MEASUREMENT AND DATA SUBMISSION MANUAL

WATER YEAR 2026

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights

February 2026

Contents

1 Abbreviations and Glossary

1.1 Abbreviations

ACP	Alternative compliance plan
Annual Report	Annual water diversion and use report as required under California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 2.7 (sections 907 through 930)
Board or State Water Board	California State Water Resources Control Board
CalWATRS	California Water Accounting, Tracking, and Reporting System
Division	The Division of Water Rights
Manual	Measurement and Data Submission Manual
QA/QC	Quality assurance and quality control
Regulation	The Water Measurement Regulation; California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 2.8 (sections 931 through 939.6)
SB 88	Senate Bill 88 (2015)

1.2 Glossary

Accuracy	The reported value relative to the actual value, expressed as a percentage and calculated as $Accuracy = 100\ \% * \left(1 - \frac{Error}{Actual\ Value}\right) = 100\ \% * (1 - \frac{\lvert Reported\ Value - Actual\ Value \rvert}{Actual\ Value})$
Actual value	The value as determined through laboratory, design, or field-testing protocols
Alternative Compliance	Any acceptable means of complying with the regulation except through strict compliance, including in circumstances where strict compliance is infeasible, is excessively costly, would result in the unreasonable use or waste of water, or would unreasonably impact public trust uses.

Annual Water Diversion and Use Report	Annually submitted reports including supplemental statements of water diversion and use forms (Water Code Section 5104), reports of permittee and licensee (California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 925 and 929), and reports of registration and certificate holders (California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 924)
Claimed water right	Legal entitlement or claim to divert a reasonable amount of water from a specified source for a beneficial, non-wasteful use. Such entitlement may be granted under a board-issued permit, license, or registration, a federal non-reserved or reserved right on file with the State Water Resources Control Board, or through a riparian or pre-1914 appropriative right claimed in a statement of water diversion and use that may or may not have been confirmed or adjudicated
Diversion	The taking of water from a surface or subterranean stream flowing through a known and definite channel, or from another surface water body, into a conduit (e.g., canal or pipeline) or water impoundment facility (e.g., reservoir)
Diverter	Any person or government agency who is: (a) Authorized to divert water under a license, permit, temporary permit, or registration; or (b) Required (under Water Code, division 2, part 5.1) to file a statement of water diversions and use.
Division	State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Water Rights. The Division of Water Rights can be contacted via the following email addresses and phone number, depending on your inquiry: • Generic Inquiries: dwr@waterboards.ca.gov or 916-341-5300 • Measurement Inquiries: dwr-measurement@waterboards.ca.gov • Annual Reporting Inquiries: CalWATRS-Help@waterboards.ca.gov
Reported value	The value included in the non-provisional measurement data submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board
Measuring device	Any device capable of recording the date, time, and a numeric value of either water flow rate, water velocity, water elevation, or volume of the water diverted. **Note**: Beginning October 1, 2026, a measuring device

	will include any equipment that provides a numerical value that can be used to calculate flow rate, velocity, elevation, or volume (i.e., it does not need to directly measure any of these values)
Measurement method	Any method capable of accounting for the rate of direct diversion, rate of collection to storage, and rate of withdrawal or release from storage while meeting the accuracy standards required by the regulation
Measurement methodology	The combination of all measuring devices and any accompanying methodology, including calculations, conversions, formulas, and quality assurance protocols through which a diverter accounts for the required measurement parameters of the updated regulation for each claimed water right
Place of use	The legal location where water is used under the claimed water right, including (a) Stockponds (for livestock stockpond registrations and stockpond certificates) (b) Ponds (for single purpose recreational ponds) (c) Other ponds or reservoirs (if designated as a place of use by the Deputy Director for the Division of Water Rights for the purposes of compliance with this regulation) (d) Designated reach of the stream or wetland area (for instream flow, wetland preservation, and enhancement beneficial uses)
Point of diversion	The location where water is diverted from its source
Qualified Individual	Any person meeting the criteria specified in the regulation who can perform the required tasks for using and installing a measuring device, preparing and implementing a measurement method, and/or certifying a measurement methodology and/or alternative compliance plan
Water year	The 12-month period beginning October 1st of the previous calendar year and extending through September 30th. The water year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends and which includes 9 of the 12 months. For example, water year 2026 extends from October 1st, 2025 through September 30th, 2026

2 Important Note

This Measurement and Data Submission Manual (manual) **only applies to water year 2026**, i.e., for data collection between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026, and data submission for annual water diversion and use reports (annual reports) due by January 31, 2027. Additional guidance for measurement and data submission for water years 2027 and beyond will be provided at a later date. If desired, diverters may choose to implement the updated measurement and data submission requirements before they go into effect on October 1, 2026. However, because these **will not be required until October 1, 2026**, they are not described in-depth in this manual.

3 Introduction

California's recent droughts have highlighted the need for timely and accurate information on the amount of water being diverted by claimed water right holders throughout the state. The purpose of this manual is to guide diverters through their obligations under the Water Measurement Regulation (regulation; California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 2.8) for water year 2026. While this document is meant to assist diverters with compliance, interested parties are encouraged to review the regulation and contact the Division of Water Rights (Division) with any questions.

3.1 Background

In 2015, the California State Legislature passed Senate Bill 88 (SB 88), establishing measurement and data submission requirements for California's claimed water right holders. Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed SB 88 into law on June 24, 2015. SB 88 authorized the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) to adopt an emergency regulation requiring individuals and organizations who divert surface water to measure their diversions and submit the resulting data to the State Water Board. The State Water Board adopted the regulation on January 19, 2016, after which it was approved by the Office of Administrative Law and filed with the Secretary of State. The regulation became effective on March 21, 2016. Most requirements under the regulation took effect by 2018.

In February 2026, the State Water Board revised the regulation to improve clarity and standardize how measurement data are submitted. Most updates to measurement requirements will take effect at the start of water year 2027 (**October 1, 2026**), and most updates to data submission requirements will take effect for water year 2027 annual reports, which are due on or before **January 31, 2028**. **Until then, the requirements of the 2016 version of the regulation generally remain in effect**.

3.2 Purpose of this Manual

The goal of this manual is to clarify diversion measurement and data submission obligations for **water year 2026**, which spans from October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026. Measurement data for water year 2026 will be submitted with water year 2026 annual reports, due on or before January 31, 2027. This manual is designed to help you understand if you are required to measure diversions, how frequently and accurately to measure, and how to submit measurement information to the Board. If you have any questions about your measurement obligations, please email dwr-measurement@waterboards.ca.gov.

