

DRAFT

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2022-

DROUGHT-RELATED EMERGENCY REGULATIONS FOR URBAN WATER CONSERVATION

WHEREAS:

1. On April 21, May 10, and July 8, 2021, Governor Newsom issued proclamations that a state of emergency exists in a total of 50 counties due to severe drought conditions and directed state agencies to take immediate action to preserve critical water supplies and mitigate the effects of drought and ensure the protection of health, safety, and the environment.
2. On October 19, 2021, Governor Newsom signed a proclamation extending the drought emergency statewide and further urging Californians to reduce their water use.
3. There is no guarantee that winter precipitation will alleviate the current drought conditions.
4. Many Californians have taken bold steps over the years to reduce water use; nevertheless, the severity of the current drought and uncertainty about Water Year 2022 require additional conservation actions from residents and businesses.
5. 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 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 or that water rationing will be required.
6. 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.
7. Public information and awareness are critical to achieving conservation goals, and the Save Our Water campaign ([SaveOurWater.com](https://www.saveourwater.com)), 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.

DRAFT

8. [SaveWater.CA.Gov](https://www.savewater.ca.gov) is an online tool designed to help save water in communities. This website lets anyone easily report water waste from their phone, tablet, or computer by simply selecting the type of water waste they see, typing in the address where the waste is occurring, and clicking send. These reports are filed directly with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) and relevant local water supplier.
9. 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.
10. On October 19, 2021, the Governor suspended the environmental review required by the California Environmental Quality Act to allow State Water Board-adopted drought conservation emergency regulations and other actions to take place quickly to respond to emergency conditions.
11. 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.”
12. On November 30, 2021, 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 January 4, 2022, 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. The emergency regulation sets a minimum standard that many communities are already doing more but not everyone is taking these low-cost, easy to implement actions that can save significant amounts of water during a drought emergency.
14. Disadvantaged communities may require assistance in increasing water conservation, and state and local agencies should look for opportunities to provide assistance in promoting water conservation, including but not limited to translation of regulation text and dissemination of water conservation announcements into languages spoken by at least 10 percent of the people who reside in a water supplier’s service area, such as in newspaper advertisements, bill inserts, website homepage, social media, and notices in public libraries.
15. Nothing in the regulation or in the enforcement provisions of the regulation precludes a local agency from exercising its authority to adopt more stringent conservation measures. Moreover, the Water Code does not impose a

DRAFT

mandatory penalty for violations of the regulation adopted by this resolution, and local agencies retain their enforcement discretion in enforcing the regulation, 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, section 995, as appended to this resolution as an emergency regulation.
2. 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. This regulation shall remain in effect for one year 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 regulation due to continued drought conditions, as described in Water Code section 1058.5.
5. The State Water Board 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.
6. Nothing in the regulation or in the enforcement provisions of the regulation precludes a local agency from exercising its authority to adopt more stringent conservation measures. Local agencies are encouraged to develop their own progressive enforcement practices to promote conservation.

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 January 4, 2022.

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board