

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
RESOLUTION NO. 2014-0038**

TO ADOPT AN EMERGENCY REGULATION
FOR STATEWIDE URBAN WATER CONSERVATION

WHEREAS:

1. On April 25, 2014, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. issued an executive order to strengthen the state's ability to manage water and habitat effectively in drought conditions and called on all Californians to redouble their efforts to conserve water. The executive order finds that the continuous severe drought conditions present urgent challenges across the state including water shortages in communities and for agricultural production, increased wildfires, degraded habitat for fish and wildlife, threat of saltwater contamination, and additional water scarcity if drought conditions continue into 2015. The National Integrated Drought Information System reported that nearly 80% of the state was reported to be under "extreme" drought conditions at the end of June;
2. The executive order refers to the Governor's Proclamation No. 1-17-2014, issued on January 17, 2014, declaring a State of Emergency to exist in California due to severe drought conditions. The January Proclamation notes that the state is experiencing record dry conditions, with 2014 projected to become the driest year on record. Since January, state water officials indicate that reservoirs, rainfall totals and the snowpack remain critically low. This follows two other dry or below average years, leaving reservoir storage at alarmingly low levels. The January Proclamation highlights the State's dry conditions, lack of precipitation and the resulting effects on drinking water supplies, the cultivation of crops, and the survival of animals and plants that rely on California's rivers and streams. The January Proclamation also calls on all Californians to reduce their water usage by 20 percent;
3. There is no guarantee that winter precipitation will alleviate the drought conditions that the executive orders address, which will lead to even more severe impacts across the state if the drought wears on;
4. Water Code section 1058.5 grants the State Water Board the authority to adopt emergency regulations in certain drought years in order to: "prevent the waste, unreasonable use, unreasonable method of use, or unreasonable method of diversion, of water, to promote water recycling or water conservation, to require curtailment of diversions when water is not available under the diverter's priority of right, or in furtherance of any of the foregoing, to require reporting of diversion or use or the preparation of monitoring reports";
5. Over 400,000 acres of farmland are expected to be fallowed, thousands of people may be out of work, communities risk running out of drinking water, and fish and wildlife will suffer.

6. Many Californians have taken bold steps over the years and in this year to reduce water use; nevertheless, the dire nature of the current drought requires additional conservation actions from residents and businesses. Some severely affected communities have implemented water rationing, limiting water use in some cases to only 50 gallons per person per day, foregoing showers, laundry, toilet flushing, and all outdoor watering.
7. Water conservation is the easiest, most efficient and most cost effective way to quickly reduce water demand and extend supplies into the next year, providing flexibility for all California communities. Water saved this summer is water available next year, giving water suppliers the flexibility to manage their systems efficiently. The more water that is conserved now, the less likely it is that a community will experience such dire circumstances that water rationing is required ;
8. Most Californians use more water outdoors than indoors. In many areas, 50 percent or more of daily water use is for lawns and outdoor landscaping. Outdoor water use is generally discretionary, and many irrigated landscapes would not suffer greatly from receiving a decreased amount of water;
9. Public information and awareness is critical to achieving conservation goals and the Save Our Water campaign, run jointly by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the Association of California Water Agencies, is an excellent resource for conservation information and messaging that is integral to effective drought response (<http://saveourwater.com>).
10. Enforcement against water waste is a key tool in conservation programs. When conservation becomes a social norm in a community, the need for enforcement is reduced or eliminated;
11. The emergency regulations set a minimum standard requiring only modest lifestyle changes across the state. Many communities are already doing more and have been for years. They should be commended, but can and should do more. Others are not yet doing so and should at least do this, but should do much more given the severity of the drought;
12. On July 8, 2014, the State Water Board issued public notice that the State Water Board would consider the adoption of the regulation at the Board's regularly-scheduled July 15, 2014 public meeting, in accordance with applicable State laws and regulations. The State Water Board also distributed for public review and comment a Finding of Emergency that complies with State laws and regulations;
13. On April 25, 2014, the Governor suspended the California Environmental Quality Act's application to the State Water Board's adoption of emergency regulations pursuant to Water Code section 1058.5 to prevent the waste, unreasonable use, unreasonable method of use, or unreasonable method of diversion of water, to promote water recycling or water conservation;
14. As discussed above, the State Water Board is adopting the emergency regulation because of emergency drought conditions, the need for prompt action, and current limitations in the existing enforcement process;

