

SAFER Clearinghouse Drought & Conservation Reporting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Contents

I. General	3
Q1: What kind of reports are required by the 2024 DDW Technical Reporting Order?	3
Q2: What is the SAFER Clearinghouse?	3
Q3: How can I access the SAFER Clearinghouse?	3
Q4: Who is required to complete required reporting?	3
Q5: Can I report for more than one system?	3
II. Authority	3
Q1: What authority does the State Water Board have to require reporting?	3
Q2: Why is the State Water Board requiring reporting?	4
Q3: Why do we have to report information such as pumping hours, flow rates, reservoir elevations and height of intake not associated with supply and demand?	4
Q4: Where can I find a copy of the technical order?	4
Q5: What if I have a source listed/missing that is incorrect?	4
Q6: Who should report on behalf of the water system?	4
III. Clearinghouse Reporting	5
Q1: How do I comply with my reporting requirements?	5
Q3: What type of reports are water systems required to submit?	5
Q4: How often is reporting required?	6
Q5: Where can I see the data I will be required to submit?	6
Q6: Does the SAFER Clearinghouse include definitions or guidance on the data requested? ...	6
Q7: Can multiple water system users enter data into the same report?	6
Q8: Can I submit estimated data in the report?	6
Q9: What happens if I don't submit my report by the deadline?	7
Q10: How do I view previous reports for my water system?	7
Q11: Will the information I submit as part of my reports be made public?	7
IV. Troubleshooting	8
Q1: I need help, who should I contact?	8
Q2: What do I do if incorrect data was submitted or if I need to revise a submission?	8
Q3: I cannot find my water system, what should I do?	8
Q4: I cannot find the source I am trying to report for, what should I do?	8
V. Duplicate Reporting	8
Q1: Does the Clearinghouse reporting mean we do not need to submit an eAR report?	8
Q3: Do the Clearinghouse reports fulfill the Monthly Conservation Reporting (DRINC) requirements?	9
VI. Reporting Data	9

Q1: How can I calculate Maximum Day Demand?	9
Q2: How can I complete the required reporting if I do not meter my customers?	9
VII. Data Uses	9
Q1: How will this data be used?	9
Q2: Will this replace or satisfy electronic Annual Report (eAR) requirements?	10
VIII. Report Deadlines	10
Q1: What if we cannot compile the necessary data to submit before the deadline?	10
Q2: What if we do not have accurate data by the reporting deadline?	10
Q3: How do I complete monthly reports if our meters and/or billing are not on a monthly timeline?	10
I. Concerns with Reporting	10
Q1: What if these reporting requirements are too expensive?	10
Q2: Do farmers and Medium or Large Water Suppliers have to report as well?	11
Q3: Does Clearinghouse reporting training count as contact training hours?	11
Q4: What is an example of how this required reporting helps communities?	11

I. General

Q1: What kind of reports are required by the 2024 DDW Technical Reporting Order?

A1: The following reports are required by the 2024 DDW Technical Reporting Order (Order No. DDW_HQ_2024_001): Monthly Potential Water Outage Report, Weekly Water Outage Report, Monthly Drought & Conservation Report, Single/Aggregated Urban Drought & Conservation Report, Annual Inventory Report, and the electronic Annual Report. The contents of this report include technical questions which can be accessed here: <https://wbappsrv.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/>. The technical questions relate to, amongst other things, public water systems' sources and supplies, drinking water demand, forecast of water shortages, demand reduction measures, efforts to augment supplies to meet current demand, and more.

Q2: What is the SAFER Clearinghouse?

A2: The SAFER Clearinghouse is a web-based reporting tool that allows public water systems to submit required information to the state in a machine-readable format.

Q3: How can I access the SAFER Clearinghouse?

A3: You can access the SAFER Clearinghouse by requesting an account here: <https://wbappsrv.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/>. For guidance on how to create an account, follow the Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide found here: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q4: Who is required to complete required reporting?

A4: All public water systems are required to report to the SAFER Clearinghouse. For a listing of each report type and who is responsible for reporting, please see Section 1.2, Table 1 in the [Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf) <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q5: Can I report for more than one system?

