



WATER USE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FACT SHEET | April 2024

REPORTING WATER USE | Required Every Year

Did you know that all Californians who divert water must report every February 1st? *It's true.* Anyone who diverts water from a stream, river, or lake must report to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) every year by February 1st. This rule applies to everyone even if the amount of water is small and even if the stream is on your property.

How Do I Report?

You need to submit your report online using the State Water Board's data reporting forms. This simplifies the process and will help you avoid mistakes. Your report will include the amount of water you diverted during the reporting period and how you use the water. The reporting period is from October through September, and then, you report the following February. For example, your diversions made between Oct. 1, 2023, and Sept. 30, 2024, must be reported by Feb. 1, 2025.

Do I Report My Irrigation District Water?

If you only get water from an irrigation or water district, the district will report your water diversion, so you do not need to report.

How Much Detail Must I Report?

The level of information you need to report depends on how much water you are permitted to divert. Typically, if you are permitted to divert more than 10 acre-feet per year, you will have to *measure* your diversions. The more water you divert, the more frequently you will measure. For example, if you are permitted to divert 50 acre-feet per year, you will need to measure your diversions weekly, but if you are permitted to divert 200 acre-feet per year, you will need to measure daily. Diverters will typically install meters to measure and report water diversions.

You are also required to demonstrate how you calculate information. For example, if you divert water using a pump that you share with someone else, you will need to calculate your portion of the diversions. When you report your diversions, you will also report the method you used to calculate them.

Why Have I Received This Information?

The State Water Board is sending this fact sheet to water users and landowners near the Merced River to provide an overview of water rights and water measurement and reporting requirements.

Why Is Reporting Important?

As Californians know, every drop counts. The information you report each year is combined with others to better understand water availability in your area. Over time, reporting helps water users, local water managers, and the state plan for each area and each diverter's water needs, especially during dry periods.

What If I Missed the Deadline?

It's not too late. Please submit your water use data for this year or prior years – it is still helpful!

How Do I Know If I Have a Water Right?

Anyone who diverts water in California needs a water right. Even if you have a dam, pump, or pipe that brings you water, don't assume that you have a water right. If you don't know if you have a water right or if you want to check the details of your water right, the first step is to search the [Electronic Water Rights Information Management System](#) (eWRIMS). You can also give us a call at 916-341-5300 or e-mail dwr@waterboards.ca.gov.



Photo: Water diversion metered using a strap-on meter.

Where Can I Get Help?

The reporting process can be challenging, so the State Water Board has created a video and a manual to walk you through the process. Templates, updates, and other useful information are also on the Water Measurement and Reporting webpage.

State Water Board Resources

- [Measurement Data Submission Video Tutorial](#)
- [Measurement and Reporting Manual](#)
- [Know Your Water Right for Measurement Regulations](#)
- [Water Rights FAQs](#)

Email or call the State Water Board Division of Water Rights:

- Email RMS@waterboards.ca.gov
- Phone: 916-341-5431
- www.waterboards.ca.gov

Reporting Quiz: True or False

- All Californians who divert water from streams, rivers, or lakes must report their water use to the State Water Board every year by February 1st.
- Water users that only divert a small amount from a stream on their property need to report annually.
- You can still report even if you missed this year's deadline.

All statements are true.