15. Disadvantaged communities may require assistance in increasing water conservation and state agencies should look for opportunities to provide assistance in promoting water conservation;
16. Nothing in the regulations or in the enforcement provisions of the regulations, preclude a local agency from exercising its authority to adopt more stringent conservation measures. Moreover, the Water Code does not impose a mandatory penalty for violations of the regulations adopted by this resolution and local agencies retain their enforcement discretion in enforcing the regulations, to the extent authorized, and may develop their own progressive enforcement practices to encourage conservation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The State Water Board adopts California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 863, 864, and 865, as appended to this resolution as an emergency regulation;
2. The State Water Board staff will submit the regulation to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for final approval;
3. If, during the approval process, State Water Board staff, the State Water Board, or OAL determines that minor corrections to the language of the regulation or supporting documentation are needed for clarity or consistency, the State Water Board Executive Director or designee may make such changes;
4. These regulations shall remain in effect for 270 days after filing with the Secretary of State unless the State Water Board determines that it is no longer necessary due to changed conditions, or unless the State Water Board renews the regulations due to continued drought conditions as described in Water Code section 1058.5;
5. The State Water Board directs staff to provide the Board with monthly updates on the implementation of the emergency regulations and their effect;
6. Directs State Water Board staff to condition funding upon compliance with the emergency regulations, to the extent feasible;
7. Directs State Water Board staff to work with the Department of Water Resources and the Save Our Water campaign to disseminate information regarding the emergency regulations; and
8. Directs State Water Board staff in developing an electronic reporting portal to include data fields so that local agencies may provide monthly reporting data on (i) conservation-related implementation measures or enforcement actions taken by the local agency and (ii) substitution during the drought of potable water with recycled water to extend water supplies.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

9. The State Water Board commends water suppliers that have increased conservation messaging and adopted innovative strategies to enhance customer awareness of water use, such as applications that let customers compare their water use to water use by others; reduce system losses, such as fixing system leaks which can deplete supplies by 10 percent or more; and establish incentives to reduce demand, such as tiered or drought rate structures. The State Water Board also commends all Californians that have already been working to maximize their conservation efforts, both at home and at work;

10. The State Water Board calls upon water suppliers to take the following actions:

Educate customers and employees

- Retail water suppliers should provide notice of the regulations in English and Spanish in one or more of the following ways: newspaper advertisements, bill inserts, website homepage, social media, notices in public libraries;
- Wholesale suppliers should include reference to the regulations in their customer communications;
- All water suppliers should train personnel on the regulations;
- All water suppliers should provide signage where recycled or reclaimed water is being used for activities that the emergency regulations prohibit with the use of potable water, such as operation of fountains and other water features;
- All water suppliers should redouble their efforts to disseminate information regarding opportunities and incentives to upgrade indoor fixtures and appliances;
- All water suppliers should use education and the tools available through the Save Our Water website (<http://saveourwater.com>); and
- All water suppliers should educate and prepare their boards and councils on the drought response actions contained in the emergency regulations and in this resolution, and to make sure that drought response items are placed on agendas as early as possible;

Increasing local supplies

- All water suppliers should accelerate the completion of projects that will conserve potable water by making use of non-potable supplies, such as recycled water, "greywater," and stormwater collection projects;
- All water suppliers should improve their leak reporting and response programs and request that police and fire departments and other local government personnel report leaks and water waste that they encounter during their routine duties/patrols;
- Smaller water suppliers – those with fewer than 3,000 service connections – should take proactive steps to secure their communities' water supplies and educate their customers about water conservation and the status of their supply reserves;
- All water suppliers should conduct water loss audits and make leak detection and repair a top priority for the duration of the drought; and
- All urban water suppliers should evaluate their rate structures and begin to implement needed changes as part of planning for another dry year. Information and assistance on setting and implementing drought rates is available from the Alliance for Water Efficiency. (<http://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org/>).

11. The State Water Board calls on all Californians to take the following additional actions:
 - Further reduce water demand, whether by using less water in daily routines indoors and out, retrofitting appliances and installing greywater and rainwater catchment systems; and
 - Check residential and business water bills to see if there are high charges that may indicate a leak and to fix the leak, if they are able, or contact their local water utility if they need assistance.
12. The State Water Board encourages its staff, the Department of Water Resources, the Public Utilities Commission, urban water suppliers, and other local agencies to look for opportunities to encourage and promote new technologies that reduce water usage, including through timely access to water usage information and behavioral response.
13. The State Water Board encourages all state and local agencies to look for additional opportunities to minimize potable water use in outdoor spaces.
14. The State Water Board encourages investor-owned utilities to expeditiously submit applications for implementation of the regulations to the California Public Utilities Commission.

CERTIFICATION


The undersigned Clerk to the Board does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on July 15, 2014.