A5: Yes, you may request access to submit a report for multiple systems. For guidance on how to create an account that can report for multiple water systems, follow the direction detailed in the Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide found here: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

II. Authority

Q1: What authority does the State Water Board have to require reporting?

A1: The California Health and Safety Codes section 116530 authorizes the State Water Board to require a public water system to submit a technical report in a form and format at intervals specified by the State Water Board, which may include without limitation: water quality information, physical descriptions of the existing water

system, information related to drinking water accessibility, and information related to technical, managerial, and financial capacity and sustainability.

Q2: Why is the State Water Board requiring reporting?

A2: The California Legislature found and declared in Senate Bill 552, signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom on September 23, 2021, that “droughts are predicted to become more frequent, longer, and more severe as climate change progresses, putting drinking water supplies at risk of running dry or becoming contaminated,” that “there are currently varying levels of water contingency planning and coverage across counties for small water suppliers and self-supported communities, leaving hundreds of thousands of people at risk of going without water to meet their basic household and drinking water needs during the next drought,” and that “California can take basic steps to implement more proactive drought planning that would benefit the communities most at risk, and by doing so help prevent catastrophic impacts on drinking water for communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.”

Rather than update the eAR to address these new and other existing requirements (such as Monthly Drought and Conservation Reporting for urban retail water suppliers), The State Board is moving requirements from these separate databases into the Clearinghouse in an effort to reduce duplicative and redundant reporting.

Q3: Why do we have to report information such as pumping hours, flow rates, reservoir elevations and height of intake not associated with supply and demand?

A3: The data you report will also help satisfy reporting requirements for new and existing regulations regarding water shortages associated with SB 552 and update our inventory for permitting, survey assessment, and needs assessment purposes.

Q4: Where can I find a copy of the technical order?

A4: There is a general order requiring online technical reporting that applies to all public water systems, and which was most recently amended on January 1, 2025:

- [Amended Order, effective January 1, 2025](#)
- [Original Order, issued January 1, 2024](#)

Q5: What if I have a source listed/missing that is incorrect?

A5: Please contact your local DDW or LPA office to make any necessary changes to your list of approved sources.

DDW Office Information

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/ddwem/DDW_districtofficesmap.pdf

LPA Office Information

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/web_contact_info_district_lpa.pdf

Q6: Who should report on behalf of the water system?

A6: Please discuss reporting responsibilities with the administrative contact or owner of

the public water system and determine who is responsible for reporting.

III. Clearinghouse Reporting

Q1: How do I comply with my reporting requirements?

A1: To comply with reporting requirements, water systems must submit their reports at the frequency specified in the Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide. For a listing of each report type and who is responsible for reporting, please see Section 1.2, Table 1 in the [Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf)
<https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q2: My water system is an Urban Retail Water Supplier and is already complying with monthly Urban Conservation reporting. Does this replace the current reporting system?

A2: In July 2023, the Monthly Conservation Reporting portal was shut down. Now, reports must be submitted in the SAFER Clearinghouse for all of 2023.

Q3: What type of reports are water systems required to submit?

A3: There are six types of monthly drought report types. The table below indicates which water systems are required to submit each report type:

Report Type	Report Frequency	Reporting Deadlines	Which water systems?
Monthly Drought & Conservation Reporting	Monthly	Quarterly (month after quarter end date)	All community water systems and non-transient noncommunity school water systems that are not conducting Monthly and/or Weekly Drought Order Reporting.
Monthly Drought Order Reporting	Monthly	Monthly (7 days after end of month)	Water systems that the Division of Drinking Water determines are experiencing or are at-risk of experiencing a severe water shortage, and which are notified by the Division.

Weekly Drought Order Reporting	Weekly	Weekly (7 days after end of week)	Water systems that the Division of Drinking Water determines are experiencing or are at-risk of experiencing a severe water shortage, and which are notified by the Division.
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Single Urban Drought and Conservation Reporting and Aggregated Urban Drought and Conservation Reporting has the same content as Monthly Drought Order Reporting, however the deadline is at the end of the following month. Aggregated reporting allows reporting on behalf of multiple water systems that are owned by the same controlling entity.

