The following standards are required for the design, installation and maintenance of landscape and irrigation systems in the City of Santa Monica per the Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) 8.108.

These requirements are based on the California Department of Water Resources State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and the Irrigation Association’s *Turf & Landscape Irrigation Best Management Practices*, 2005 edition and tailored to the ordinances, policies and climate of the City of Santa Monica.
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Section 1: Definitions

For purposes of the Water-Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Standards, the following words or phrases shall be defined as follows:

A. **Anti Siphon Valve.** Backflow device configured with a single moving part, a float, which moves up or down to allow atmospheric air into the piping system to prevent back siphoning of water from sprinkler lines into the drinking water. Must be installed at least 6 inches above the highest sprinkler, elevated piping or emission outlet in the valve.

B. **Bubbler.** Water emission device that tends to bubble water directly to the ground or that throw water a short distance, on the order of one foot, (300 mm) before water contacts the ground surface.

C. **Drip Irrigation.** Method of micro irrigation wherein water is applied to the soil surface as drops or small streams through emitters on or within polyethylene tubing at less than 2 gallons per hour.

D. **In-line Remote Control Valve.** Valve which is actuated by an automatic controller by electric or hydraulic means.

E. **Multi Outlet Emitter.** A point source emission device consisting of two or more drip emitters connected to 1/4 inch or 1/8 inch distribution tubing.

F. **New Landscaped Area.** A new landscaped area or modifications to an existing landscaped area as part of a major remodel or substantial remodel or new construction.

G. **Plant Material.** Living plants, trees, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses and edible plants.

H. **Point of Connection.** Location where irrigation system is connected to the water supply.

I. **Precipitation Rate.** The rate at which water is applied to a landscape area by an irrigation system or watering device measured in inches per hour.

J. **Spray head.** Sprinkler head that does not rotate.

K. **Sprinkler.** Any watering device which distributes water by projecting it into the air.

L. **Turfgrass.** Any plant listed as turfgrass in WUCOLS.

M. **Watering Device.** Any device for distribution of pressurized water to landscaping.

N. **WUCOLS.** Water Use Classification of Landscape Species published by the California Department of Water Resources.

O. **Valve.** A device that opens and closes to allow pressurized water to flow through pipes.
Section 2: Plan Submittal Requirements for Major Remodel, Substantial Remodel or New Construction Projects.

The following items will be required prior to the issuance of a building permit. Any revisions to the approved plans will require re-submittal and approval.

A. Landscape Plan.
   a. The landscape plan may be designed by an unlicensed landscape designer, licensed landscape architect, or licensed architect. The final landscape plan shall be signed by a licensed landscape architect or architect prior to submittal for approval.

   b. Include the name, size, quantity, location and water use needs of each plant; specify soil amendments as necessary; mulch type, depth and location. Include hydrozones for all plants.

   c. Include the following measurements in square feet: parcel size including parkway, total building footprints, total existing hardscape, total existing landscape area, and total area to be landscaped.

   d. If using non-fruiting, non-invasive, sterile varieties or cultivars of invasive plants, specify this on the plans.

   e. Include planting specifications.

   f. Include a Hydrozone Matrix with planting areas arranged into hydrozones according to watering needs. Describe for each zone the following: the square footage, percentage of total landscaped area, plant type, hydrozone basis, hydrozone description, exposure or micro-climate, irrigation method, irrigation devices (including manufacturer / model / number), zone pressure, precipitation rates, zone gallons per minute, and controller station number, and total feet of drip tubing used.

   g. Include a Soil Analysis Report which may include but is not limited to soil texture; infiltration rate or soil texture infiltration rate table; pH; total soluble salts; sodium; percent organic matter; and recommendations determined by laboratory test.

   h. Submitted plans must include the following notation:
i. “Landscape plans, when submitted, shall comply with SMMC 9.04.08.02.070(I).”
ii. “For open-trench and final inspections, call Building and Safety at (310) 458-8355.”
iii. “Parkway permits must be obtained from and approved by the Public Works Department.”
iv. “Prior to construction of landscaped area or irrigation, the contractor must obtain and review a copy of the Water-Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Standards.”
v. “All landscaping and irrigation systems must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.”

