

# California's Ban on Non-Functional Turf: What Hotels Need to Know

A guide to understanding the law, your compliance timeline, and opportunities to save water & money.

## OVERVIEW

### What is AB 1572 and Why Does it Matter to Hotels?

In 2022, California passed Assembly Bill 1572, prohibiting the irrigation of non-functional turf (NFT) using potable water on commercial, industrial, and institutional properties statewide (irrigation with recycled water is exempt).

This primer explains what the law requires, how it applies to your property, key deadlines, and how compliance can reduce costs, support sustainability goals, and improve community water reliability.

**January 1, 2028**

Law in effect for commercial properties, including hotels

**\$1,000 per day**

Potential fines per violation after deadline

### What is Non-Functional Turf (NFT)?

Turf that is purely ornamental, with no use for recreation, gathering, or pet exercise.

#### Examples:

- Parking lot medians
- Roadside strips
- Steep slopes

*If the only person walking on it is the person mowing it, it's probably NFT!*

## IDENTIFY. STOP. CERTIFY.

### Steps to Get Into Compliance

1

**Identify.** Audit your landscape and document all turf areas. Classify each as functional or non-functional. Photograph and measure.

2

**Stop.** By January 1, 2028, you must cease watering the areas identified as NFT, unless irrigated with recycled water.

3

**Certify.** Properties with over 5,000 square feet of irrigated area must self-certify compliance to the State Water Board.

### Purple Pipe Exemption

Landscapes irrigated with recycled water (purple pipe) are not subject to the NFT ban.

### Tree Protection

Exemptions include irrigation to prevent the death or damage of mature trees.

## Benefits of Transforming Non-Functional Turf

### Water Savings

Climate-appropriate plants use about 70% less water than turf.

### Cost Savings

Lower water bills, reduce maintenance costs, and avoid penalties by proactively removing NFT.

### Guest Experience & Brand Value

Enhance curb appeal and signal environmental leadership with beautiful native plantings.



Beautiful, climate-appropriate hotel landscapes. Photo credit: SWA Group.

## RESOURCES

### Where to Learn More

Visit [nonfunctionalturfca.org](https://nonfunctionalturfca.org) to find:

#### Your Local Water Utility

Many water utilities provide financial incentives and technical support, including fee site surveys, to support turf conversion.

#### Property Check Tool

Complete a preliminary assessment to help identify if you have NFT on your property.

#### Inspiring Alternatives

Look up Qualified Water-Efficient Landscapers in your area who can help create a beautiful new landscape to replace NFT.

#### AB 1572 Text

Access the full text of the bill signed by Governor Newsom in 2022.