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**HOW TO SUBMIT A LANDSCAPE APPLICATION**  
**MODEL WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE (MWELo)**

**I. PREFACE**

In 2015, in compliance with Executive Order No B-29-15, the state of California Department of Water Resources updated the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo). The purpose of MWELo is to promote the values and benefits of landscaping practices, integrating conservation and efficient water use while establishing a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water efficient landscapes.

**2. APPLICABILITY**

MWELo applies to landscapes for new construction and rehabilitation projects as follows:

- A. New construction project equal to or greater than 500 square feet, and
- B. Rehabilitated landscape projects with an aggregate landscape area equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet requiring a building or landscape permit, plan check or design, although landscaping less than 2,500 square feet may require the application of MWELo.

New construction and rehabilitated landscapes requiring a building or landscape permit, plan check or design review may comply with ordinance utilizing the **PRESCRIPTIVE COMPLIANCE OPTION.**

Any project greater than or equal to 2,500 square feet must comply with the **PERFORMANCE COMPLIANCE OPTION.**

If an Irrigation Auditor is required for the process, the Applicant will be responsible for hiring a Third-Party Irrigation Auditor.

**3. EXEMPTIONS**

The following areas and projects are exempt from MWELo:

- A. Registered local, state and federal historical sites;
- B. Ecological restoration projects that do not require a permanent irrigation system;
- C. Surface mining reclamation project that do not require a permanent irrigation system; or
- D. Plant collections, as part of botanical gardens and arboretums open to the public.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

To avoid unnecessary expense and delay consult with the Inyo County Planning Department for a preliminary review and discussion of your proposal in order to answer any questions regarding the application and processing procedures, there is no fee for this meeting. You may also request a formal pre-application meeting for which there is a fee.

#### **5. PLANNING DEPARTMENT MAIN APPLICATION**

The Main Application Form must be completed in its entirety with the Landscape box checked and must be signed by the authorized property owner of the property for which the landscape plan is applied. The Processing Fee Agreement Form must also be filled out in its entirety and accompany the Main Application Form.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FORM**

This form is included in the Main Application Package. The information requested by this form assists the County in preparing the appropriate environmental documentation as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

#### **7. INITIAL MWELo APPLICATION PACKAGES**

Submission of either of the following normally constitutes a complete application and must be submitted before construction:

**A. Prescriptive Compliance** – for landscape between 500 and 2,499 square feet.

- One original Main Application Form with the MWELo Prescriptive Compliance box checked and the Environmental Information Form filled out.
- One original Processing Fee Agreement Form.
- Landscape Design Plan with one 18"x26" print and 8.5"x11" print of the site plan depicting the landscape design.
- Project Information
- Prescriptive Path Checklist

**B. Performance compliance** – For landscape greater than 2,500 square feet.

- One original Main Application Form with the MWELo Performance Compliance box checked and the Environmental Information Form filled out.
- One original Processing Fee Agreement Form.
- Landscape Design Plan with one 18"x26" print and 8.5"x11" print of the site plan depicting the landscape design, and plant legend and specifications
- Project Information
- Water Budget/Water Use Calculator
- Soil Management Report
- Irrigation Plan
- Hydrozone Plan
- Grading Plan

## 8. THE JOSHUA TREE CONSERVATION ACT (WJTCA)

The WJTCA prohibits the importation, export, take, possession, purchase, or sale of any western Joshua tree in California unless authorized by CDFW.

The WJTCA authorizes CDFW to issue several types of take permits under certain circumstances including:

- WJTCA Hazard Management Permits, which provide authorization to remove dead trees or trim live or dead trees that pose a risk to structures or public health and safety. No permit fees or mitigation is required for these permits.
- WJTCA Incidental Take Permits, which provide authorization for take in association with renewable energy, housing, public works, and other projects. The WJTCA incidental take permit is streamlined through the option for an individual or business to choose to pay a standard mitigation fee rather than complete mitigation actions.

For more information please contact California Department of Fish and Wildlife, their permitting information can be found at: [Western Joshua Tree Conservation Permitting \(ca.gov\)](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov).

## 9. REVIEW PROCESS

Planning staff will review the application package and approve the permit, plan check or design review, or will request revisions/resubmittals for further review for possible approval.

## 10. POST CONSTRUCTION PHASE/FINAL INSPECTION

Applicant submits a certificate of Completion to the property owner which includes:

- A. **Prescriptive Compliance** – For landscape between 500 and 2,499 square feet.

At the final inspection, applicant submits to the property owner the following:

- Certificate of Completion and Installation
- Irrigation Schedule
- Schedule of Landscape and Irrigation Maintenance.

**B. Performance compliance** For landscape greater than 2,500 square feet.

- i. Applicant submits a Certificate of Completion to the Planning Department staff which includes:
  - Project Information
  - Certification that landscape is built per plans
  - As-built drawings (if necessary to show major changes)
  - Irrigation diagram showing hydrozones
  - Irrigation scheduling parameters
  - Landscape and irrigation maintenance schedule
  - Irrigation audit report
  - Soil report (if not submitted during design)
  - Verification for implementation of report recommendations
  
- ii. Planning Department staff:
  - Reviews the Certificate of Completion and accompanying submittals
  - Conducts a site visit using the Landscape Installation Checklist after the irrigation audit and repairs are complete.
  - Approves or denies final submittal prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (if applicable) or requests revisions and/or resubmittals.