



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
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April 13, 2015

The Honorable Felicia Marcus
c/o Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Comment Letter Regarding the Proposed SWRCB Regulatory Framework

Dear Chair Marcus:

The City of Newport Beach appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to the Proposed Regulatory Framework in response to the Governor's executive order B-29-15. The Order, in addition to the SWRCB's emergency regulations has increased public awareness and conservation measures throughout the State. The City of Newport Beach has a long history of water conservation efforts and has been addressing the issue for many years. As a bay and ocean community, water conservation and urban water runoff is a key concern of ours. Additionally, all of our water comes from outside the city limits therefore; water supply is another primary concern. Some of the efforts include:

- Supplying our golf courses, center medians, and school yards with recycled water through the Green Acres Project since 1995.
- In 1997 the City spent nearly \$26 million dollars on a ground water project that now supplies 72% of the City's water supply from the Orange County water basin lessening the demand on State project water.
- The adoption of a water conservation and landscape ordinances in 2009 which includes permanent restrictions as well as a tiered level of conservation requirements on water use.
- 90% of all City owned landscaping is controlled by weather based irrigation systems with the remaining systems scheduled to be replaced next fiscal year.
- Last fiscal year 1,200 weather based irrigation controllers and 85,000 efficient irrigation nozzles were installed at Newport Beach homes.
- From 2013 to date, Newport Beach residents and businesses have removed nearly 270,000 square feet or 7.5 acres of turf grass with drought tolerant plants or artificial turf.

- This year we are replacing 157,000 square feet of turf with artificial turf at one of our recreational parks.
- Adopting a “Level One” water supply shortage in September 2014 that imposed mandatory watering days as well as other restrictions.
- The City continuing to conduct meetings with homeowner associations as well as providing workshops to educate the public about water conservation.
- Having 5,000 customers participating in the “Smart Water” program which will be expanding next fiscal year. These are individualized reports for residents to track usage and find incentive programs.

We understand and sympathize with the SWRCB’s challenge to implement the Governor’s actions very quickly. Not all agencies are alike but we are all in this together. We offer the following comments to the proposed draft framework.

- If the proposed targets to be used are in terms of residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD) with a formula to divide water produced by the service area population, we suggest a common methodology for establishing production and percentage of residential use in the calculation. Each agency should certify the numbers provided to the Board as well as how these numbers were established.
- Consideration of adjustments to production numbers for previous and current conservation efforts, water storage, indirect potable reuse, recycled water use, reductions in commercial, institutional, and industrial (CII) use. Additionally, cities such as Newport Beach have a large influx in residential and visitor population during the summer months. Please consider these population changes in the calculations. Perhaps used as a “credit” to the production calculation.
- The proposal uses September 2014 as a baseline. Monthly production is fairly easy for most agencies; however, the percentage of residential is derived by sales consumption data. The City of Newport Beach as well as many others collect usage data bi-monthly which makes establishing accurate sales for each month difficult. We ask that the SWRCB consider a methodology for establishing the percentage of residential use over a longer period or average of two or more months.
- We recognize the urgency to reduce water quickly, however, ask that the SWRCB phase in the reductions over a longer period of time. Some conservation measures may include capital projects or municipal code amendments. These could take time, but will be permanent and sustainable rather than a quick fix.
- Consider additional tiers to the four proposed in the draft framework. This will further define targets and close the gap between the existing four.
- Consider a reduction target in gallons per capita per day (GPCD) for agencies in addition to reductions in residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD). Agencies may wish to target parks, center medians, City facilities, and commercial reduction to reach the state wide goal of 25%.

The City of Newport Beach remains committed to doing our part to ensure water reliability to all Californians. The combination of using water wisely and looking for alternative water supplies is the key to our future needs. We appreciate the efforts of the SWRCB and look forward to working with you and other agencies during this drought.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (949) 718-3401 or gmurdoch@newportbeachca.gov if you have any questions. Thank you.



George Murdoch
Utilities General Manager/Co-Director
Municipal Operations Department