4 Diverters Required to Measure

The first step in understanding your requirements is to identify what type of claimed water rights you have. Table 1 lists the types of claimed water rights that may require measurement and data submission for water year 2026:

Table 1: Claimed Water Rights that May Require Measurement for Water Year 2026

Type of Claimed Water Right	First Letter of Water Right ID
Riparian or pre-1914 appropriative claims	**S** *(Ex: S001234)*
Licenses, permits, or temporary permits	**A** or **T** *(Ex: A012345)*
Registrations (Domestic, Livestock Stockponds, Irrigation, Cannabis)	**D, L,** or **H** *(Ex: H004567)*
Stockpond certificates	**C** *(Ex: C009876)*

If you need help identifying your claimed water rights, the Division maintains a Frequently Asked Questions webpage and a Know Your Water Right Guide. Please consult these resources for additional information or contact us at dwr@waterboards.ca.gov with any questions.

Once you have identified your type of claimed water right, the next step is to understand the maximum size of your annual diversion. For water year 2026, your requirements are based on either the maximum volume of water that **is allowed** to be diverted under each claimed water right (i.e., **not** how much you actually diverted in recent years) or the capacity of your storage facility (for registrations only). Generally, if you divert **more than 10 acre-feet per year**, you must measure and report your diversions to the Board. Applicability can be broken down more specifically by claimed water right type and is described further in Table 2 and the following sections.

Table 2: Regulation Applicability by Claimed Water Right Type for Water Year 2026

	For diverters who have…	…the regulation applies if the….
4.1	A riparian or pre-1914 claim,	Maximum historical annual diversion amount or future intended diversion amount exceeds 10 acre-feet.
4.2	A license, permit, or temporary permit,	Authorized annual diversion amount of the claimed water right exceeds 10 acre-feet.
4.3	A registration,	Authorized annual diversion amount or the authorized capacity of the storage facility exceeds 10 acre-feet.
4.4	Multiple claimed water rights that share a point of diversion,	Total authorized annual diversion volume for all claimed water rights sharing the point of diversion exceeds 10 acre-feet.
4.5	Multiple claimed water rights that share a place of use or reservoir,	Total authorized annual diversion volume for all claimed water rights sharing the place of use or reservoir exceeds 10 acre-feet.

4.1 Riparian and Pre-1914 Appropriative Claims

If you have ever diverted more than 10 acre-feet per year under a riparian or pre-1914 appropriative claimed water right, then you need to measure your diversions under that claimed water right. If you have not previously diverted more than 10 acre-feet, but you anticipate that you will during the current water year, then you should also measure your diversions.

If you recently acquired a pre-1914 claimed water right, refer to the initial statement of diversion and use on file with the State Water Board and make sure it accurately reflects the amount of water you plan to use. Please contact the Division at dwr@waterboards.ca.gov if the amount of water on your initial statement of diversion and use is incorrect.

4.2 Licenses and Permits

If you have a license or permit (including temporary permits) to divert more than 10 acre-feet per year, you must submit measurement data to the Board. For example, if your permit's face value is greater than 10 acre-feet per year, the measurement and data submission requirements apply to you.

4.3 Registrations

For water year 2026, all diverters with a registration that has a face value greater than 10 acre-feet per year or a storage facility with a capacity greater than 10 acre-feet must report measurement data to the Board. While most registrations have a face value less than 10 acre-feet, you should confirm your face value and storage capacity to determine whether you must measure and submit data for your diversions. **Note**: Beginning in water year 2027, some registrations will no longer be required to measure or submit data for their diversions. Additional guidance for water year 2027 will be available at a later date.

4.4 Multiple Claimed Water Rights that Share a Point of Diversion

Multiple claimed water rights may divert from the same point of diversion as other claimed water rights. For example, a single owner could hold several licenses and permits which all use the same pump to divert water from a river.

If you have multiple claimed water rights that share a point of diversion, you must measure your diversions if the combined total of all your claimed water rights that divert from the shared point of diversion is greater than 10 acre-feet per year. An individual claimed water right might divert less than 10 acre-feet, but if the total authorized diversions from a shared point of diversion is greater than 10 acre-feet, then you are required to measure your diversions under each claimed water right that shares the point of diversion. For example, if you have two claimed water rights that each are allowed to divert 6 acre-feet per year and they share a point of diversion, the combined maximum allowable diversion amount is 12 acre-feet per year; therefore, you must measure diversions under each of these claimed water rights. Diversion data must be apportioned and reported separately for claimed water right, i.e., not reported as the total diversion at the specified point of diversion.

4.5 Multiple Claimed Water Rights that Serve the Same Place of Use

You must also measure your diversions if the combined total of all of your claimed water rights serving the same place of use is greater than 10 acre-feet per year. An individual claimed water right might divert less than 10 acre-feet, but if the total maximum allowable diversion to a shared place of use is greater than 10 acre-feet per year, you are required to measure diversions for each claimed water right that diverts to that location. For the purpose of this regulation, the place of use also includes stockponds, reservoirs, and recreational ponds, as described in chapter 1.2 of this manual. Diversion data must be apportioned and reported separately by claimed water right, i.e., not reported as the total diversion for the specified place of use.

5 How to Measure

You can either measure your diversions using a measuring device, a measurement method, or a combination of measuring devices and/or measurement methods.

5.1 Measuring Device

The term “measuring device” has a specific definition in the context of the regulation. For water year 2026, it can be any device that records the date, time, and at least one of the following: total volume of water diverted, flow rate, water velocity, or water elevation. Measuring device data must be recorded in a format compatible with Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Access. More information on data file requirements can be found in chapter 7. If your measuring device measures the flow rate, water velocity, or water elevation, but not water volume, you must also report how you converted the measured value to volume.

If you need to install a new measuring device **on or after February 1, 2026**, it must be installed by a qualified individual (see chapter 8) and in such a manner that the installation does not result in a major environmental disturbance. The device must be located such that no water is delivered, used, or significantly lost through percolation or evaporation before being measured. In order to collect data that most accurately reflect the volume of water diverted from the source stream, many diverters opt to measure at their point of diversion, though other measurement locations may also be acceptable.

5.2 Measurement Method

The term “measurement method” also has a specific definition in the context of this regulation. For water year 2026, a measurement method is any way of measuring the volume of water diverted that does not involve using a measuring device at each point of diversion. Examples of measurement methods may include tracking the number of times a tank is filled and emptied over a time interval or using electricity records and a pump curve to calculate the volume of water diverted in a given time period. Additionally, measurement methods must meet the same frequency and accuracy standards required of diversions measured with a measuring device (see chapter 6).

A measurement method may be used for an individual claimed water right as well as for a group of claimed water rights that share a point of diversion and serve multiple diverters. A measurement method must be able to measure direct diversions, diversions to storage, and withdrawals or releases from storage. Any measurement method must also be able to quantify the amount of water diverted under each individual claimed water right used. In the event that multiple claimed water rights that use the same measurement method have conflicting measurement requirements, the more stringent measurement requirements apply.

If you measure your diversions using a measurement method, you must have previously submitted a measurement method form to the State Water Board **before February 1, 2026**. Any previously submitted measurement methods will remain valid through September 30, 2026. If you have not installed any measuring devices, submitted a measurement method, or submitted an alternative compliance plan before February 1, 2026, you must submit a measurement methodology as described in chapter 5.3 and you may also need to install measuring devices or submit an alternative compliance plan in accordance with the **updated** requirements of the regulation. The updated requirements of the regulation are not discussed in-depth in this manual but will be the subject of future guidance published by the Division.

