



## **California Green Building Code Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance**

The Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) is a California state regulation which has become part of the California Green Building Standards Code, and it is designed to prevent water from being wasted on irrigated landscapes. The MWELo was enacted in 1993 from the 1990 Water Conservation and Landscaping Act and was updated in 2015 at the height of the drought. The City of Gardena has adopted the MWELo as a City Ordinance 1836, found in Chapter 15.60 of the City of Gardena Municipal Code.

### **What is the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance?**

The MWELo establishes a procedure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining, and managing water efficient landscapes in new construction and rehabilitated landscaping. The MWELo Ordinance seeks to ensure that landscapes promote water efficiency, soil health, stormwater management, and erosion control. The full Ordinance text, along with other helpful resources, can be found at the Department of Water Resource's website. [Model-Water-Efficient-Landscape-Ordinance](#).

### **Which projects are subject to MWELo?**

MWELo applies to any landscaping project greater than 500 square feet that requires a permit, plan check or design review. It also applies to existing landscape rehabilitation projects with a total landscaped area greater than 2,500 square feet.

### **Submittal Requirements**

The City of Gardena only accepts electronic submittal of plans for plan check including Landscaping Plans. Please see our Community Development/Building Department Web Page for copies of the application and the email address where the application and plans are to be sent by email. The following reports/plans shall be submitted with the Building Department Permit application packet:

1. Landscape Design Plan
2. Irrigation Design Plan
3. Grading Design Plan (as applicable)
4. MWELo Project Information Form (only one copy of this needed; see last page)

You may contact the City of Gardena Building Department at (310)217-9672 with any questions.



## **WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS**

- (A) Property owners or their building or landscape designers, including anyone requiring a building or planning permit, plan check, or landscape design review from the jurisdiction, who are constructing a new (single-family, multi-family, public, institutional, or commercial) project with a landscape area greater than 500 square feet, or rehabilitating an existing landscape with a total landscape area greater than 2,500 square feet, shall comply with Sections 492.6(a)(3)(B), (C), (D), and (G) of the MWELo, including sections related to use of compost and mulch as delineated in MWELo.
- (B) The following compost and mulch use requirements that are part of the MWELo are included as requirements of this article. Other requirements of the MWELo are in effect and can be found in 23 CCR, Division 2, Chapter 2.7.
- (C) Property owners or their building or landscape designers that meet the threshold for MWELo compliance outlined above shall:
- (1) Comply with Sections 492.6(a)(3)(B), (C), (D) and (G) of the MWELo, which requires the submittal of a landscape design plan with a soil preparation, mulch, and amendments section to include the following:
    - (a) For landscape installations, compost at a rate of a minimum of four cubic yards per 1,000 square feet of permeable area shall be incorporated to a depth of six inches into the soil. Soils with greater than 6% organic matter in the top six inches of soil are exempt from adding compost and tilling.
    - (b) For landscape installations, a minimum three-inch layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed soil surfaces of planting areas except in turf areas, creeping or rooting groundcovers, or direct seeding applications where mulch is contraindicated. To provide habitat for beneficial insects and other wildlife up to 5% of the landscape area may be left without mulch. Designated insect habitat must be included in the landscape design plan as such.
    - (c) Organic mulch materials made from recycled or post-consumer materials shall take precedence over inorganic materials or virgin forest products unless the recycled postconsumer organic products are not locally available. Organic mulches are not required where prohibited by local fuel modification plan guidelines or other applicable local ordinances.
  - (2) The MWELo compliance items listed in this section are not an inclusive list of MWELo requirements; therefore, property owners or their building or landscape designers that meet the threshold for MWELo compliance outlined above shall consult the full MWELo for all requirements.



## MWELO PROJECT INFORMATION

### Applicant Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
(new dwelling, commercial, rehab)

Currently, this project does not include landscaping. I am aware that future landscape installations may be required to comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) requirements per California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Division 2, Chapter 2.7.

This project does incorporate landscaping. (Please provide the information below specific to the landscape area which will be completed as part of this project. Landscape plans must be submitted as part of the Building Permit application):

Total Landscape Area (sq. ft.): \_\_\_\_\_

Turf Area (sq. ft.): \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Turf Plan Area (sq. ft.): \_\_\_\_\_

Special Landscape Area (sq. ft.): \_\_\_\_\_

Water Type (*potable, recycled, well*): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of water purveyor (*if not served by private well*): \_\_\_\_\_

*I \_\_\_\_\_ declare under penalty of perjury that the statements contained in the MWELO Project Information are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that this statement is executed with the knowledge that misrepresentation or failure to reveal information requested may be deemed sufficient cause for the refusal to issue or revocation of a permit hereunder.*

Signature of Applicant(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **CITY USE ONLY**

RECEIVED BY:	DATE:	PERMIT NO:
APPROVED BY:	COMMENTS:	