

Dear Ma'am or Sir,

I respect the fact that my location in Lancaster in the Antelope Valley, the high desert area 60 miles north of Los Angeles, is a naturally arid and as such it is unreasonable in these times of drought to expect to be able to maintain a lush, green lawn around my home. While I don't look forward to the \$10,000.00 loss in property value by letting it die, I accept the environmental necessity of having to do so... but only if everyone else, including the city, does so as well. But they won't.

Lancaster is the site of the Lancaster National Soccer Center, 60 acres of the best watered turf in the entire valley. It is not subject to the same restrictions homeowners face when it comes to water usage. It gets its water at wholesale prices and is not subject to the punitive tiered system homeowners have to pay. To maintain the same quality of turf in our yards, I estimate our water bills are going to more than triple while the soccer fields will not see any increase in cost. It can water any time of the day and any day it wants while we have to limit ourselves to certain hours and days. It is immune to punishment while we can be cited and forced to pay for water restrictors being placed on our supply lines if we violate these rules. In essence, Lancaster homeowners are being forced to subsidize these fields even though the vast majority of us never use them.

I appreciate that the large Hispanic population in the Antelope Valley and their cultural attachment to soccer renders sacrificing the soccer fields because of the drought politically unacceptable. Worse still, even if a water cost equity was legislated so that the fields had to pay their fair share, the cost would be passed onto local homeowners through water rate increases or increased taxes. Either way we lose.

The same comments apply to all of the parks in the Antelope Valley. Homeowners have to endure significant financial burdens and property value sacrifices while the soccer fields and parks are allowed to shower their lawns with as much water as they want at little or no cost increase.

I understand that this is most likely a "trash can" forum: an email address set up to let taxpayers feel like they are accomplishing something by voicing their concerns, where in actuality it probably has an automated delete system. I'll be interested to see what response, if any, I receive.

Wayne Schmidt.