5.3 Measurement Methodology

On or before January 31, 2027, all diverters must submit a measurement methodology to the Board. A "measurement methodology" describes the various measuring devices, calculations, conversions, formulas, quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) protocols, and other procedures and methods of measuring diversions in accordance with the updated regulation. It describes everything you will need and everything you will do in order to collect measurement data and convert it into the volume and flow rate of direct diversion, diversion to storage, withdrawals from storage, and releases from the reservoir for each claimed water right. All diverters who are required to measure their diversions must have a measurement methodology on file with the Board. **Note**: The new measurement methodology component of the regulation does **not** affect how diverters measure or submit data during water year 2026, but submission of the measurement methodology will be due by **January 31, 2027**, the same date by which annual reports and measurement data submissions for water year 2026 are also due.

6 Measurement Requirements

The regulation does not dictate a particular way to measure your diversions, but it does require that measurements be collected at specified time intervals and meet specific accuracy requirements. These measurement requirements are tiered such that the largest diverters are required to measure more frequently and more accurately.

6.1 Measurement Frequency

You must collect measurements at monthly, weekly, daily, or hourly intervals depending on your type of diversion and the volume diverted. You must also submit your measurement data to the Board annually as part of your annual report. For water year 2026, measurement frequency requirements are based either on the maximum volume of water you are allowed to directly divert or, for diversions to storage, on the capacity of your reservoir. The required frequency at which you must collect measurements for each authorized diversion amount and reservoir size is summarized in Table 3 and described in detail in the following subsections. **Note**: Beginning October 1, 2026, frequency requirements will change. Additional guidance for water year 2027 will be available at a later date.

Table 3: Measurement Frequency Requirements for Water Year 2026

Diversion Type	Volume Threshold	Required Measurement Frequency[(a)]
Direct Diversion: Requirements are based on the face value or maximum annual historical use (whichever is greater)	More than 10,000 acre-feet per year	Hourly, plus telemetry requirements
	1,000 to 10,000 acre-feet per year	Hourly
	100 to 999 acre-feet per year	Daily
	10 to 99 acre-feet per year	Weekly
Diversion to Storage: Requirements are based on storage capacity	10,000 acre-feet or more	Hourly, plus telemetry requirements
	1,000 to 9,999 acre-feet	Hourly
	200 to 999 acre-feet	Daily
	50 to 199 acre-feet	Weekly
	10 to 49 acre-feet	Monthly

(a) Notable exceptions to the listed measurement frequency include the following:

- Northern California Coastal Streams: Hourly monitoring is required for all new permits in the AB2121 area, which includes Marin, Sonoma, and portions of Napa, Mendocino, and Humboldt counties.
- Cannabis Registrations: Daily (or more frequent) monitoring is required. Please see the Board's Cannabis Cultivation Policy for specific requirements.

6.1.1 Direct Diversions

For direct diversions, the maximum volume that you are allowed to divert determines whether you must measure at an hourly, daily, or weekly frequency. For riparian and pre-1914 claims for direct diversion, the measurement frequency is based on the maximum historical annual diversion. If you have multiple claimed water rights that share a point of diversion or serve the same place of use, the measurement frequency is based on the combined maximum allowed diversions of all such claimed water rights.

Hourly

Direct diversions must be measured every hour for claimed water rights to divert 1,000 acre-feet per year or more.

Daily

Direct diversions must be measured every day for claimed water rights to divert at least 100 acre-feet per year but less than 1,000 acre-feet per year.

Weekly

Direct diversions must be measured every week for claimed water rights to divert more than 10 acre-feet per year but less than 100 acre-feet per year.

6.1.2 Diversions to Storage

For diversions to storage, the capacity of your reservoir (not the diversion amount) determines your required measurement frequency. The larger your reservoir, the more frequently you must measure your diversions.

Hourly

Diversions to storage must be measured hourly if the reservoir has a capacity of 1,000 acre-feet or more.

Daily

Diversions to storage must be measured daily if the reservoir has a capacity of at least 200 acre-feet but less than 1,000 acre-feet.

Weekly

Diversions to storage must be measured weekly if the reservoir has a capacity of at least 50 acre-feet but less than 200 acre-feet.

Monthly

Diversions to storage must be measured monthly if the reservoir has a capacity greater than 10 acre-feet but less than 50 acre-feet.

6.2 Required Accuracy

Diversion measurements must meet specific accuracy requirements depending on when you installed your measuring device, the size of your direct diversion or reservoir, the type of measuring device used, and whether the accuracy was certified in a laboratory. For riparian and pre-1914 claims for direct diversion, the accuracy requirements are based on the maximum historical annual diversion. If you have multiple claimed water rights that share a point of diversion or serve the same place of use, your accuracy requirements are based on the combined maximum allowed diversions of all such claimed water rights. If your measuring device was not certified in a laboratory, a qualified individual must certify the accuracy (see chapter 8 for more information about qualified individuals). **Note**: Beginning October 1, 2026, accuracy requirements will change. Additional guidance for water year 2027 will be available at a later date.

6.2.1 Devices Installed on or before January 1, 2016

If you installed your measuring device on or before January 1, 2016, it must be at least 85 percent accurate by volume (i.e., within ± 15 percent error). You must periodically test your measuring device to verify its accuracy.

6.2.2 Devices Installed or Replaced after January 1, 2016

If you installed or replaced your measuring device after January 1, 2016, your accuracy requirements are based on whether the measuring device is used to measure the diversion or whether it is used to measure stored water. Required accuracy is summarized in Table 4 and described in the following subsections.

Table 4: Measurement Accuracy Requirements for Water Year 2026

Type of Device	Volume Threshold	Required Accuracy[(a)]
Device Measures Diversions: Requirements are based on maximum allowable annual diversion amounts	100 acre-feet per year or more	± 10%
	10 to 99 acre-feet per year	± 15%
Device Measures Stored Water: Requirements are based on storage capacity	200 acre-feet or more	± 10%
	10 to 199 acre-feet	± 15%

(a) Accuracy requirements are shown as percent differences by volume. For devices installed before January 1, 2016, the required accuracy is ± 15 percent for all diversion types and sizes. Laboratory-certified devices must be accurate to within ± 5 percent by volume.

Devices Used to Measure Diversions

If your measuring device is used to measure the diversion of water (e.g., a flow meter or totalizer), it must be at least:

- 95 percent accurate by volume (within ± 5 percent error) if the measuring device was certified in a laboratory,
- 90 percent accurate by volume (within ±10 percent error) for claimed water rights to divert 100 acre-feet per year or more, or
- 85 percent accurate by volume (within ±15 percent error) for claimed water rights to divert at least 10 acre-feet per year but less than 100 acre-feet per year.

