



Association  
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Water Agencies  
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# Water Conservation: Local Actions & Response

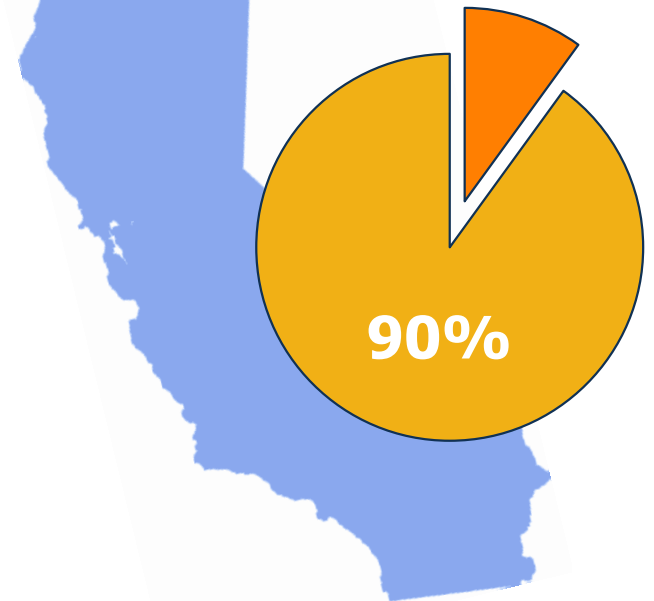
David Bolland, ACWA Senior Regulatory Advocate

June 17, 2014

# About ACWA

## Who We Represent . . .

- + 430 public water agencies responsible for 90% of the state's distributed water
- + Members provide water for the public, for agriculture and for business
- + Includes state and federal water contractors; wholesalers and retailers (but not investor owned utilities or mutual water companies)
- + Includes biggest CA municipal utilities and largest irrigation districts down to very small rural community systems and irrigation districts



# Public Water Agencies Are Committed to Continued and Heightened Conservation

- ACWA has expressed its strong support for both urban and agricultural water use efficiency in its SWAP - a comprehensive water plan endorsed by over 100 public water agency members
- ACWA's Board of Directors has urged water agencies to call on water users to ramp up water conservation statewide
- ACWA partners with DWR on the Save Our Water program (a comprehensive, consumer-focused statewide public education program to advance conservation by all Californians)



# Public Water Agencies Are Committed to Continued and Heightened Conservation

ACWA member agencies continue to be leaders on a variety of initiatives at the local and regional level to encourage water conservation and water use efficiency

