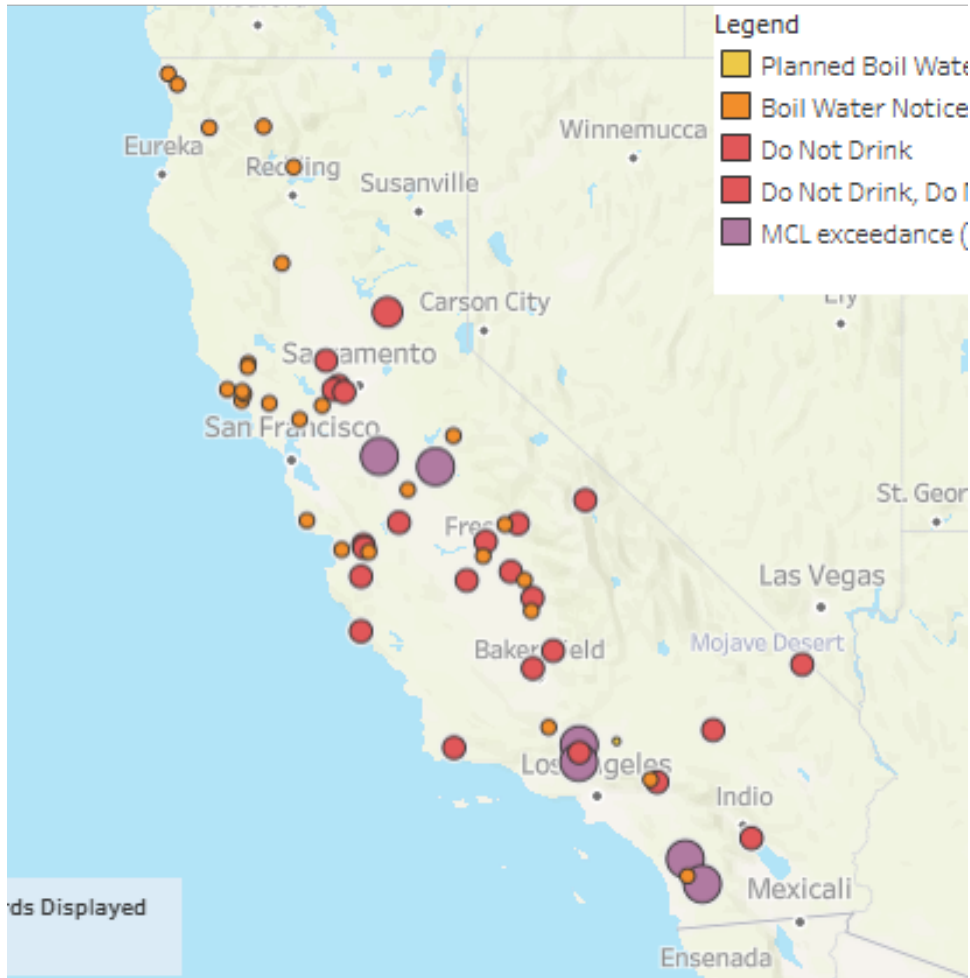


The SAFER Clearinghouse User Guidance: Unsafe Water Notices module



The SAFER Clearinghouse is a web application where water systems can submit a variety of required reporting to the Division of Drinking Water (DDW). It now includes a new module for storing statewide records of Unsafe Water Notices. This document provides water system guidance on utilizing the Unsafe Water Notice module in the SAFER Clearinghouse.

Features related to unsafe water notices currently active for water system users:

- View the details of an unsafe water notice record
- Upload one or multiple digital copies of the notices sent to your customers
- Automated notice emails and reminder emails

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1. Overview

Unsafe Water Notices are used in circumstances where there is known or potential risk of contamination to a water supply or water delivery system that poses an immediate threat to public health. Unsafe water notices can be issued by the water supplier, DDW, Local Primacy Agencies, or Local Health Officers. California Health and Safety Code sections 116450 and 116451, and sections 64430, 64463, 64463.1, 64463.4, and 64465 of title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, provide authority for requiring an unsafe water notice (a Tier 1 public notification).