If your measuring device's accuracy was not certified in a laboratory, you must periodically test your measuring device to confirm its accuracy.

Devices Used to Measure Stored Water

If your measuring device is used to measure water impounded in a reservoir or pond (e.g., a pressure transducer or staff gage in a reservoir), it must be at least:

- 90 percent accurate by volume (within ±10 percent error) for reservoirs with a capacity of 200 acre-feet or more, or
- 85 percent accurate by volume (within ±15 percent error) for reservoirs with a capacity of more than 10 acre-feet.

If your measuring device's accuracy was not certified in a laboratory, you must periodically test your measuring device to confirm its accuracy.

6.3 Additional Telemetry Requirements for Larger Diverters

The largest diverters are also required to publish diversion data on a public website. The website must be updated at least once per week. These requirements are commonly referred to as "telemetry requirements."

In addition to the other requirements of the regulation, you must also adhere to telemetry requirements if you meet any of the following criteria:

- Divert more than 10,000 acre-feet per year under a claimed water right or a combination of claimed water rights that share a point of diversion,
- Own or operate a reservoir with a storage capacity of 10,000 acre-feet or more, or
- Directly divert more than 30 cubic feet per second at any time between June 1 and September 30 under a claimed water right or a combination of claimed water rights that share a point of diversion.

In general, if you are subject to telemetry requirements, you likely are also required to collect data on an hourly basis. However, when posting your measurement data to a public website, you may aggregate the data to reflect daily values. When submitting a data file with your annual report, however, the data must reflect the hourly measurements.

Note: Beginning October 1, 2026, telemetry requirements will be replaced with “large diversion requirements.” Additional guidance regarding large diversion requirements will be available at a later date.

6.4 Alternative Compliance Plan

There may be circumstances when it is not possible to meet all measurement and data submission requirements described in this manual. In such cases, alternative compliance may be appropriate. If you submitted an alternative compliance plan (ACP) **before February 1, 2026**, you may continue to measure in accordance with your existing ACP through September 30, 2026. Diverters using an ACP must meet as many of their requirements as possible when measuring their diversions and submitting their measurement data to the Board. If you would like to submit an ACP and did not previously submit one before February 1, 2026, you may submit an ACP in the California Water Accounting, Tracking, and Reporting System (CalWATRS) according to the **updated** requirements of the regulation. The updated requirements are not discussed in-depth in this manual but will be the subject of future guidance.

7 Submitting Measurement Data

You must submit your measurement data as an attachment to your annual reports. Diversion data must be submitted in an electronic file that can be opened and read using either Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Access. The most common file types for measurement data are comma-separated value (csv) files and Microsoft Excel spreadsheets (.xls and .xlsx). Additional guidance on how to format data files is in Appendix A:, and several optional data file templates are available on the Water Measurement Regulation website. Refer to the section below for data submission requirements based on whether you use a measuring device, measurement method, or ACP.

7.1 Registry

Whether you use a measuring device, measurement method, or alternative compliance plan, you are must submit a measurement data file to the Board. Measurement data submitted through CalWATRS must be associated with a measuring device or measurement method. Therefore, you must register any measuring devices and/or methods before submitting your measurement data.

7.1.1 Measuring Devices

Diverters who use measuring devices must register their devices **on or before January 31, 2027**. If you previously registered any devices before February 1, 2026, you must update your existing registries on or before January 31, 2027 to ensure that they meet the requirements of the updated regulation. If any device information changes after the measuring device is registered (e.g., the measuring device was moved to a different location), you will need to update the device registry to include the updated information.

The registry form for measuring devices can be found in CalWATRS under the menu item titled *"My Measurement Details"* (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: You can register, update, and manage your measuring devices in CalWATRS through "My Measurement Details."

Select the *"Register a Device/Methodology"* option (see Figure 2) and complete the form by selecting *"Start"* under *"Measurement device/method information"* (see Figure 3).

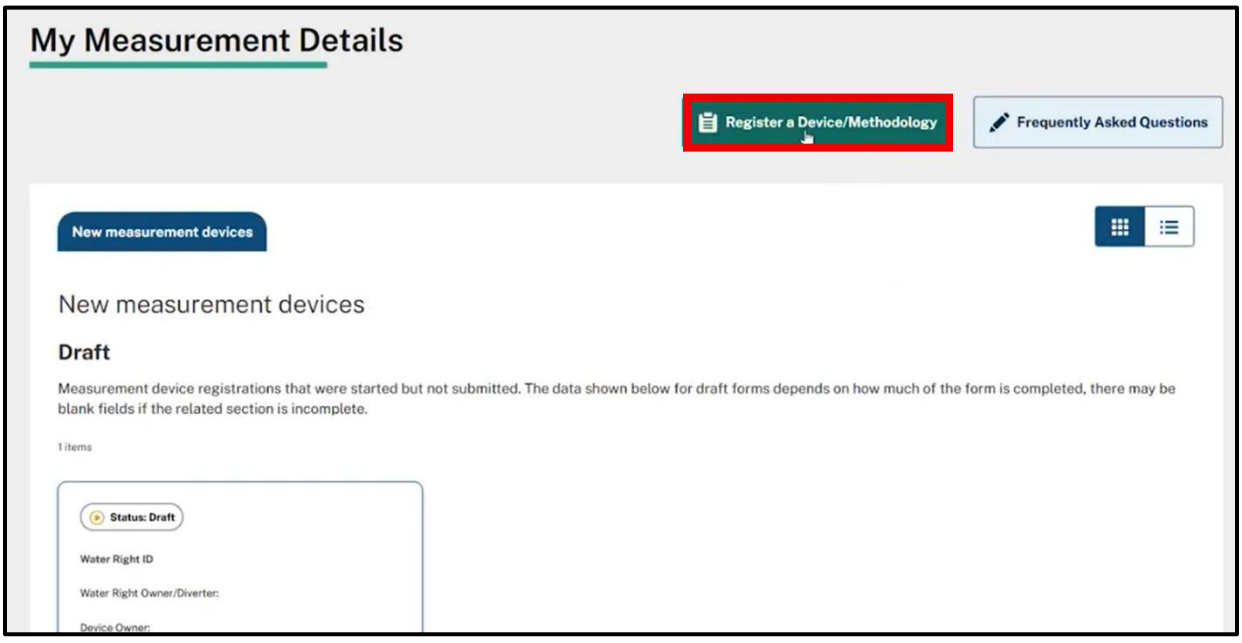


Figure 2: "My Measurement Details" shows existing measuring devices and allows you to register new devices.