B. Irrigation Plan.
   a. The irrigation plan may be designed by an unlicensed landscape designer, unlicensed irrigation designer, licensed landscape architect, or licensed architect. The final irrigation plan shall be signed by a licensed landscape architect or architect prior to submittal for approval.

   b. Include point of connection, water supply type (potable, graywater, cistern, recycled).

   c. Include all parts and their make and model, including but not limited to: pressure regulators, valves, backflow prevention devices, filters, piping and piping depth, pressurized main lines and lateral lines, sprinkler heads showing head-to-head coverage, drip irrigation components and drip irrigation layout.

   d. Include a static pressure reading for the irrigation system measured from the point of connection.

   e. Include irrigation details, with applicable detailed drawings, and specifications.

   f. Irrigation design shall accommodate hydrozones accordingly. For example; separate zones may be required for trees, shrubs, flowers, shady or sunny areas, drip irrigation and/or sprinklers.

   g. Submitted plans must include the following notation:
      i. “The irrigation system must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.”
      ii. “The irrigation designer or landscape architect or landscape designer shall
perform one or more site observations during system installation to check for adherence to the design, including the proper installation of the backflow prevention assembly, main line, laterals, valves, sprinkler heads, drip irrigation equipment, control wire, controllers, and sensors and should assure that the intent of the irrigation design has been preserved.”

C. Grading Plan.
   a. A grading plan shall be prepared by a civil engineer.

   b. Grade so that all irrigation and rainfall remains within property lines and does not sheet flow on to permeable hardscapes.

   c. The project applicant shall submit a landscape grading plan that indicates finished configurations and elevations of the landscaped area including but not limited to:
      i. Drainage patterns with arrows:
         a. Slope of site
         b. Slope of landscaped area and paved areas
         c. Height of graded slopes
      ii. Pad elevations
      iii. Finished grade

D. Urban Runoff Reduction Plan.
   a. If urban runoff reduction is required per Section 7.10.050 no additional plans are required for compliance with these Standards.

E. Tree Protection Plan.
   a. Tree Protection Plan requirements can be found at on the City’s website at http://www01.smgov.net/cmd/landscape.htm.
Section 3: Requirements for New Landscaped Areas for Major Remodel, Substantial Remodel or New Construction Projects

A. Plant Material Requirements
   a. The maximum area permitted for installation of turfgrass and high water need plants defined for Region 3 in the current edition of the Water Use Classification for Landscape Species (WUCOLS) issued by the Department of Water Resources is twenty percent of the total landscaped area. Alternative documentation of water use may be presented for plants not listed in WUCOLS. Public agencies are exempt from this requirement.
   b. Turfgrass is not allowed on slopes greater than 25% where the toe of the slope is adjacent to an impermeable hardscape and where 25% means 1 foot of vertical elevation change for every 4 feet of horizontal length (rise divided by run x 100 = slope percent).
   c. Plants listed in the current Invasive Plant Inventory for the southwest region by the California Invasive Plant Council are prohibited, except for known non-fruiting, non-invasive, sterile varieties or cultivars.
   d. Multi-family property units and commercial property units are subject to the requirements of SMMC Section 9.04.10.04.
   e. Single family properties are not required to install plant material.
   f. Plants shall be grouped together into hydrozones based on similar watering needs.
   g. Root vegetables shall not be irrigated with graywater.

B. Amendments and Mulch Requirements
   a. Soil amendments shall be added based upon soil analysis results and recommendations performed by a soil laboratory.
   b. A minimum two inch (2”) layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed soil surfaces, except in areas covered by groundcovers.
   c. No mulch shall be applied within twenty-four inches (24”) of the base of trees.

C. Irrigation System Requirements
   a. General Irrigation Requirements
      i. Landscape areas may be watered by hand, manual or automatic irrigation systems. Permanent irrigation systems are not required. Hoses shall be equipped with an automated, shut off nozzle and a hose bibb vacuum breaker.
      ii. Irrigation systems must be designed and installed in such a manner that a precipitation rate of 0.75 inches per hour is not exceeded in any portion of the landscape.
      iii. Sprinklers, drip irrigation and bubblers must be on separate valves.
      iv. Design landscape and irrigation systems in parkways according to all local,
state, and federal laws and regulations. Installation of an irrigation system within a parkway cannot result in the damage of the roots of any existing street trees.

v. Graywater irrigation systems must conform to Title 24, Part 5, Chapter 16A of the California Building Code as adopted by the City of Santa Monica.

vi. Cistern irrigation systems must conform to all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

vii. Low head drainage is prohibited. Anti-drain valves or check valves in sprinkler heads and drip emitter devices are required as necessary to prevent low head drainage.

viii. Specify pressure regulation to insure that the dynamic pressure at each emission device is within the manufacturer’s recommended pressure range for optimal performance.