Many of these activities are identified on ACWA's 2014 Drought Watch website

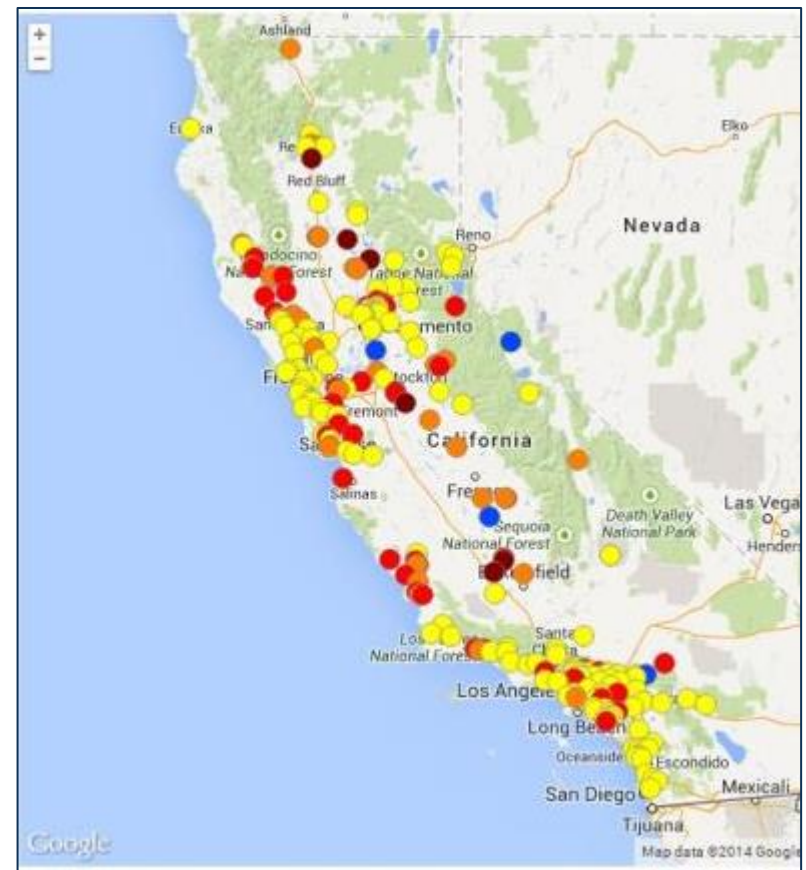


# Local agency response

Interactive map tracks agency impacts and actions around the state and is updated daily:

- + Mandatory restrictions / conservation in at least 54 communities / service areas
- + At least 150 agencies calling for voluntary / increased conservation in support of governor's request
- + Drought emergency / water shortage declared in 28 counties / cities

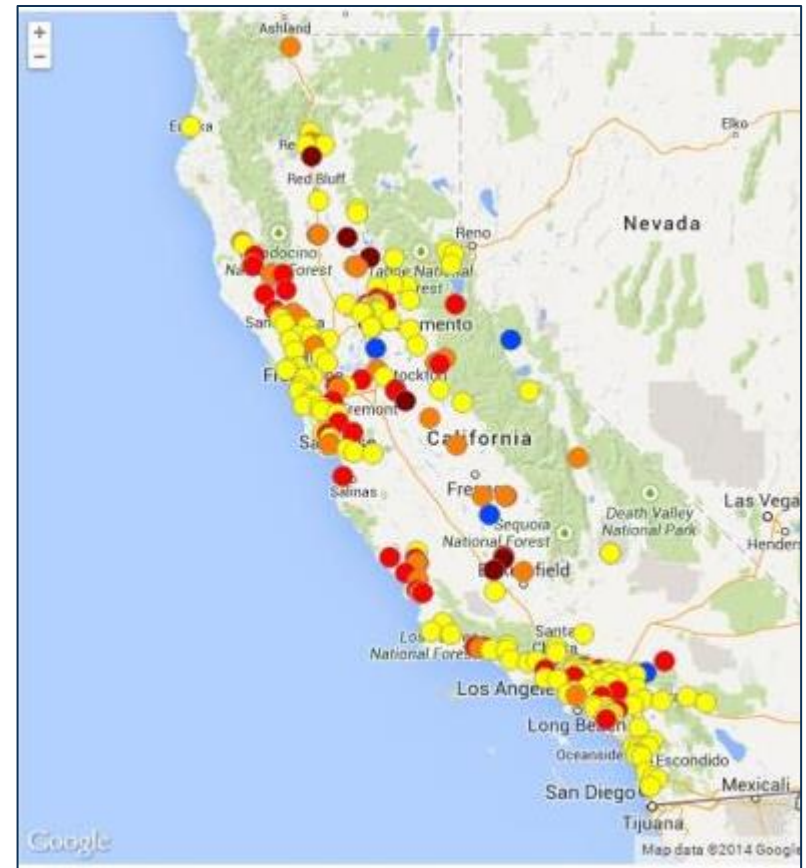
ACWA Interactive Map [www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com)



# Mandatory rationing / water conservation allotments in effect

- + Brooktrails Township
- + Cambria Community Services District
- + City of Santa Cruz
- + Lompico County Water District
- + Redwood Valley County Water District
- + City of Avalon (begins July 1)

ACWA Interactive Map [www.acwa.com](http://www.acwa.com)





# ACWA Informal Survey

- + 56% of respondents say primary source of supply reduced due to drought
- + More than half face cuts in surface water deliveries
- + About one-half are drawing down surface storage to cope this year
- + About one-third relying more heavily on groundwater

\*\* Informal survey conducted by ACWA in late Jan /early Feb. 100 agencies responded.



# ACWA Informal Survey - continued

- + 77% have drought contingency plans in place
- + 82% have expanded public education / outreach to customers on conservation
- + 59% offer rebates or other financial incentives to install water-efficient devices, remove turf grass
- + 82% see an increase in customer willingness to conserve

\* Informal surveys conducted by ACWA in late Jan /early Feb and late May / early June. About 100 agencies responded.





