COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

CALCULATORS

The Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) limits the amount of water that may be applied to subject landscapes each year. This limit is called your Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA), which can be calculated using the attached, downloadable worksheet. To get your MAWA from County staff, or to receive assistance in using the calculator, call the Zoning Information Line, at (831) 454-2130.

The calculator is provided in two versions of Excel: the 2007 edition (.xlsx) and the 1997 edition (.xls). Note: on some terminals, the worksheet labels at the bottom of each page may not initially appear. For help in revealing the labels, click here.

The calculator also includes a sheet for calculating your Estimated Total Water Use, the projected annual water consumption based on hydrozone areas. See the third tab at base of the spreadsheet pages.

MAWA Calculator Excel 2007

MAWA Calculator Excel 1997-2003

The calculator requires the Reference Evapotranspiration (ET_o) for your parcel. To look up your ET_o, go to the County's online GIS system and find your parcel or address. Expose the tabs at left, by clicking the white arrow between dots at the top of the left column, then click the Biotic and Water Resources tab. Click the last box under that tab, Reference Evapotranspiration (ET_o).

If you are submitting a residential building permit application that includes a WELO landscape, your application must include either a signed Landscape Checklist or, if you prefer, a full Landscape Plan. Landscape plans are allowed more water but are also subject to higher installation standards. MAWA calculations are not required for a Checklist submission. Landscape installers and homeowners may want to estimate the total water use of the planned landscape, although any landscape that incorporates primarily low to moderate water-use plants will comply.

Your installed landscape must be certified by an independent, qualified inspector prior to occupancy clearance for the building permit. (Qualified personnel include certified landscape irrigation auditors, certified irrigation designers, licensed landscape architects and licensed civil engineers.) The inspector completes and signs a Water Efficient Landscape Installation Certificate to confirm that the Estimated Total Water Use (ETWU) does not exceed the Maximum Applied Water Allowance.

For an explanation of how the Maximum Applied Water Allowance calculations are performed mathematically, click here. For the Estimated Total Water Use calculations, click here.