ix. Pressure regulation may include a single master filter and/or master pressure regulator may be used for the entire system, located after the backflow device and/or master valve. In this case, if the system does not include a master valve, heavy-duty grade filters and pressure regulators that can tolerate constant pressurization must be used.

b. Water Supply & Meter

i. Manual shut-off valves (such as a gate valve, ball valve, or butterfly valve) shall be required, as close as possible to the point of connection of the water supply, to minimize water loss in case of an emergency (such as a main line break) or routine repair.

ii. Cross-Connection Prevention (Backflow Prevention) as required by SMMC Section 7.12.370.

c. Pipes

i. Specify main and lateral pipe sizes that will result in the velocity of water moving through these pipes at a rate not exceeding 7.5 feet per second.

ii. Use Schedule 40 or Class 315 solvent weld-type PVC pipe for mains, below grade laterals, or piping under roadways. Class 125 pipe is not permitted.

iii. IPS Flexible PVC Pipe may be substituted for rigid PVC pipe below grade (in lateral lines only) to avoid underground obstructions encountered during trenching or tunneling.

iv. Above grade pipes use Schedule 80 or metal piping.

v. Pipe laid in the same trench must be laid side-by-side and not overlapped. Provide 3 inch vertical and horizontal clearance between irrigation lines and 6 inch clearance between lines of other work. Do not install parallel lines directly over any other line.

vi. PVC fittings must be of the same chemical compound as pipe on which they are installed.
vii. PVC cement must be of an appropriate chemical compound for the pipe on which it is used.

viii. Trench or tunnel depth must be sufficient to obtain a minimum depth of cover over the installed pipe and control wire which conforms to the following dimensions. Where pipe and/or conduit are placed below paving or hardscape the minimum burial depths are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Minimum Burial Depth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Lines ≤2 inches in landscaping</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Lines &gt;2 inches in landscaping</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Lines under non-vehicular paving</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Lines under vehicular paving</td>
<td>24&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pressure Lines ≤2 inches in landscaping</td>
<td>8&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pressure Lines &gt;2 inches in landscaping</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pressure Lines under non-vehicular paving</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pressure Lines under vehicular paving</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduit in landscaping</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduit under non-vehicular paving</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduit under vehicular paving</td>
<td>24&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. **Automatic Irrigation Controller**

i. Weather-based irrigation controllers (WBIC) are required. Only Smart Water Application Technologies tested and published WBICs are permitted.

e. **Sprinkler Irrigation Requirements**

i. Sprinklers shall have a minimum operational lower quarter distribution uniformity of 71%.

ii. No sprinklers shall be located within twenty-four inches (24") of any trees or impermeable hardscape, including but not limited to sidewalks, driveways, alleys, streets, walkways, fencing.

iii. Irrigation shall not runoff nor overspray onto impermeable surfaces including but not limited to buildings, fencing, property line, public right-of-way.

iv. Sprinkler heads on the same valve shall have matched precipitation rates. The precipitation rate shall not exceed 0.75 inches per hour.

v. Spray heads with or without multi-stream, multi-trajectory rotating nozzles, shall have built-in pressure regulation in the body or stem or shall have pressure regulating swing joints.

vi. Sprinkler heads shall have swing joints or other riser-protection components.

vii. Sprinkler heads must have a minimum of head-to-head coverage (minimum of 50% of diameter). Wind derating, if used, should be based on wind criteria for the time period that the system is normally operated.
f. **Drip Irrigation Requirements**

i. Drip irrigation shall have a minimum operational lower quarter emission uniformity of 80%.

ii. Drip irrigation is required for all plants one-gallon or larger in size. Exception: Tree Bubblers emitting 0.5 gallons per minute or less may be used for 24” box or larger. Specify tree watering devices for below grade installation. A precipitation rate of 0.75 inches per hour cannot be exceeded.

iii. Trees shall be irrigated on a separate valve.

iv. Drip irrigation emitters shall emit no more than 2.0 gallons per hour.

v. Multi-outlet emitters are prohibited.

vi. Container Plantings and Raised Plant Beds may use 1/4” or 1/8” solid tubing (also referred to as “spaghetti” tubing,) nowhere else may 1/4” or 1/8” solid tubing be used for irrigation.

vii. Drip irrigation valve assemblies are required for each drip zone and must include:

1. Anti-siphon valve if a master backflow protection device is not specified;
2. In-line remote control valves, only if there is a master backflow prevention device at the Point of Connection;
3. pressure regulator;
4. Filter with a 150 – 200 mesh, wye or tee filter with a stainless steel screen;
5. Pressure regulator and remote control valve must have a minimum flow rate that is lower than the zone flow rate.