Unsafe water notices are a critical tool for water systems to protect their customers from an interruption to predictable water delivery service, due to unforeseen circumstances or maintenance-related work. Centralizing California’s data will allow water systems to review their

data, receive reminders for completing mitigation activities, and upload copies of the notices sent to customers. The Clearinghouse holds historical unsafe water notice data going back to 2021, migrated as-is from the previous, optional, reporting platform. The use of this module is evolving and increasing. In addition, historical data did not undergo rigorous retrospective cleaning, so the dataset should neither be considered complete, nor accurate until verified. Corrections to historical data can be submitted to DDW-SAFER-Clearinghouse@Waterboards.ca.gov

1.1. Division of Drinking Water Guidance

For templates that can be used for issuing unsafe water notices, visit:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Notices.html

For information on the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) process of managing situations involving unsafe water notifications, refer to the Unsafe Water Notification Guidance document:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/docs/2023/guidance-unsafe-water-notices.pdf

1.2. Environmental Protection Agency Guidance

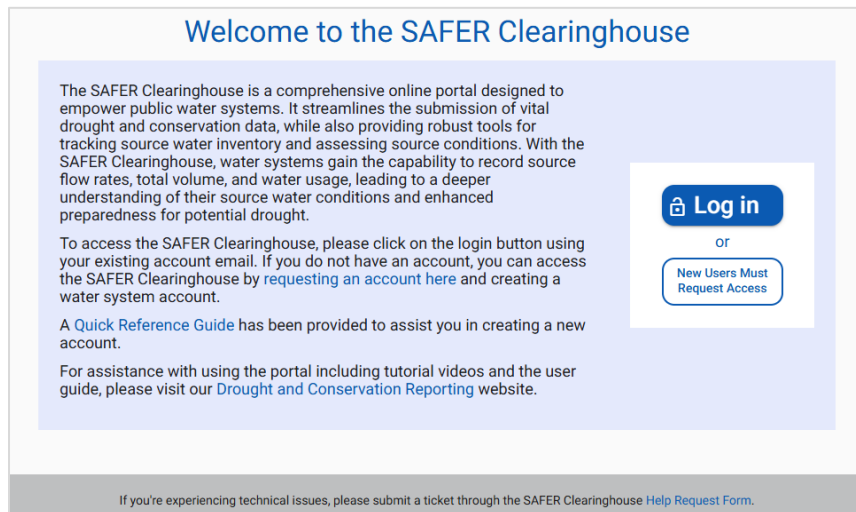
For more information on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements, refer to the most recent version of the EPA Public Notification Handbook (3rd Revision of Document: EPA 816-R-23-002, March 2023): https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-05/CWS_NTNC%20PN%20Handbook_508_March%202023.pdf

2. Getting setup in the SAFER Clearinghouse

2.1. SAFER Clearinghouse Login

Log in or request access to the SAFER Clearinghouse <https://wbappsrv.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/> (Figure 1). For more information on requesting access to the SAFER Clearinghouse, refer to the

Quick Reference Guide: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/20221221-quick-reference-guide-for-drought-reporting.pdf>



Welcome to the SAFER Clearinghouse

The SAFER Clearinghouse is a comprehensive online portal designed to empower public water systems. It streamlines the submission of vital drought and conservation data, while also providing robust tools for tracking source water inventory and assessing source conditions. With the SAFER Clearinghouse, water systems gain the capability to record source flow rates, total volume, and water usage, leading to a deeper understanding of their source water conditions and enhanced preparedness for potential drought.

To access the SAFER Clearinghouse, please click on the login button using your existing account email. If you do not have an account, you can access the SAFER Clearinghouse by [requesting an account here](#) and creating a water system account.

A [Quick Reference Guide](#) has been provided to assist you in creating a new account.

For assistance with using the portal including tutorial videos and the user guide, please visit our [Drought and Conservation Reporting](#) website.

