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## Water Supply, Rates and Conservation Update

Enclosed is the 2009 Consumer Confidence Report. Again, as in previous years, the Company is proud to report that we surpassed all state and federal drinking water standards.

While the winter season started off with great promise, March was extremely dry with less than 1" of rainfall. April turned out to be the "saving grace" increasing the season rainfall totals to just over normal. Even after this *barely* better than average winter, we are still no better off than 12 months ago, but we are no worse off either. The heavy and above-average rainfall in January and February helped to keep things from going from bad to worse. However, ground water levels are still at record lows, and the ability to import water from northern California is still restricted by a Federal Court Order. Therefore, the continued shortage of supply and the escalation in the cost of water is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

The Company has seen a significant reduction in water usage and wishes to thank everyone for their diligent efforts. Currently, the Company has no plan to increase restrictions on usage but will continue to enforce the **Phase I Water Conservation Plan** implemented in June of 2009. This plan was developed to **reduce wasteful practices**, not to restrict proper and practical water use. If you have any questions about the Phase I Plan, please feel free to contact the office or view the plan on our website at [vhwc.org](http://vhwc.org). Some of the more relevant sections of the Plan are listed below.

Your conservation efforts will continue to help reduce the need to purchase expensive imported water. In the past few years, the cost of imported water has jumped from about \$250 per ac-ft to almost \$700 per ac-ft, an increase of nearly 200 percent. **This increase is projected to result in as much as a 25% increase in water rates in each of the next two years.** By reducing water waste, you will reduce the amount of imported water the Company must purchase at this high price, helping to control the escalating cost of purchased water.

### Phase I Conservation Plan highlights;

**Limits on Watering Hours:** The watering or irrigating of lawns, landscape or other vegetated areas with potable water is prohibited between the hours of **7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. current time** on any day, except with the use of a hand-held bucket or similar container, a hand-held hose equipped with a positive self-closing water shut-off nozzle or,

device, or for very short periods of time for the express purpose of adjusting or repairing an irrigation system.

**Limits on Watering Duration:** The watering or irrigating of lawns, landscape or other vegetated areas with potable water using a landscape irrigation system or a watering device that is not continuously attended, is limited to no more than fifteen (15) minutes of watering per day per station. This subsection does not apply to landscape irrigation systems that exclusively use very low-flow drip type irrigation systems when no emitter produces more than two (2) gallons of water per hour and weather based controllers or stream rotor sprinklers that meet a 70% efficiency standard.

**No Excessive Water Flow or Runoff:** The watering or irrigating of any lawns, landscape or other vegetated areas in a manner that causes or allows excessive water flow or runoff onto an adjoining sidewalk, driveway, street, alley, gutter or ditch is prohibited.

**No Washing Down of Hard or Paved Surfaces:** The washing down of hard or paved surfaces, including but not limited to sidewalks, walkways, driveways, parking areas, tennis courts, patios or alleys, is prohibited except when necessary to alleviate safety or sanitary hazards, and then only with the use of a hand-held bucket or similar container, a hand-held hose equipped with a positive self-closing water shut-off device, a low-volume, high-pressure cleaning machine equipped to recycle any water used, or a low-volume high-pressure water broom.

**Obligation to Fix Leaks, Breaks or Malfunctions:** The excessive use, loss or escape of water through breaks, leaks or other malfunctions in the water user's plumbing or distribution system for any period of time after such lost or waste of water should have reasonably been discovered and corrected, **and in no event more than seven (7) days of receiving notice from the VHWC, is prohibited.**

Finally, for everyone who would like the option of electronic payment to pay their water bill, we are currently developing this option and hope to have it available in the next several months. Please watch for information about electronic options on our website at [vhwc.org](http://vhwc.org) to learn how to participate.

Again, we wish to thank all our consumers for their conservation efforts and cooperation. Your continued efforts will ensure lower rates for everyone. Anyone with questions or requesting assistance is encouraged to contact our office.

Sincerely,

*Valencia Heights Water Company*

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