# Typical response actions

- + Asking for 10% to 60% reductions in water use
- + Outdoor irrigation limited to certain days, hours
- + Drought-related surcharges, penalties for excessive use
- + Expanded rebates / incentives for conservation devices, turf replacement, etc.



# Other Actions to Reduce Water Use

- + Paid advertising campaigns
  - + Recycled water filling stations for customers to use on outdoor landscaping
  - + Water audits, free water-efficient shower heads, etc.
  - + Drought “Drive-Up” Days to distribute conservation kits
  - + Town-hall style forums and community events
  - + Weekly email updates to customers
- \* Informal survey conducted by ACWA in late May /early June. 90 agencies responded.



# Examples of Urban Water Agency Conservation Initiatives

**Sonoma County Water Agency** and contractors are implementing voluntary 20% conservation with a regional conservation marketing campaign “There’s a Drought On. Turn the Water Off, ” including paid advertising, social media outreach, an easy-to-use website, local toolkits, eco-friendly garden tours, and rebates



**San Diego County Water Authority** implementing voluntary conservation through its “When in Drought” campaign featuring paid advertising, public service announcements and online communications. The campaign is supported by \$300,000 in drought response grant funds from DWR and is being coordinated with other local and statewide conservation efforts, including Save Our Water

# Examples of Urban Water Agency Conservation Initiatives - continued

**The City of Sacramento** has implemented mandatory 20% conservation and is using a host of measures including limiting outdoor irrigation to twice per week, increased water patrols and implementing a “cash for grass” program. Sacramento has budgeted over \$1 million on the drought response including cash for grass, increased education and enforcement and infrastructure modifications.

Sacramento increased its enforcement staff to 40 and has issued nearly 2,300 notices of violation since the beginning of the year (compared to 37 over the same period last year)

# Examples of Urban Water Agency Conservation Initiatives - continued

**Metropolitan Water District of Southern California** recently doubled its conservation and outreach budget to \$40 million, includes \$5.5 million for outreach to raise public awareness and target inefficient practices. MWD's programs include rebates, incentives for turf removal, large landscape audits, California Friendly Landscape Training Classes and a Public Agency Program and Fitness Center Program.

**Dublin San Ramon Services District** has adopted water use limitations and penalties for excess use. Mandatory 25% reduction in water use to preserve water supply for public health and safety. 50% - 60% reduction mandated for outdoor irrigation. No washdown of impervious surfaces, decorative fountains and water features must be shut off, and all pools and spas covered when not in use. Rebates for turf removal, toilet retrofits, high efficiency appliances, weather based irrigation controllers and pool and spa covers.



# Observations

- + Public outreach is a key component of conservation initiatives – Statewide SAVE OUR WATER messaging has moved into high gear. Some agencies are using SOW; others are working through regional efforts and still others have their own outreach program to the public
- + Many conservation outreach programs and enforcement activities are just now beginning to influence water users – results should become more evident in coming weeks
- + Outdoor irrigation season is just beginning – greater proportionate water savings are anticipated in coming weeks
- + If dry conditions persist into 2015 public water agencies will be implementing detailed plans to step up their conservation efforts

# Policy Considerations

- + How to measure and report drought-related conservation progress against the backdrop of on-going implementation of Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SB 7x 7) “20x2020” targets
- + Additional “structural” conservation subject to “demand hardening” since the “early adopters” and “low hanging fruit” have been tapped
- + Continued and more intense outreach and education (and additional enforcement) will be required to gain more conservation
- + There is more capacity to conserve during the irrigation season
- + Water agencies must focus on BOTH reducing water demand AND expanding supply in both the short and long term (recycled water, gray water, stormwater capture, groundwater remediation, desalination)

# Recommendations

- + The State should continue to affirm that local water systems are in the best position to determine which water conservation programs are most effective for their customers
- + Consider establishing a drought response “clearinghouse” to document effective conservation practices and results (as a toolbox for use by other agencies)
- + Target increased funding for water use efficiency activities in disadvantaged communities and on conservation programs that are not locally cost effective but contribute broad benefits (such as “cash for grass” programs and clothes washer rebate programs)
- + The State should work with local agencies to review opportunities for more closely coordinating local water management planning documents to address in future drought contingencies (Urban Water Management Plans, Agricultural Water Management Plans, Groundwater Management Plans and Integrated Regional Water Management Plans)

# Contact & More Information

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