Log in

or

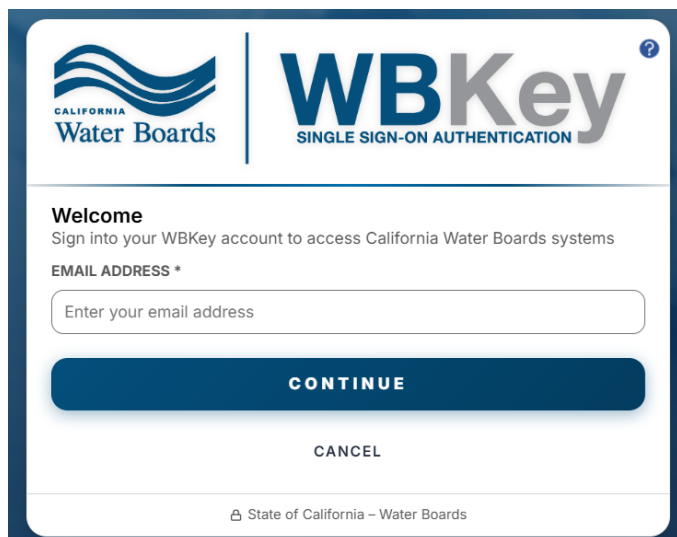
New Users Must Request Access

If you're experiencing technical issues, please submit a ticket through the SAFER Clearinghouse [Help Request Form](#).

Users are required to log in to the SAFER Clearinghouse using WB Key two-factor authentication.

Help & technical assistance for WBKey two-factor authentication is available at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/clearinghouse_drought_conservation_reporting.html



CALIFORNIA Water Boards

WBKey
SINGLE SIGN-ON AUTHENTICATION

Welcome
Sign into your WBKey account to access California Water Boards systems

EMAIL ADDRESS *

Enter your email address

CONTINUE

CANCEL

State of California – Water Boards

2.2. Account Permissions

- All SAFER Clearinghouse users can **view** unsafe water notice records.
- Water system account users associated with a public water system will be able to **upload** a copy of the actual unsafe water notice that was submitted to customers. The notice will be automatically associated with the recorded data entry. Multiple upload versions per the same incident record are allowed.

- As of now, water system account users are unable to create a data record of the unsafe water notice. User feedback is encouraged and we hope to expand this module's functionality to allow water systems to leverage templates from within the SAFER Clearinghouse for generating notices and their associated data records.

3. Accessing unsafe water notice data

3.1. HOME Page Counts

When logging into the SAFER Clearinghouse, the HOME page displays the total active unsafe water notices for the water system associated with the logged-in user's account.

- If you only manage one water system, selecting the “**Active Public Notices**” card at the top of the page will take you directly to the unsafe water notices page for your system.

HOME INVENTORY MY SYSTEMS REPORTS ADMINISTRATION

Hello, DDW

	43 SAFER PROJECTS		0 REQUIRED ACTION ITEMS		10 ACTIVE PUBLIC NOTICES
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- If you manage more than one water system, the table below the icon cards will have a row with a link to each water system's unsafe water notice page.

SUMMARY OF YOUR 2 SYSTEMS

	1 ACTIVE UNSAFE WATER NOTICES		41 REPORTS PAST DUE
---	---	---	-------------------------------

VIEW YOUR 2 SYSTEMS

PWSID	PWS Name	Unsafe Water Notice	Current SAFER Status
CA3410001	SACRAMENTO SUBURBAN WATER DISTRICT	No Record	NF and Not Assessed
CA3410020	CITY OF SACRAMENTO MAIN	Active	NF and Not Assessed

3.2. INVENTORY Page Column

The inventory table now includes a new field for “UNSAFE WATER NOTICE”. The drop-down options filter the inventory table by unsafe water notice status: Active, Lifted, or No Record:

SHOW / HIDE ▼

ITEM	SAFER SYSTEM TYPE	CURRENT ACTIVITY STATUS	REGULATING AGENCY	SERVICE AREA TYPE	UNSAFE WATER NOTICE	CURRENT SAFER STATUS
		A				
ITY	PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM	A	DISTRICT 04 - SAN FRANCISCO	RESIDENTIAL AREA	Active	Not At-Risk
ITY	PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM	A	DISTRICT 04 - SAN FRANCISCO	MOBILE HOME PARK	No Record	Not At-Risk
NON-ITY	PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM	A	DISTRICT 04 - SAN FRANCISCO	RECREATION AREA	No Record	Exc Non-Community

3.3. Unsafe Water Landing Page

Click on a linked Water System’s name or PWSID to navigate to the Water System’s profile page. On the left-hand bar of the profile page, click the “**Unsafe Water**” page link under “**Public Notification**” to navigate to the Unsafe Water landing page.



