

## IRWD Offices are Closed

Need help? Click  
[IRWD.com/services](https://www.irwd.com/services),  
email

[CustomerService@  
IRWD.com](mailto:CustomerService@IRWD.com), or  
call **949-453-5300**.

# pipelines

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Irvine Ranch  
WATER DISTRICT

## Easier Bill Pay Is on the Way!

Coming in February, IRWD will begin using a new bill payment system with no fees, and with flexible online and mobile options our customers have asked for.

You will be able to pay by credit card (including American Express), PayPal, Venmo, and text from almost any device. And it's free—unlike our current service, which charges \$2.95 per transaction.

The new service is intuitive and user-friendly, with easy navigation and a direct link to IRWD's WaterInsight reports, where you can track your home water

usage and see how you compare to your neighbors. WaterInsight will send email alerts if your water use indicates a possible leak, and provide tips to save water based on your use patterns. These services will simplify your life and help you save money, water, and time.

If you prefer a more traditional payment method, checks can still be mailed, or deposited in our drop box at 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine.

For more information, visit [PayMyBill.IRWD.com](https://PayMyBill.IRWD.com).



## New Year, New Yard

### Turn Your Garden into a Watershed Guardian



Woolly blue curls  
(*Trichostema lanatum*)

We are nestled in an ecological golden spot of Southern California. Spread between the undulating peaks of the Santa Ana Mountains, the vast Pacific, and an abundance of natural open space, our community is home to watershed areas that are critical to the health of local and marine habitats.

Believe it or not, your home garden plays an important role in the survival and biodiversity of these ecosystems. Water runoff from irrigation and rain carries harmful pesticides, fertilizers, bacteria, and other pollutants into the storm drains that feed local streams, riparian habitats, and the ocean.

Here are three steps you can take to make your garden an ocean-friendly landscape that protects the watershed and encourages biodiversity.

- **Soil:** Healthy soil—characterized by minerals, decaying organic material, bugs, worms and other organisms—helps to prevent runoff because it absorbs water, stores it, and makes it available for the plants in your garden. Enhance it with compost and natural mulch. Also, use organic fertilizers and eco-friendly pest-control methods.
- **Irrigation:** Make your irrigation system water-efficient, by incorporating smart timers, water-efficient sprinklers, and drip systems. Deep and infrequent watering allows the water to soak into the soil and plants to grow deep vast roots. Find out more at [WateringGuide.com](https://WateringGuide.com).
- **Plants:** Select climate-appropriate plants (both exotics and natives) such as woolly blue curls that are beautiful and reduce runoff because they require little water. Make sure to hydrozone them appropriately.

For more tips and ideas, visit [RightScapeResources.com](https://RightScapeResources.com) and [CalScape.org](https://CalScape.org).

## Save the Date

### Turf Be Gone

Online Webinar  
Wednesday  
Feb. 10  
Noon – 1 p.m.

Learn the steps to remove your lawn and replace it with a water-efficient garden.

**Sign-up required:**  
[RightScapeNow.com/events](https://RightScapeNow.com/events)

# Tribe Gathers Marsh Plants for Traditional Uses



Native plants that rim the ponds at IRWD's San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary do more than clean the water and provide habitat for the creatures that live there. To members of the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, these plants represent gifts from Mother Earth, with medicinal properties. See the full story and pictures at [IRWD.com](https://IRWD.com).

## Ask Customer Service

**Q:** What can cause my water bill to be high?

**A:** Every IRWD customer has a customized water budget. If you use more than you're budgeted for, your bill goes up. Common causes of high usage are overwatering and leaks. Also, your water budget might not be right for the number of people in your home or the size of your landscape. See [bit.ly/right-water-budget](https://bit.ly/right-water-budget). If your bill shows you in the inefficient or wasteful tiers, contact Customer Service or visit [RightScapeNow.com](https://RightScapeNow.com) for water-saving tools. When the cause of high usage is corrected, email [CustomerService@IRWD.com](mailto:CustomerService@IRWD.com) or call **949-453-5300** to see if you qualify for a bill adjustment.

Got a question? Email [info@IRWD.com](mailto:info@IRWD.com) with "Ask Customer Service" as the subject line.

## Ask Juan



**Q:** We live in a condominium association in Irvine with a small yard. We've grown apples, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce and other edible plants in containers. Do you have any recommendations on how to ward off rats and raccoons from eating the produce?

**A:** I totally understand your struggles. I have found fruit or veggies half eaten or bitten by squirrels. Liquid Fence is a natural repellent, but like any product, do a little research before you use it. The Master Gardeners of Orange County are a good source to turn to. Visit their website and submit a question at their gardening hotline, [mgorange.ucanr.edu](https://mgorange.ucanr.edu).

Got landscape questions? Email [AskJuan@IRWD.com](mailto:AskJuan@IRWD.com) or ask on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with [#irwdcommunity](https://twitter.com/irwdcommunity). See past answers at [RightScapeNow.com/landscape-resources/ask-juan](https://RightScapeNow.com/landscape-resources/ask-juan).

## California Native Corner Juan's January Plant: California Coffeeberry

The California coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*) enhances the beauty and sustainability of any garden. Attractive as an evergreen bush or hedge, it sustains birds foraging for food during their southern migration and blooms with tiny green flowers in spring to attract many beneficial insects. The coffeeberry is also good for your soil—moving nitrogen from the atmosphere into the earth where plants can absorb it. Learn more about native plants at [CalScape.org](https://CalScape.org) and [CalScape.org/planting-guide.php](https://CalScape.org/planting-guide.php). — Juan



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**24-Hour Customer Service:** 949-453-5300  
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**Address:** 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine, CA 92618  
**Website:** [IRWD.com](https://IRWD.com)

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