All public water systems are required to report the Annual Inventory Report for the previous year by March 31 of the following year.

Q4: How often is reporting required?

A4: Reporting is required at the frequency listed in the table above. If you are unsure of your reporting frequency, it is also displayed when you login to the SAFER Clearinghouse here: <https://wbappsrv.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/home>.

Q5: Where can I see the data I will be required to submit?

A5: A complete guide of the data collected in the Monthly Drought and Conservation Reports, Monthly Drought Order Reports, and Weekly Drought Order reports can found here: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q6: Does the SAFER Clearinghouse include definitions or guidance on the data requested?

A6: Yes. Click on the question mark icons next to each data field to open a pop-up window with a help tip. If the help tip does not meet your needs, please [submit](#) a ticket from the DDW Clearinghouse Help Request Form: <https://forms.office.com/g/t3KjRY5ci2>

Q7: Can multiple water system users enter data into the same report?

A7: Yes. Multiple water system users in the SAFER Clearinghouse, that have permissions for the same water system (PWSID) can enter and save data in the same Report just not in the same tab at the same time. However, only one user will need to review and attest the data is accurate before officially submitting the report to the State.

Q8: Can I submit estimated data in the report?

A8: Yes. Water systems can submit preliminary estimates for some of the data collected in the reports. Water systems will be required to amend their submitted reports to provide final values by the end of the calendar year to comply with annual reporting in the Annual Inventory Report. If the water system only has estimates available and is not expected to have better numbers later on, they should not mark Preliminary Estimate in their monthly report as that will block the Annual Inventory Report submission.

Q9: What happens if I don't submit my report by the deadline?

A9: Submission of required reports is mandatory for all public water systems. Failure to meet these requirements may result in enforcement action.

Q10: How do I view previous reports for my water system?

A10: You may view previously submitted, past due, and pending reports for your water system by logging in to the SAFER Clearinghouse (<https://wbappsrv.waterboards.ca.gov/safer/>) and navigating to your system's "Required Reporting" webpage. More detailed directions can be found in the Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide found here: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q11: Will the information I submit as part of my reports be made public?

A11: Yes.

IV. Troubleshooting

Q1: I need help, who should I contact?

A1: For questions regarding your public water system inventory contact your regulating agency. Current Water Board District Office (state regulators) contact information can be found here:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/ddwem/DDWdistrictofficesmap.pdf. Current Local Primacy Agency (county regulators)

contact information can be found here:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/web_contact_info_district_lpa.pdf.

For questions or technical support with accessing or using the SAFER Clearinghouse or the technical reporting order, please [submit](#) a ticket from the DDW Clearinghouse Help Request Form: <https://forms.office.com/g/t3KjRY5ci2>

Q2: What do I do if incorrect data was submitted or if I need to revise a submission?

A2: If revisions are needed, you may reopen an already submitted report in the SAFER Clearinghouse to revise and re-submit. Your username and the date of revision will be captured and stored separately from that of the original submitter and original submission date. For more instructions on how to revise a report, consult the Clearinghouse Reporting User Guide found here:

<https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/resources-for-drinking-water-systems/docs/clearinghouse-reporting-user-guide.pdf>

Q3: I cannot find my water system, what should I do?

A3: Please navigate to the Search tab to locate your water system, then click on required reporting. If this is not visible, then you may need to request access to the water system by editing your Account. If you cannot find your water system when creating an account, please [submit](#) a ticket from the DDW Clearinghouse Help Request Form: <https://forms.office.com/g/t3KjRY5ci2>

Q4: I cannot find the source I am trying to report for, what should I do?

A4: If you cannot find a source you are trying to report for, contact your regulatory agency. Current Water Board District Office (state regulators) contact information can be found here:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/ddwem/DDWdistrictofficesmap.pdf. Current Local Primacy Agency (county regulators)

contact information can be found here:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/documents/web_contact_info_district_lpa.pdf.

V. Duplicate Reporting

Q1: Does the Clearinghouse reporting mean we do not need to submit an eAR report?

