



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Promoting the wise use of land - Helping to build great communities

Dear Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Landowner,

The Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Urgency Ordinance (Ordinance 3246) requires all new development dependent upon a well in the basin area to offset new water demand at a ratio of at least 1:1 and to install meters on every well that serves the new use. You will need to obtain an Offset Clearance for your proposed project prior to permit issuance and provide evidence of meter installation within 30 days of well construction.

Obtain Offset Clearance

You may choose to obtain an Offset Clearance in one of two ways:

1. Purchase offset credits through the County's New Development Water Conservation Program

The County's water conservation program generates offset credits through a retrofit program that replaces older plumbing fixtures with high efficiency fixtures in residential dwellings in the basin. The cost of water offset credits equals the cost of performing the required number of retrofits through the retrofit program. Offset credits are purchased prior to permit issuance. The table below shows the standard gallons per day and corresponding cost of offset credits for a new single family dwelling, secondary unit, guest house, and an addition.

Dwelling Type	Landscaping	Gallons per Household per Day			Cost
		Outdoor	Indoor	Total	
Single Family Dwelling	1000sqft, 10% or less as turf	170	110	280	\$6496.00
Secondary	500sqft, 10% or less as turf	85	110	195	\$4524.00
Guest House	0sqft additional	0	35	35	\$812.00
Addition	No fee. Must retrofit all existing fixtures. (Toilets over 1.6 gallons per flush(gpf) to 1.28gpf or less, all showerheads 1.5 or less gallons per minute)				

Gallons per day are based on standard water usage rates and average household size for new construction in the rural Paso Robles area. The standard offset amounts shall apply unless specific and adequate evidence, as determined by the Director of Planning and Building, is submitted during the building permit application process indicating that some other offset amount is more appropriate (e.g., use of plumbing fixtures with lower flow rates).

OR

2. Hire your own licensed plumber to perform retrofits in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin

You may choose to offset water use by hiring your own licensed plumber directly to perform retrofits in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin. Verifiable information regarding the retrofits performed must be provided to the County. This information will be used to determine the number of retrofit credits assigned and therefore available as offset credits for your development. If you choose this option, please contact us beforehand to find out all of the program requirements.

Regardless of which option you choose to obtain an Offset Clearance, a landscape plan for the entire property is required as part of the building permit application process for each new residential use. The landscape plan shall show the extent and type of landscaping on the site. If landscaping or outdoor water use is proposed that exceeds 170 gallons per day for a single family dwelling, or 85 gallons per day for a secondary unit, additional offsets will be required. Alternatively, a landscape and irrigation plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect may be used to calculate proposed outdoor water use that is less than the standard amount per day.

Well Metering and Monitoring

Ordinance 3246 also requires meters for new or existing wells that serve new development. Meter installation must be verified by the County Public Works Department (805 781-5252) within 30 days of construction of a new well or prior to final building inspection for existing wells. The meter shall be used to measure all groundwater used from that well.

Property owners or a person designated by the property owner must read the water meter and record the water usage on or near the first day of the month. These records must be maintained by the property owner, but do not need to be submitted to the County.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 805-781-1366 or ccochran@co.slo.ca.us. Information is also available online at www.pasobasin.org.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Cochran
Planner, Department of Planning and Building