AYE: Chair Felicia Marcus
 Vice Chair Frances Spivy-Weber
 Board Member Steven Moore
 Board Member Dorene D'Adamo

NAY: None

ABSENT: Board Member Tam M. Doduc

ABSTAIN: None



Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board

PROPOSED TEXT OF EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

Article 22.5. Drought Emergency Water Conservation

Sec. 863 Findings of Drought Emergency

(a) The State Water Resources Control Board finds as follows:

(1) On January 17, 2014, the Governor issued a proclamation of a state of emergency under the California Emergency Services Act based on drought conditions;

(2) On April 25, 2014, the Governor issued a proclamation of a continued state of emergency under the California Emergency Services Act based on continued drought conditions;

(3) The drought conditions that formed the basis of the Governor's emergency proclamations continue to exist;

(4) The present year is critically dry and has been immediately preceded by two or more consecutive below normal, dry, or critically dry years; and

(5) The drought conditions will likely continue for the foreseeable future and additional action by both the State Water Resources Control Board and local water suppliers will likely be necessary to further promote conservation.

Authority: Wat. Code, § 1058.5.

References: Wat. Code, §§ 102, 104, 105.

Sec. 864 Prohibited Activities in Promotion of Water Conservation

(a) To promote water conservation, each of the following actions is prohibited, except where necessary to address an immediate health and safety need or to comply with a term or condition in a permit issued by a state or federal agency:

(1) The application of potable water to outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes runoff such that water flows onto adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, private and public walkways, roadways, parking lots, or structures;

(2) The use of a hose that dispenses potable water to wash a motor vehicle, except where the hose is fitted with a shut-off nozzle or device attached to it that causes it to cease dispensing water immediately when not in use;

(3) The application of potable water to driveways and sidewalks; and

(4) The use of potable water in a fountain or other decorative water feature, except where the water is part of a recirculating system.

(b) The taking of any action prohibited in subdivision (a) of this section, in addition to any other applicable civil or criminal penalties, is an infraction, punishable by a fine of up to five hundred dollars (\$500) for each day in which the violation occurs.

Authority: Wat. Code, § 1058.5.

References: Wat. Code, §§ 102, 104, 105.

PROPOSED TEXT OF EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

Sec. 865 Mandatory Actions by Water Suppliers

(a) The term “urban water supplier,” when used in this section, refers to a supplier that meets the definition set forth in Water Code section 10617, except it does not refer to suppliers when they are functioning solely in a wholesale capacity, but does apply to suppliers when they are functioning in a retail capacity.

(b)(1) To promote water conservation, each urban water supplier shall implement all requirements and actions of the stage of its water shortage contingency plan that imposes mandatory restrictions on outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf with potable water.

(2) As an alternative to subdivision (b)(1), an urban water supplier may submit a request to the Executive Director for approval of an alternate plan that includes allocation-based rate structures that satisfies the requirements of chapter 3.4 (commencing with section 370) of division 1 of the Water Code, and the Executive Director may approve such an alternate plan upon determining that the rate structure, in conjunction with other measures, achieves a level of conservation that would be superior to that achieved by implementing limitations on outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf with potable water by the persons it serves to no more than two days per week.

(c) To promote water conservation, each urban water supplier that does not have a water shortage contingency plan or has been notified by the Department of Water Resources that its water shortage contingency plan does not meet the requirements of Water Code section 10632 shall, within thirty (30) days, limit outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf with potable water by the persons it serves to no more than two days per week or shall implement another mandatory conservation measure or measures intended to achieve a comparable reduction in water consumption by the persons it serves relative to the amount consumed in 2013.

(d) In furtherance of the promotion of water conservation each urban water supplier shall prepare and submit to the State Water Resources Control Board by the 15th of each month a monitoring report on forms provided by the Board. The monitoring report shall include the amount of potable water the urban water supplier produced, including water provided by a wholesaler, in the preceding calendar month and shall compare that amount to the amount produced in the same calendar month in 2013. Beginning October 15, 2014, the monitoring report shall also estimate the gallons of water per person per day used by the residential customers it serves. In its initial monitoring report, each urban water supplier shall state the number of persons it serves.

(e) To promote water conservation, each distributor of a public water supply, as defined in Water Code section 350, that is not an urban water supplier shall, within thirty (30) days, take one or more of the following actions:

(1) Limit outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf with potable water by the persons it serves to no more than two days per week; or

(2) Implement another mandatory conservation measure or measures intended to achieve a comparable reduction in water consumption by the persons it serves relative to the amount consumed in 2013.

Authority: Wat. Code, § 1058.5.

References: Wat. Code, §§ 102, 104, 105; 350; 10617; 10632.