A1: The eAR will remain a required report. However, it will be modified so users will not have to report the same information in the eAR and in the Clearinghouse. For more information or questions related to the eAR please contact [DDW-](#)

EAR@waterboards.ca.gov.

Q3: Do the Clearinghouse reports fulfill the Monthly Conservation Reporting (DRINC) requirements?

A3: Yes, they do. If you submit a Clearinghouse report that will also satisfy the DRINC requirements for urban retail water supplier Monthly Conservation Reporting for the same month. The DRINC portal was taken offline in July 2023.

VI. Reporting Data

Q1: How can I calculate Maximum Day Demand?

A1: If you do not have a daily reading for demand, Maximum Day Demand can be estimated by taking your total demand for the month, dividing by the number of days in the month, and multiplying that estimate by 1.5. For the date, you can enter the end of the month.

Q2: How can I complete the required reporting if I do not meter my customers?

A2: Please mark No to the question, "Do you meter the volume of potable water delivered to your individual customers?"

VII. Data Uses

Q1: How will this data be used?

A1: This portal is intended to streamline data reporting to the State, used by many State Water Board Divisions and State agencies. This is intended to harmonize data

collection requirements from Senate Bill SB 552 (for Small Communities and Non-transient Non-community Schools), Monthly Conservation Reporting for Urban Retail Water Suppliers, and annual Production and Demand data reporting from the electronic Annual Report (among others) into one reporting system.

Q2: Will this replace or satisfy electronic Annual Report (eAR) requirements?

A2: Yes. Data supplied on monthly supply and demand values, if provided accurately and for the whole year, will satisfy annual reporting requirements for supply and demand. Starting in the 2023 reporting year for the eAR (due in 2024), this section, currently known as Section 6 – Water Supplied and Delivered, are anticipated to be removed from the eAR.

VIII. Report Deadlines

Q1: What if we cannot compile the necessary data to submit before the deadline?

A1: Your reports will be logged as “past due” and you will not be able to submit the Annual Inventory Report without having submitted all past due reports for that calendar year. We encourage past due reports to be submitted, even if it is past the deadline.

Q2: What if we do not have accurate data by the reporting deadline?

A2: Reports can be submitted with preliminary estimates if you do not have verified numbers and can be edited and resubmitted once you have accurate data.

Q3: How do I complete monthly reports if our meters and/or billing are not on a monthly timeline?

A3: Water systems that are metered bi-monthly (once every two months) can be averaged to estimate a monthly metered data and systems that are metered semi-monthly (twice per month) can be combined to estimate monthly metered data. We are currently planning enhancements to the Clearinghouse that will allow water systems to report metered data on variable billing cycles. Please provide the best data you have available.

I. Concerns with Reporting

Q1: What if these reporting requirements are too expensive?

A1: We understand that reporting requirements can often place a high burden on water systems that are already overtaxed with other regulatory requirements. We believe we are striking a difficult balance between more legislative requirements and placing undue burdens on water systems and would like to hear how we can alleviate these challenges within our constraints, please [submit](#) a ticket from the DDW Clearinghouse Help Request Form with your suggestions: <https://forms.office.com/q/t3KjRY5ci2>.

The State Water Board offers assistance for water systems to help complete the Drought & Conservation Reporting through the Water Board’s Division of Financial Assistance Technical Assistance Program. [Technical Assistance Application](#)

Q2: Do farmers and Medium or Large Water Suppliers have to report as well?

A2: Yes, all public water systems must report regardless of the size or type of the water system. However, reporting requirements may vary by size and type of system.

Q3: Does Clearinghouse reporting training count as contact training hours?

A3: Unfortunately, no. We cannot offer contact hours for the training but all slides and recordings will be made available on the website.

Q4: What is an example of how this required reporting helps communities?

A4: Data you report can be used to identify water systems that may be at risk of, or are currently, experiencing a water shortage or water outage. The data you report also helps to fulfill new reporting obligations and existing obligations simultaneously by sending them to one location in the Clearinghouse to be utilized by other state agencies, governmental entities, and the public.