SAFER Clearinghouse

UAT

HOMEINVENTORYMY SYSTEMSREPORT

ABOUT
WATER QUALITY
SOURCES & FACILITIES
SUPPLY & DEMAND

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
UNSAFE WATER

←

TEMESCAL VALLEY WATER DISTRICT : CA3310074

[UNSAFE WATER NOTIFICATION GUIDANCE](#)

TEMESCAL VALLEY WATER DISTRICT HAS NO UNSAFE WATER NOTICE HISTORY ENTERED IN THE CLEARINGHOUSE.

4. Using the unsafe water notice module

4.1. Viewing notices

The left navigation bar will show PUBLIC NOTIFICATION: UNSAFE WATER in blue text when you are active in the module. When there are notice records in the system you will see a table with record

details. Please note, the data shown below is fake test data and does not reflect actual unsafe water notices for this system.

LADWP - LONE PINE : CA1410003

[UNSAFE WATER NOTIFICATION GUIDANCE](#)

1 – 2 of 2

DATE ISSUED	PUBLIC NOTICE STATUS	NOTICE ID	LAST EDITED BY		
09/04/2026	Active	2409	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	VIEW DETAILS	UPLOAD NOTICE
09/01/2026	Active	2408	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	VIEW DETAILS	UPLOAD NOTICE

4.2. Viewing unsafe water notice details and history

Select the VIEW DETAILS button to see the full data record for the issued unsafe water notice. If there were changes made to the record throughout the incident, you will be able to toggle the blue ‘View Field History’ boxes to view the items that changed (such as a modified Notice Type or an updated Expected End Date).

TY

IG

Incident Details

Public Notice Type ?*
Do Not Drink, Do Not Boil

View Field History

Field Value	Entered By	Entry Date
Do Not Drink, Do Not Boil	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	09/10/2026
Do Not Drink	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	09/10/2026

4.3. Uploading notices delivered by your water system

As a water system user of the SAFER Clearinghouse, you will be able to upload digital versions of the notices your water system sent directly to your users.

- You can use the UPLOAD NOTICE button on the landing page, making sure to select the correct row record for the unsafe water notice that you wish to associate with the upload:

1 – 2 of 2 ⏪ ⏩ ⏴ ⏵

DATE ISSUED	PUBLIC NOTICE STATUS	NOTICE ID	LAST EDITED BY		
09/08/2026	Active	2409	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	VIEW DETAILS	UPLOAD NOTICE
09/01/2026	Lifted	2408	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov	VIEW DETAILS	UPLOAD NOTICE

- You can also use the UPLOAD button from the VIEW page of an individual unsafe water notice:

DATE ISSUED	PUBLIC NOTICE STATUS	NOTICE ID	LAST EDITED BY
09/08/2026	Active	2409	suzanne.kline@waterboards.ca.gov

[Uploaded notice documents](#) 0
[Upload new document](#)
No documents have been uploaded for this notice yet.

Upload Rules:

- Accepted upload formats include PDF, DOC, DOCX, and ODT.
- Maximum file size of 20 MB.
- Your upload will be associated with the currently selected water system and unsafe water notice.
- More than one upload is appropriate and allowed per unsafe water notice ID/incident if you reissued the notice to customers. Multiple notice copies can be associated with the same Notice ID if they are for the same incident.
 - For example, the incident started with a Do Not Drink notice sent to customers but after fully inspecting the systems, the notice was reissued and downgraded to a Boil Water Notice.*

4.4. Data definitions

The data notes below follow the unsafe water notice data fields.

Data Field Name	Description and related Public Notification rules
Public Notice Type	Category of severity and instruction based on the templates available on the State Water Board website. Options include: Boil Water Notice; Chlorine Dioxide MRDL exceedance; Fecal Indicator in Source; MCL exceedance (Chlorite, E Coli, Nitrate, Perchlorate); Turbidity exceedance;

