of So. Cal.**
- **Steve Macaulay, Ca. Urban Water Agencies**
- **David Todd, Ca. Dept. Water Resources**
- **Paula Sunde, US Bureau of Reclamation**
- **Katie Shulte Joung, Council staff**
- **Marsha Prillwitz, Council consultant**

200 Surveys in each of 6 Regions

- **Coastal Southern California**
- **Inland Southern California**
- **Desert**
- **Inland California**
- **Northern California**
- **Greater Bay Area**

Preliminary findings: residential surveys

- **93%: Individuals should take responsibility for the environment**
- **67%: Yard is important place for leisure**
- **53%: Lawn is very important**
- **82%: Yards should be low maintenance**
- **40%: Appearance is most important**
- **75%: Yards include water effic. plants**
- **76%: Would buy water effic. plants**
- **86%: Believe water effic. plants look as good as others**

Residential Surveys, con't.

- **66%: Believe they use < 50 gpd on landscapes**
- **89%: Those who have sprinklers systems have controllers**
- **87%: Would take cash to switch to weather based controller**
- **81%: Would take cash to reduce lawn**

Managed Property Surveys

- **98%: Conserving water is important**
- **68%: Turf is very important for business**
- **80%: have water effic. plants in landscapes**
- **52%: Would attend free weekend workshop**
- **59%: Rebate would need to cover 30%**

Preliminary Recommendations

- **Focus marketing efforts on two-step flow of communication rather than direct mass marketing**
- **Educate teachers to inform students, 72% listen to their children**
- **Invest in demonstration gardens, show pictures of attractive gardens (87% would respond)**
- **Emphasize appearance, easy care, cost savings, enviro. benefits, reduced run-off**

Recommendations, con't.

- Offer rebates
- Sponsor plant sales
- Sponsor school fund raising programs: kids sell water conservation gadgets instead of candy
- Highlight new technologies
- Train professionals, inform consumers
- Water bills that educate, motivate



bewaterwise.com
FAMILY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES: CALIFORNIA FRIENDLY GARDEN GUIDE

[Home](#) | [Garden Spot](#) | [Rebates](#) | [Events](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Sitemap](#)



2007 MWD Survey findings

- **Median yard size: 1000-2000 sq. ft.**
- **80% of yard watered by sprinklers**
- **50% water 100% of yard**
- **74% have automatic controllers**
- **61% of landscapes dedicated to lawns**
- **83% strongly agree it is important for So. Cal to control water consumption**

2007 San Diego CWA Survey

- **83% find CA friendly landscapes easier to maintain than traditional**
- **63% found them at least as attractive**
- **41% might be motivated to reduce the size of their lawn**
- **80% strongly supported using recycled water**



Thank you!
Marsha Prillwitz
marsha@cuwcc.org
916.552.5885 x22

CUWCC.org

PARTNERS FOR A WATER-EFFICIENT CALIFORNIA