viii. “Twist-lock” type fittings are prohibited.

ix. Wire stakes shall be U-shaped galvanized steel wire stakes and shall be installed at minimum every 3 feet.

x. Drip tubing shall be made of polyethylene.

g. **Installation Requirements**

i. Contact all appropriate utility companies prior to beginning installation, to locate underground utilities including gas lines, electrical, telephone, cable, and so forth. State laws require anyone who digs to notify utility companies before starting. The installation should not be started until all underground utilities are located and marked and plans have been approved.

ii. Install the irrigation system according to the approved design, specifications and manufacturer’s published performance standards.

iii. An open-trench inspection by city staff is required prior to covering below grade pipes, laterals and mains.

iv. Installer shall test the irrigation system to verify that it meets the approved design and specifications.
v. Installer must program the WBIC.
vi. Final inspection by city staff is required prior to certificate of occupancy to ensure that the system was built to approved plans and specifications.
vii. Provide the property owner or his/her agent with keys, tools, warranties and operating instructions for all equipment.

h. As-Built Plans
   i. Provide a complete As-Built set of plans to the property owner.
Section 4: Modifications to Any Existing Landscaped Areas Excluding Major Remodel, Substantial Remodel or New Construction Projects

A. New Landscaping Requirements - The following requirements apply when all new plant materials are installed, excluding street trees:

a. Plant Material
   i. When installing all new plant material in the landscaped area, excluding street trees, the maximum area permitted for installation of turfgrass and high water need plants defined for Region 3 in the current edition of the Water Use Classification for Landscape Species (WUCOLS) issued by the Department of Water Resources is twenty percent of the total landscaped area. Alternative documentation of water use may be presented for plants not listed in WUCOLS. Public agencies are exempt from this requirement.
   ii. Turfgrass is not allowed on slopes greater than 25% where the toe of the slope is adjacent to an impermeable hardscape and where 25% means 1 foot of vertical elevation change for every 4 feet of horizontal length (rise divided by run x 100 = slope percent).
   iii. Plants listed in the current Invasive Plant Inventory for the southwest region by the California Invasive Plant Council are prohibited, except for known non-fruiting, non-invasive, sterile varieties or cultivars.
   iv. Planted areas shall be covered with a minimum of two inches (2”) of organic mulch, except in areas covered by groundcovers or within twenty-four (24”) inches of the base of a tree.
   v. Root vegetables shall not be irrigated with graywater.
   vi. Multi-family property units and commercial property units are subject to the requirements of SMMC Section 9.04.10.04.
   vii. Single family residences are not required to have plant material.

b. Amendments and Mulch Requirements
   i. A minimum two inch (2”) layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed soil surfaces, except in areas covered by groundcovers.
   ii. No mulch shall be applied within twenty-four inches (24”) of the base of trees.

B. Existing Landscaping Requirements - The following requirements apply when existing plant materials are replaced, excluding street trees:

a. Plant Material
   i. For commercial and multi-family properties, plant replacements must comply with SMMC Section 9.04.10.04.100 (b).
ii. Single family residences are not required to have plant material.

iii. Root vegetables shall not be irrigated with graywater.

b. Mulch Requirements

i. A minimum two inch (2") layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed soil surfaces, except in areas covered by groundcovers.

ii. No mulch shall be applied within twenty-four inches (24") of the base of trees.

c. Irrigation System Requirements

i. General System Requirements

1. Landscaped areas may be watered by hand, manual or automatic irrigation systems. Hoses shall be equipped with an automated, shut off nozzle and a hose bibb vacuum breaker.

2. All existing irrigation systems must conform to SMMC Section 7.12.370 Cross-Connection Prevention and SMMC 7.16.020 Water Conservation Requirements.

3. Specify pressure regulation to insure that the dynamic pressure at each emission device is within the manufacturer’s recommended pressure range for optimal performance.

4. Pressure regulation may include a single master filter and/or master pressure regulator may be used for the entire system, located after the backflow device and/or master valve. In this case, if the system does not include a master valve, heavy-duty grade filters and pressure regulators that can tolerate constant pressurization must be used.

5. Design landscape and irrigation systems in parkways according to all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Installation of an irrigation system within a parkway cannot result in the damage of the roots of any existing street trees.

6. New irrigation systems must be designed and installed in such a manner that a precipitation rate of 0.75 inches per hour is not exceeded in any portion of the landscape.