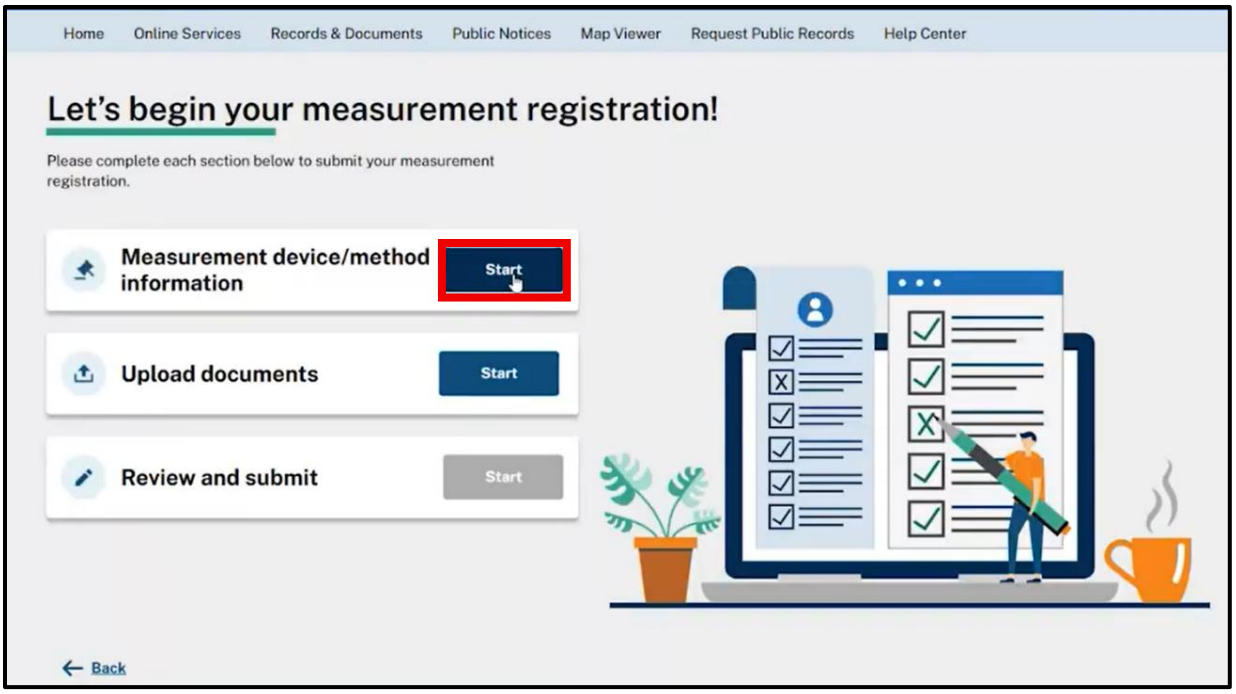


Figure 3: Click "Start" to input information about your measuring device.

Once you complete the registry form, a unique identification number will automatically be generated for that specific measuring device (see Figure 4).

Please refer to the Measurement Device Entries training video for addition information on how to register your measuring devices.

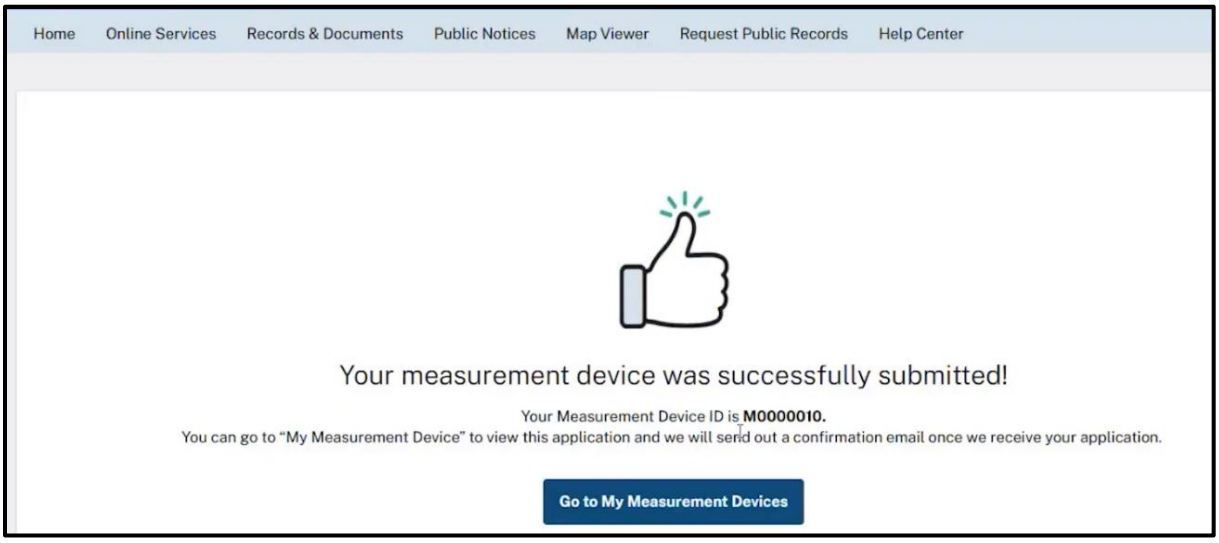


Figure 4: After registering your measuring device, it will be assigned a measurement device ID number.

7.1.2 Measurement Method

If you measure using a measurement method, you must have already submitted a measurement method form **before February 1, 2026**. You should also register your method and upload any supporting documents using the same process as for measuring devices described in chapter 7.1.1. This will generate a measurement device ID for your measurement method that can be used to upload diversion data files.

Note: On October 1, 2026, the definition of "measuring device" will be revised to include any equipment that provides a numerical output. Under the revised definition, any previously filed measurement method will generally include at least one measuring device. For example, for a measurement method that uses electricity records and a pump curve to calculate the volume of water diverted, the measuring device will be the electricity meter. For a measurement method that tracks the number of times a tank is filled and emptied, the measuring device will be the gage on the tank that identifies the volume of water in the tank when full. **On or before January 31, 2027**, diverters currently using a measurement method must register their measuring devices based on this revised definition.

7.1.3 Alternative Compliance Plan

If you use an alternative compliance plan, you must also submit your diversion data to the Board by registering your measuring devices and/or measurement methods as described above.

7.2 Uploading Measurement Data Files

Upload your measurement data through your annual report in CalWATRS by linking the data to a specific measuring device. To submit measurement data, select the appropriate measurement device ID under *"Measuring devices/methods I am submitting data for"* and identify the type of data associated with that device (e.g., data related to direct diversion, diversion to storage, withdrawals, etc.) (see Figure 5). Types of data for each measuring device are defined in Table 5. The types of data in Table 5 match the names of available data file templates. You must select the appropriate type of data, even if you do not use one of the provided templates (which are **optional** for water year 2026). Beginning water year 2027, you must use the provided templates.