	Waterborne disease outbreak; Lead action level exceedance; Do Not Drink; Do Not Use; Do Not Drink-Do Not Boil; Planned Boil Water Notice. <i>Please note that 'Planned Boil Water Notice' is a Division of Drinking Water indicator used to identify Boil Water Notices that were anticipated by a system for a known event related to maintenance or upgrades.</i>
Date system was aware of lead exceedance	Date during the lead reporting period that your water system first saw elevated lead levels.
Date notice issued to customers	Date that your water system officially sent the notice to your customers. <i>Please note that if an existing entry is edited to reflect issuance of a new Notice Type, it indicates an upgrade or downgrade to the existing incident notice, and you will need to provide a new date and delivery method for the updated notice issued.</i>
Date system notified Regulating Agency	Date your system first communicated the incident to your Regulating Agency.
Notice delivery method	The options and value restrictions selectable in the dropdown are designed to meet EPA Public Notification rules for community and non-community water systems. Options are categorized by Direct or Indirect Delivery and include: Direct-door tags or in-person communication; Direct-email, phone, and/or text; Indirect-physical signage in community; Indirect-signage around water system; Indirect-internet postings; Indirect-news and/or radio broadcast; Indirect-local meetings; Indirect-USPS (Planned boil water notices only); or 'Other DDW pre-approved method' <i>Please note that if an existing entry is edited to reflect issuance of a new Notice Type, it indicates an upgrade or downgrade to the existing incident notice, and you will need to provide a new date and delivery method for the updated notice issued.</i>
Primary reason for system interruption	What functional system breakdown occurred that resulted in the unsafe water notice issuance. Options include: Planned Boil Water notice (includes PSPS, repairs, upgrades, maintenance); Loss of Pressure related to power or water outage, backflow incident, treatment issue, main break or leaks); Distribution sample results; Source sample results; Treatment or Source problem; Backflow contamination without pressure loss; and/or Other.
Related to drought or local/weather emergency?	This field helps the Division of Drinking Water adapt to emergency trends and needs. Local emergency or weather events that directly led to the system interruption can include: Drought; Fire; Flooding; Earthquake; Landslide/Avalanche/Debris Flow/Mudslide; Wind or Lightning; Deliberate sabotage or terrorism; Explosion; Snowstorm; or Other.
Contaminant(s) of concern	Identifies which contaminants were introduced to the water supply at unsafe levels, or must be sampled before the notice can be lifted.

Planned mitigation actions	Identifies which mitigation tasks your water system will be engaging with in order to further investigate or implement mitigation
Expected date of notice ending	The date that you and your regulating agency reasonably believe you can complete mitigation needs and retract the unsafe water notice for your customers. This date can be changed as the situation evolves.
Alternative Water Provided	Indicates whether alternative water is being provided to customers while the unsafe water notice is in place.
SDWIS Service Area Type	Identifies your current EPA classification, which determines the applicable EPA public notification requirements.
Impacted Water Service Area	Identifies the extent of the impact to the distribution system. Options include Entire or Partial.
Estimated Service Connections Impacted	Follows the selection made from the Impacted Water Service Area question prior: If 'Entire' is chosen, the system uses your current service connection count for the next field. If 'Partial' is chosen, your regulating agency will use your provided estimate of impacted service connections.
Impacted Special Facility Types	Identifies any types of service connections that are monitored by additional governmental public health agencies. Options include: schools and/or daycares; medical facilities; farm laborer/employee housing; food service facilities; or none.
Languages notice was provided in	All unsafe water notice issuances should follow the EPA and state statutes related to language requirements for Tier 1 Public Notification.
Impacted customers and facilities comments	Comments about service connections, special facility types or populations that are impacted by the unsafe water notice

5. Emails Generated by SAFER Clearinghouse

The SAFER Clearinghouse automatically sends the following emails to SDWIS identified Administrative Contacts and Carbon Copy contacts. If the user does not have a SAFER Clearinghouse account, they have the option to create one, but they are not required to. The emails are courtesy notices and reminders to stay in communication with your regulating agency about the unsafe water incident and progress.

5.1. Courtesy notice

When an unsafe water notice record is created in the SAFER Clearinghouse by your regulating agency.

5.2. 1-day reminder

One day before the 'Expected End Date' approaches, you will receive an email to complete mitigation actions and follow up with your regulating agency if appropriate for lifting the notice.

5.3. 1-week reminder

One week past the 'Expected End Date', you will receive an email to remind you that the unsafe water notice is still Active in the SAFER Clearinghouse.

For questions or comments related to unsafe water notice data in the SAFER Clearinghouse, email DDW-SAFER-Clearinghouse@Waterboards.ca.gov