7. Low head drainage is prohibited. Anti-drain valves or check valves in sprinkler heads and drip emitter devices are required as necessary to prevent low head drainage.

ii. Requirements for New Sprinkler Irrigation or Replacement of Existing Sprinkler Irrigation

1. No sprinklers shall be located within twenty-four inches (24") of any trees or impermeable hardscape, including but not limited to sidewalks, driveways, alleyes, streets, walkways, fencing. Public agencies are exempt from this requirement.
2. When a sprinkler head is changed, all of the sprinkler heads on the same irrigation valve must be changed to the same manufacturer make and type.

3. All new or replaced sprinkler heads on the same valve shall have matched precipitation rates. The precipitation rate shall not exceed 0.75 inches per hour.

4. All new or replaced sprinkler heads must have a minimum head-to-head coverage (minimum of 50% of diameter). Wind derating, if used, should be based on wind criteria for the time period that the system is normally operated.

5. All new or replaced spray heads, with or without multi-stream, multi-trajectory rotating nozzles, shall have built-in pressure regulation in the body or stem or shall have pressure regulating swing joints.

6. All new or replaced sprinkler heads shall have swing joints or other riser-protection components.

iii. Requirements for New Drip Irrigation or Replacement of Existing Drip Irrigation

1. Drip irrigation emitters shall emit no more than 2.0 gallons per hour.

2. Drip irrigation is required for all new plant materials that are 1 gallon or larger in size within a new hydrozone. Exception: Tree Bubblers emitting 0.5 gallons per minute or less may be used for existing trees.

3. For existing plant material that is 1 gallon or larger and a new irrigation system is installed for that hydrozone, the irrigation system must be a drip irrigation system. Exception: Tree Bubblers emitting 0.5 gallons per minute or less may be used for existing trees.

4. Newly planted trees shall be irrigated on a separate irrigation valve. Tree Bubblers emitting 0.5 gallons per minute or less may be used for new trees 24 inch box or larger. Specify tree watering devices for below grade installation. A precipitation rate of 0.75 inches per hour cannot be exceeded.

5. The installation of multi-outlet emitters is prohibited.

6. Container Plantings and Raised Plant Beds may use ¼ inch or 1/8 inch solid tubing (also referred to as “spaghetti” tubing,) nowhere else may ¼ inch or 1/8 inch solid tubing be used for irrigation.

7. The installation of new drip irrigation systems require drip valve assemblies for each drip zone and must include:

   a. Anti-siphon valve if a master backflow protection device is not specified;
b. In-line remote control valves only if there is a master backflow prevention device at the Point of connection;
c. pressure regulator;
d. Filter with a 150 – 200 mesh, wye or tee filter with a stainless steel screen;
e. Pressure regulator and remote control valve must have a minimum flow rate that is lower than the zone flow rate.

8. “Twist-lock” type fittings are prohibited.
9. Wire stakes shall be U-shaped galvanized steel wire stakes and installed every 3 feet.
10. Drip tubing shall be made of polyethylene.
Section 5 Water Features

A. All fountains, ponds or other decorative water features in the landscaped area, excluding swimming pools or spas, shall have a maximum total cumulative exposed water surface area of twenty-five square feet.

B. All allowed water features shall use a water recirculation system.

C. All water sprayed into the air from allowed water features must remain within the water feature and shall not be allowed to spray or run onto surrounding landscape or impermeable hardscape areas.

D. Public agencies are exempt from all requirements of Section 5 of these Standards.
Section 6 Landscape and Irrigation System Maintenance

A. Irrigation systems must be maintained according to the manufacturers’ specifications and in accordance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

B. Landscapes shall be maintained to ensure water use efficiency using sustainable or environmentally-friendly practices for overall landscape maintenance.

C. All landscaped areas shall be permanently maintained and kept free of weeds, debris, and litter. For single family properties, all plant materials shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition and diseased or dead plant materials shall be replaced, in kind, pursuant to the approved plans within thirty days. Alternatively, diseased or dead plant materials may be replaced with plant materials that have low water needs, as rated in the current edition of the Water Use Classification of Landscape Species published by the California Department of Water Resources, or equivalent documentation.

D. Multi-family property units and commercial property units are subject to the requirements of SMMC Section 9.04.10.04.

E. Chemical products used for plant pest control or fertilizing plant material shall meet EPA approval.

F. Maintenance of parkways is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, in accordance with SMMC 9.04.10.04.100j