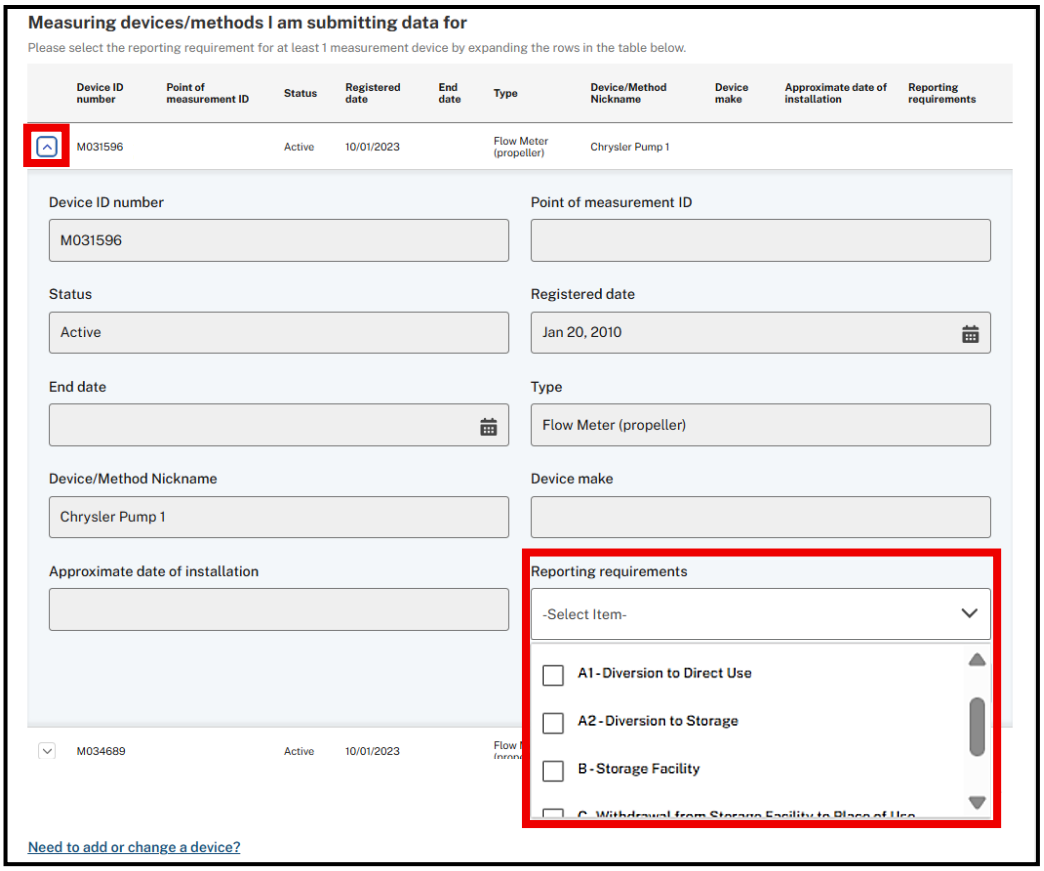


Figure 5: When completing your annual report, select which measuring devices you are submitting data for and the type of data associated with each device.

Table 5: Types of Data

Type of Data	Definition
A1 - Diversion to Direct Use	Data related to direct diversion (e.g., volume and rate)
A2 - Diversion to Storage	Data related to diversion to storage (e.g., volume and rate)
B - Storage Facility	Data related to water in a reservoir (e.g., total volume of water impounded)
C - Withdrawal from Storage Facility to Place of Use	Data related to stored water withdrawn for beneficial use (e.g., volume and rate)
D - Release from Storage Facility	Data related to water leaving a reservoir at its outlet (e.g., volume and rate)

For each device and type of data you select, you will be prompted to upload a data file (see Figure 6).

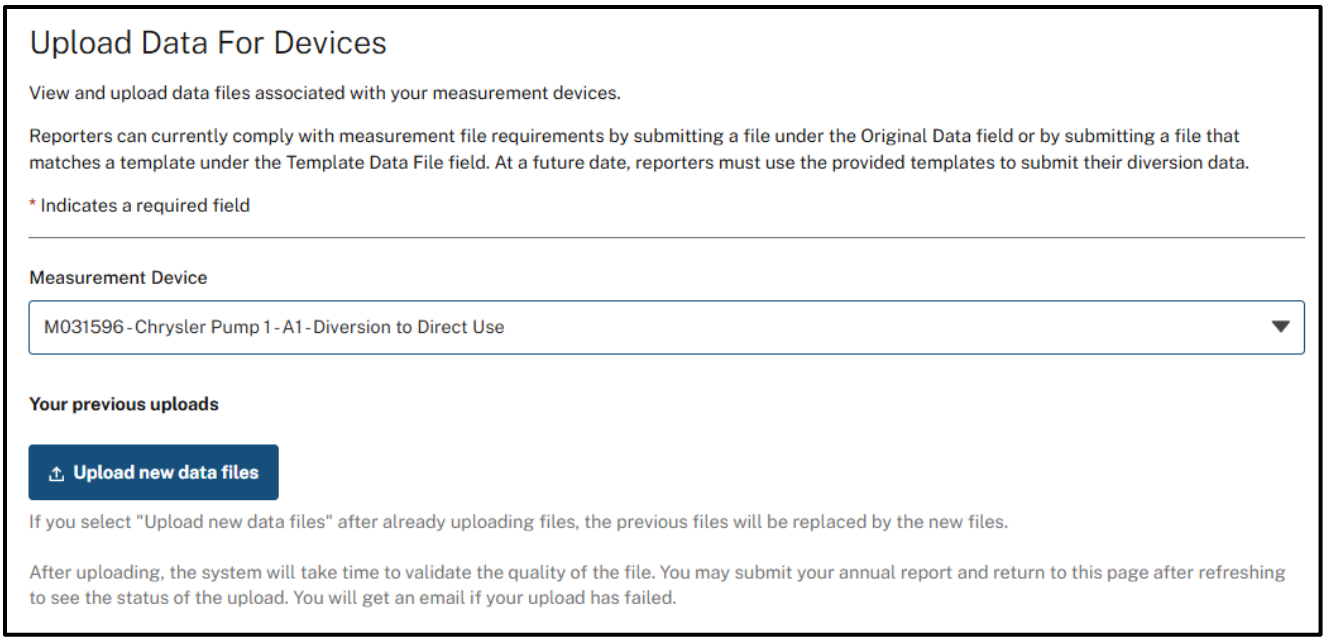


Figure 6: For each measuring device and type of data, you will be prompted to upload the associated data files.

After clicking “Upload new data files,” there are three options for uploading data for the selected measuring device and type of data (see Figure 7):

1. Template Data File,
2. Original Data, and
3. Supplemental Data.

For water year 2026, use the “**Original Data**” option.

If you would like to use the provided templates (which are **optional** for water year 2026), please also upload them using the “Template Data File” option. Beginning water year 2027 (annual reports due on or before January 31, 2028), measurement data must be submitted using the provided data file templates and the “Template Data File” option.

