



CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI  
**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
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TO: Development Services Customers

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION BULLETIN (IB) 020**  
**Landscaping Installation (Drought Contingency Plan: Stage 2)**

DATE: March 14, 2024

CREATED BY: Development Services Department

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**Purpose:**

On March 12, 2024, a declaration of a Stage 2 (Moderate Water Shortage Condition) was made by the City Manager. As part of the initiation of the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) Stage 2 protocols, Development Services must take immediate steps to align our policies and procedures with the City's DCP.

Therefore, the following sections of the Unified Development Code (UDC) and the City's Municipal Code will be temporarily altered beginning March 18, 2024. All Landscaping requirements of the UDC and Municipal Code will resume upon notification by the City Manager that Stage 1 (Mild Water Shortage Watch) protocols have resumed.

This decision aims to support water conservation efforts during this challenging period. We acknowledge the importance of maintaining City beautification efforts; however, our priority is to ensure the responsible use of water resources.

The affected sections of the UDC are 7.3.17.b and 7.3.17.c. The affected section of the Municipal Code is 14-1006.2.

**Code and Policy References:**

- **New Construction (Commercial and Residential):**
  - Section 7.3.17.b of the UDC states, "The installation of Landscape material, as shown on the approved landscape plan, shall be certified by the property owner's Landscape Architect, Certified Nursery Professional, or registered professional engineer, and shall be inspected and approved by the Assistant City Manager of Development Services before the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. Landscape installation may be delayed for up to six months during a declared natural disaster or demonstration of supply chain interruption. Any extension beyond six months requires approval by the Board of Adjustment.
  - Section 17-1006.1 (Temporary pollution control measures (during-construction)) of the Municipal Code states that silt fencing, straw bales, and vegetative buffer strips

may be used to retain the sediments from disturbed areas within the site and decrease the velocity of sheet flows.

- Section 17-1006.2 (Permanent pollution control measures (post-construction)) of the Municipal Code states that permanent stabilization consists of stabilization that consists of sodding, seeding, or mulching with seed-bearing hay must be installed and not disturbed for 45 days after construction has ceased and will provide for new growth within three months. New vegetative ground cover must be maintained by watering, re-grading, reseeding, and sodding, as necessary, until seventy percent growth coverage is obtained.
- Existing Development:
  - Section 7.3.17.c of the UDC states, "Diseased, dead or missing required plant material shall be satisfactorily treated or replaced within 30 days, or a date approved by the Assistant City Manager of Development Services with the same plan variety and size."
- Drought Contingency Plan (Stage 2)
  - Irrigation of landscaped areas shall be limited to once every other week. The watering schedule will be determined by the City Manager or designee. Customers will be made aware of their designated watering day. However, irrigation of landscaped areas is permitted on any day if it is using a handheld hose (with a positive shutoff nozzle), a faucet-filled bucket or watering can of five (5) gallons or less, or a drip irrigation system with a positive shutoff device. Exceptions for this restriction may be permitted, upon review and approval by the Executive Director of Utilities or designee, for the following uses: new plantings (for up to 60 days), vegetable gardens, athletic playing fields, and botanical gardens. In addition, this restriction does not apply to customers irrigating with well water or an aerobic septic system. Customers irrigating with well water or an aerobic septic system shall still apply for a permit from the City Utilities Department to be prominently posted on the premises within two (2) feet of the street number located on the premises.

### **Procedure:**

- New Construction and Additions (Commercial and Residential):
  - Plan Review:
    - New commercial and residential projects will continue to require landscape plans to be submitted with building permit application documents as required by the UDC. Landscape designers are highly encouraged to implement xeriscaping methods into their landscaping plan designs. Landscape plans include but are not limited to buffer yards, vehicle screening areas, dumpster screening, tree plantings, and other general landscaping requirements as outlined in the UDC. Additionally, where applicable by the Municipal Code, the appropriate pollution prevention plan identifying both during-construction and post-construction pollution control measures be submitted as well.

- Construction:
  - Once the building permit is issued, it is at the contractor’s discretion to install the landscaping as noted on the approved landscape plan. If the contractor elects to install the landscaping, adherence to the Stage 2 protocol of the DCP is required for landscape maintenance.
  - Adherence to Section 17-1006.1 (Temporary pollution control measures (during construction)) of the Municipal Code will continue to be required during the construction process regardless of any drought level declaration. However, adherence to Section 17-1006.2 (Permanent pollution control measures (post-construction)) shall be limited to stabilization of the site with or without vegetation.
- Inspection:
  - As part of the permitting process, inspections of landscaping are suspended for the installation of landscaping. However, the inspector shall note in the permitting system if any landscaping was installed and/or if the contractor has opted to await the return to the Stage 1 level of the DCP to install the required landscaping. Additionally, the inspector shall formally notify the contractor that stage 2 protocols for irrigation must be followed.
- Existing Development (Landscape Maintenance):
  - Code Enforcement:
    - Section 7.3.17.c of the UDC states the requirements for the replacement of diseased, dead, or missing required plant materials to maintain compliance with the UDC. Enforcement of Section 7.3.17.c of the UDC shall be suspended during the Stage 2 declaration period. However, if the contractor elects to plant during the Stage 2 period, it is at their own risk.

**Conclusion:**

To reiterate, the affected sections of the Unified Development Code (UDC) and the City’s Municipal Code will be temporarily altered beginning on March 18, 2024. All Landscaping requirements of the UDC and Municipal Code will resume upon notification by the City Manager that Stage 1 (Mild Water Shortage Watch) protocols have resumed. A separate IB will be distributed before the return to Stage 1 levels to inform the process of reconciling suspended landscaping installations during the Stage 2 declaration period.

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