

Ugliest Yard Contestants Need Your Help – Pronto



Source: www.TurfMagazine.com

Do you want to see ugly as in dog-butt ugly? I'm referring to the winners and contestants of the recent "[Ugliest Yard Contest](#)" sponsored by the San Francisco Department of Environment. The contest recently ended and the "worst of the worst" were selected. Let them stand as stark examples of the need for professional landscaping.



This yard was voted the most times as "ugliest." Submitted to SF Environment by user: winlsonng1

Does this description of the yard of the winning yard on the Department's website give you a better idea of what I'm referring to?

"By far the ugliest front yard in SF. Corner lot has overgrown weeds; Gopher infestation; Dog pee and poop; Cracked and uneven concrete; Dead plants; Evidence of failed attempts to mulch and gravel (covered by weeds); Snails and bugs everywhere."

This grand prize winner is getting a free yard makeover using native plants using native plants in a water-conserving landscape provided by [Madrono Landscape Design Studio](#). The three first prizewinners are receiving landscape consultations, native plant seeds and enough compost to makeover 500 square feet of their yards. Everyone entering the contest is receiving seed packets of native plants.

In all, 79 property owners submitted images of their yards. Click [here](#) to see the winners, indeed images of all of the 79 submissions... if you've the

courage!


The competition was a first for the Department, which initiated the contest to support Gov. Jerry Brown's executive order to cut water use 25 percent statewide. The City "hopes this gimmick will push at least a few residents into switching to less water-intensive landscaping," according to the department. The timing of the contest took place just weeks before statewide mandatory water restrictions were implemented.

Governor Jerry Brown on April 1 (the first time in the state's history) imposed mandatory water restrictions on residents, businesses and farms. He ordered cities and towns in California, now in its fourth year of drought and after a winter of low-record snowfalls, to reduce water usage by 25 percent.



Along with the restrictions, Brown's executive order directed to the State Water Resources Board:

- Imposes significant cuts in water use on campuses, golf courses, cemeteries and large estates.
- Calls for drought-tolerant landscaping to replace 50 million square feet of turfgrass lawns.
- Bans watering of hard surfaces (driveways, sidewalks, asphalt, etc.), and also ornamental grasses on public street medians.
- Prohibits new homes and developments from irrigating with potable water unless drip irrigation systems are used.

 The restrictions went into effect Monday, June 1, 2015, and left the California's 400-plus water agencies scrambling to convince their customers to reduce water use. If water agencies fail to meet the mandatory water restrictions they face fines of up to \$10,000 a day.

Getting back to the Ugliest Yard contest, San Francisco Department of Environment spokesman Guillermo Rodriguez says: "The ugliest yard isn't one that is desolate and full of weeds and dirt. A yard that wastes a lot of water to maintain – that is ugly."

Turf magazine agrees with Mr. Rodriguez to a point, but adds the caveat that turfgrass doesn't waste water, unknowledgeable irrigators (property owners) waste water.

Need convincing? Consider where the great grasslands of the world thrive – in dry areas of the world, such as the U.S. Plains, Russian Steppes and the African savannahs, for instance.

Join the www.expired-link.com discussion, "Looks bleak in California" started several weeks ago by clicking [here](#).

Finally, what do you think about the contest and about the steps California is taking to conserve water? Let me know at rhall@mooserivermedia.com.

PHOTOS: [SF ENVIRONMENT](#)