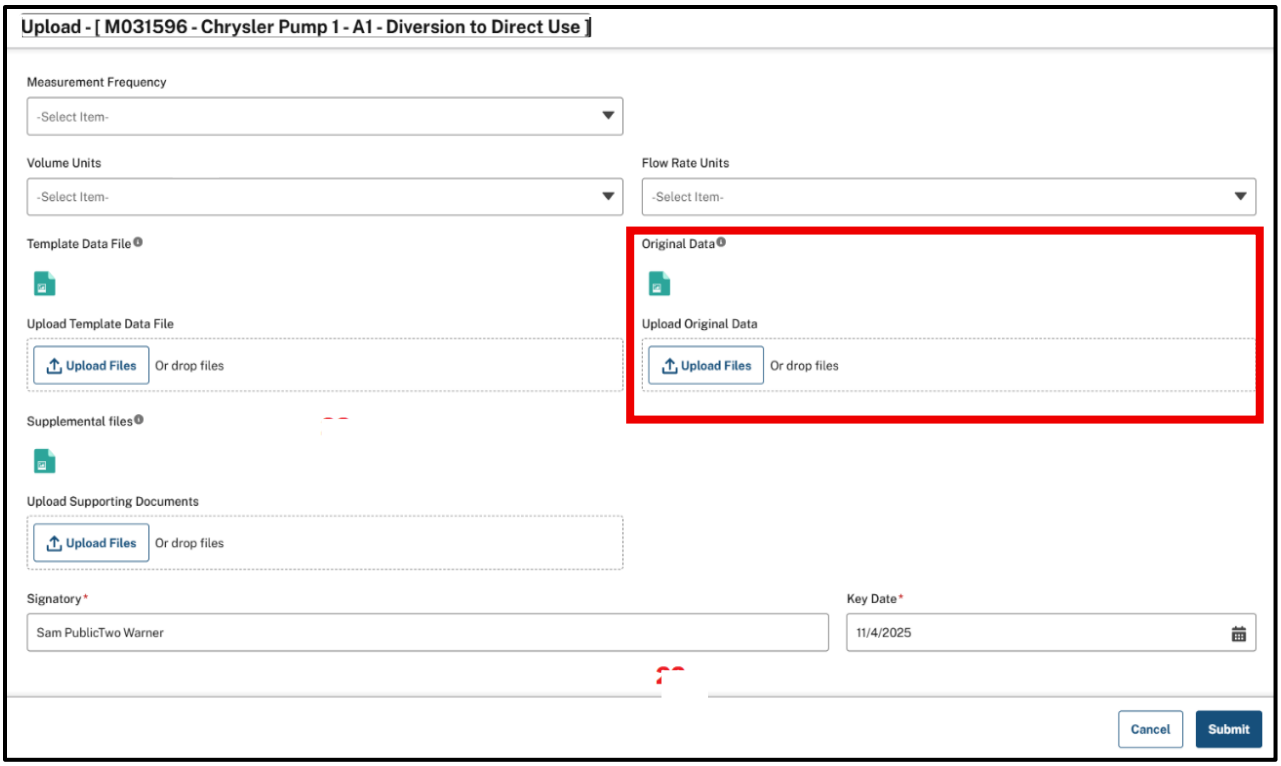


Figure 7: There are three options for uploading data in CalWATRS. For water year 2026, use the "Original Data" option.

Please refer to the Submitting Data in CalWATRS fact sheet for additional information on how to submit measurement data.

8 Qualified Individual

Because diversion measurement can be complex and require technical expertise, certain aspects of water measurement must be performed or overseen by a qualified individual. The term “qualified individual” has a specific definition in the context of this regulation. They are responsible for overseeing or performing some of the more technically complex tasks related to measuring water diversions. This chapter explains the role of a qualified individual, how to become a qualified individual, and what parts of the measurement process require a qualified individual. **Note**: The criteria determining who can be a qualified individual was updated on February 1, 2026.

8.1 Role of a Qualified Individual

A qualified individual’s role varies depending on whether you measure using a measuring device, measurement method, or ACP. Table 6 outlines which parts of the measurement process require a qualified individual.

Table 6: Role of Qualified Individual for Water Year 2026

A Qualified Individual Is Required to…	Measuring Device	Measurement Method	Alternative Compliance	Measurement Methodology
Install measuring device[(a)]	✓			
Calibrate and verify accuracy	✓	✓		
Certify accuracy of evidence of proper functioning	✓			
Approve conversion method of measured values to diverted volume	✓			
Certify ACPs and measurement methodologies meet requirements			✓	✓

(a) Measuring devices installed on or after February 1, 2026 must be installed in accordance with the updated requirements of the regulation, which are not discussed in this manual.

If you measure using a measuring device, a qualified individual must:

- Install the measuring device (note that any measuring devices installed **after February 1, 2026** must meet **updated** requirements),
- Approve a method to convert the measured value to a volume, and

- Certify that the measuring device meets the accuracy requirements described in chapter 6.2, unless the measuring device is laboratory-certified prior to installation.

If you measure using a measurement method, a qualified individual must certify that the measurement method meets the accuracy requirements based on the size of the diversion, as described in chapter 6.2.

If you measure using an ACP, a qualified individual must certify that the ACP meets the measurement and data submission requirements of the regulation to the extent possible.

8.2 Who Can Be a Qualified Individual?

The size of your diversion determines who can be a qualified individual, as summarized in Table 7 and described in the subsections below.

Table 7: Qualified Individual Requirements

Authorized Diversion Amount	Eligible Qualified Individuals
200 acre-feet per year or less	• Anyone trained and experienced in water measurement and reporting (a training class is highly recommended but not required)
More than 200 acre-feet per year	• A California-registered Professional Engineer or a person under their supervision, • A California-licensed contractor for C-57 well drilling or C-61/D-21 Limited Specialty: Machinery and Pumps, • A Board-certified Water Treatment Operator or Water Distribution Operator who is trained and experienced in water measurement, • A person professionally employed as a hydrographer or water measurement technician who is trained and experienced in water measurement, or • Any diverter who has completed a class on measurement devices and methods offered through the University of California Cooperative Extension
Federal claimed water right to divert more than 200 acre-feet per year	• Hydrologist or Professional Engineer experienced and trained in water measurement

8.2.1 Annual Diversions of 200 Acre-Feet or Less

For annual diversions of 200 acre-feet or less, a qualified individual can be any person trained and experienced in water measurement and reporting, including the diverter or the diverter's agent. The State Water Board highly recommends completing the training course on water measurement offered by the University of California Cooperative Extension, but the course is not required.

8.2.2 Annual Diversions Greater Than 200 Acre-Feet

For annual diversions greater than 200 acre-feet, a qualified individual must be one of the following:

- A California-registered Professional Engineer or a person working under their supervision,
- A California licensed contractor for C-57 well drilling,
- A California licensed contractor for C-61: D-21 Limited Specialty: Machinery and Pumps,
- A Board-certified Water Treatment Operator or Water Distribution Operator who is trained and experienced in water measurement,
- A person professionally employed as a hydrographer or water measurement technician who is trained and experienced in water measurement, or
- Any claimed water right holder, diverter, tenant, or their employee who has completed a training course on water measurement offered by the University of California Cooperative Extension.

