

California adopts strict lawn-reduction rules

By Phillip Reese, Dale Kasler and Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

The era of lush, green lawns adorning new California homes moved a dramatic step closer to ending Wednesday.

Drought-tolerant plants must dominate lawns around new homes and businesses across California under new regulations unanimously approved by the California Water Commission.

The new rules effectively limit the amount of turf grass around newly constructed homes to 25 percent of landscaped area. Under prior rules, turf grass could take up about one-third of landscaped area.

The restrictions will apply to all homes with more than 500 square feet of landscaped area – essentially, all new, single-family, detached homes in the state. Old rules only applied to new homes with more than 2,500 square feet of landscaped area. California homes, on average, feature about 2,500 square feet of landscaping, state officials said.

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