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Redondo Beach takes a dry approach to public urinals

City expects waterless units to save 40,000 gallons each and a few thousand dollars.

By Kristin S. Agostoni

Staff Writer

Gone are the leaky pipes, puddles and corrosive cleaning solutions: The waterless urinal is No. 1 these days in Redondo Beach.

Psyched about the prospect of conserving water and saving money, local leaders have already swapped flushable urinals for their dry counterparts in the jail and city yard.

And later this year, expect to see eight or nine new pissoirs make an appearance on the municipal pier.

"Less maintenance. It's less labor intensive. You don't have to worry about overflows," said Redondo Beach Public Works Director Sylvia Glazer. "That's the big thing, you're saving all this water."

Each urinal is expected to conserve an average of 40,000 gallons a year. And with a combined annual savings of more than \$6,000 in supplies and maintenance costs, local leaders figure they can't go wrong.

The new amenities come courtesy of West Basin Municipal Water District, which has partnered with the South Bay Energy Savings Center to offer restroom retrofits around the South Bay.

The program is made possible with \$300,000 in state grant money that provides a combination of water-free urinals, sensor-operated sinks and high efficiency toilets - and their installation - free of charge.

They're available, first come, first serve, to qualifying businesses and government agencies within West Basin's 17-city territory, said Elise Goldman, the district's conservation program specialist.

While the district has been taking requests for about a year, many applicants are just beginning to see what the program can buy them, Goldman said.

"We've really stepped up the installation schedule (for) the next couple of months," she added. "We're looking for real opportunities for water savings. It's a way to decrease our dependency on imported water."

In addition to the city of Redondo Beach, Sangria restaurant in neighboring Hermosa Beach was also selected for a bunch of bathroom upgrades, four sinks and six toilets.

"It was great," said owner Kevin Barry. "We have the toilets and sinks, but not the urinals."

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