

# Sun Valley considers limiting water use in new developments

By Ariel Hansen - Times-News writer | Posted: Monday, November 16, 2009 1:35 am |

The Sun Valley City Council took up the issue of water use and waste on Thursday, considering an amendment to the city's comprehensive plan that would restrict irrigation on new residential developments to 50 percent of the lot or half an acre, whichever is smaller.

The amendment is the first of several proposals that the city's planning and zoning commission has suggested to conserve and reuse water and educate homeowners on water use. Among these proposals may be a tiered fee schedule that might include rebates for low users and additional charges for high users, and opting toward reusing water to irrigate golf courses.

In introducing his thoughts on the amendment, Mayor Wayne Willich said that last year he learned from his landscapers that he could as much as halve his irrigation-water use through simple methods like timing of watering.

"I said, 'Why didn't we do this last year?' He said, 'You never asked,'" Willich said. He noted that some Sun Valley residents don't blink at a water bill of \$14,000 for the growing season. "The culture or the mentality for some strange reason is 'let 'er rip.' ... It's a culture change we have to get going, we have to get warmed up to this thing."

The language of the amendment was a concern for Councilman Dewayne Briscoe, who said he would prefer to emphasize education and rate adjustments to words like "punish" and "fine."

Councilman Nils Ribbi said he hopes to get public input on the amendment, which the council is expected to revisit a few more times before voting.

Ariel Hansen may be reached at [ahansen@magicvalley.com](mailto:ahansen@magicvalley.com).