8.2.3 Federal Agency Water Rights

For claimed water rights held by the federal government, a qualified individual must be a hydrologist or professional engineer experienced and trained in water measurement who is employed by the federal agency in that capacity.

Appendix A: Measurement Data File Considerations

A.1 Data File Templates

Data file templates are available to help you submit your measurement data. These templates are **optional for water year 2026** and are meant to assist you in submitting your measurement data. The State Water Board highly recommends using the available templates to prepare your data files, though alternative data file formats are allowed if they meet the criteria specified in the regulation. However, templates provided by the Board demonstrate best practices for formatting and can be a good reference even if you choose not to use them. **Note**: Beginning water year 2027 (annual reports due on or before January 31, 2028), measurement data must be submitted by using the provided templates.

Please visit the Water Measurement Regulation website to download the appropriate template for your diversion(s). For instructions on how to use the templates, refer to the Submitting Measurement in Data in CalWATRS fact sheet.

A.2 Time Stamp

The date and time of measurement are required for every measurement value. Many measuring devices or dataloggers may automatically record the date and time along with the measurement value. If not recorded by a datalogger, the time reported should be the time the measurement value was manually recorded.

A.3 Raw Data vs. QA/QC'd Values vs. Calculations

If you perform any calculations or QA/QC protocols on the raw output from your measuring device, you only need to upload the final, QA/QC'd data when submitting your measurement data file. Otherwise, uploading your raw, unaltered device output is sufficient for water year 2026.

If any calculations or conversion methods are required to convert the measured value into the volume of water diverted, the method(s) of conversion must be approved by a qualified individual and uploaded as part of your annual report. Any conversion methods must clearly describe how the volume was determined, using formulas and/or narrative text, including supplementary documents (e.g., rating tables) as necessary.

A.4 Submitting Measurement Data for Multiple Rights

Each data file must disaggregate the volume of water diverted per claimed water right so that the volume of water reported in each data file represents only the amount of water diverted under a single claimed water right. If a measuring device is shared among multiple diverters or among multiple claimed water rights all held by a single

diverter, a measurement method or other protocol must be used to determine the amount of water diverted under each claimed water right.

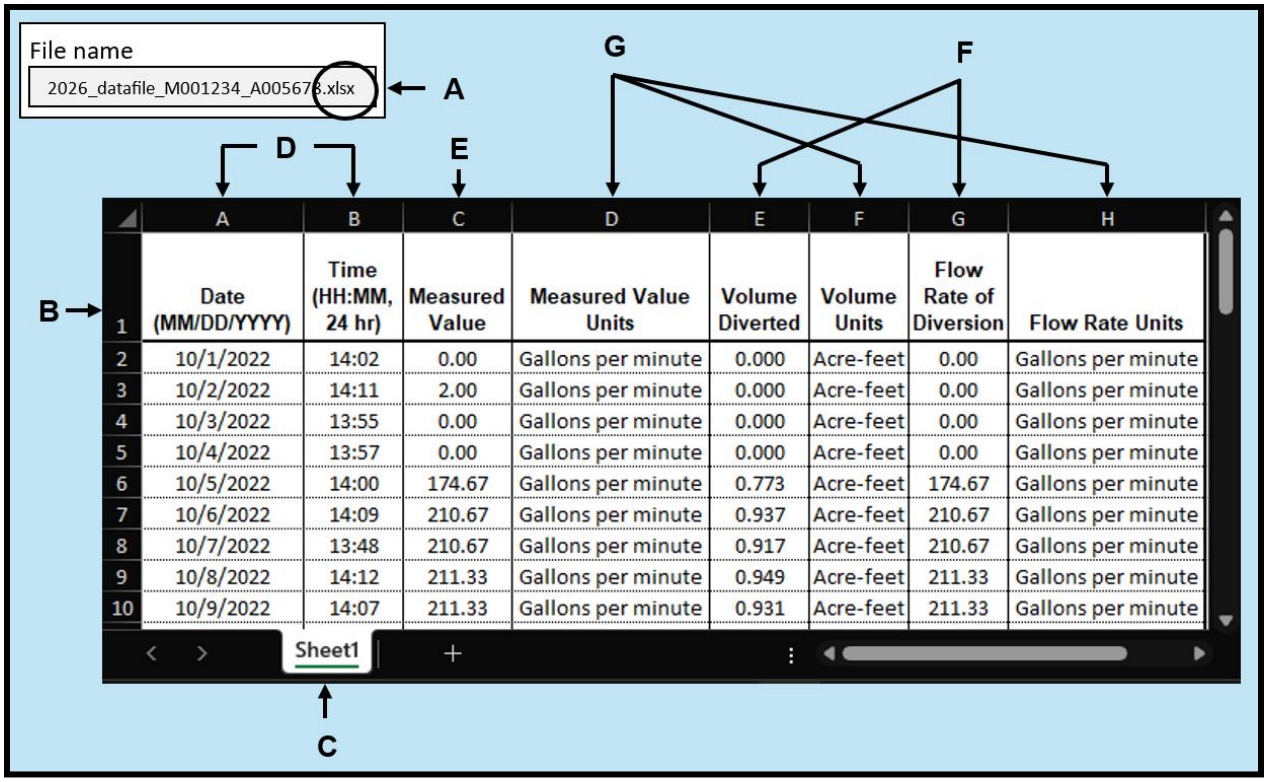
A.5 Data File Best Practices

Submit all measurement data as a data file attachment through your annual report. Optional data file templates are available for your convenience on the Board's Water Measurement Regulation webpage. Use of these templates is highly recommended, but not required for water year 2026; you may use other data file formats that better suit your individual needs.

For information on how to submit telemetered data, refer to the Telemetry Requirements webpage.

In general, data files should contain the following (see Figure 8):

A. File type that can be opened using either Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Access (common file types include.xls, .xlsx, .csv, .txt, .dat)
B. Descriptive column headings **in the first row of the data file**
C. Use only one spreadsheet "tab" with only one data table per data file (you may submit multiple data files with your annual report)
D. Date and time of measurement
E. Measured value (the raw/unaltered data output from your measuring device or measurement method)
F. The volume and flow rate of water diverted under the water right at each time stamp
G. Units written out in their entirety (i.e., not abbreviated)
    a. Any standard units are acceptable. Common examples include acre-feet or gallons (for volume), cubic feet per second or gallons per day (for flow rate), feet per second (for water velocity), and feet or meters (for water elevation).



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Time (HH:MM, 24 hr)	Measured Value	Measured Value Units	Volume Diverted	Volume Units	Flow Rate of Diversion	Flow Rate Units
2	10/1/2022	14:02	0.00	Gallons per minute	0.000	Acre-feet	0.00	Gallons per minute
3	10/2/2022	14:11	2.00	Gallons per minute	0.000	Acre-feet	0.00	Gallons per minute
4	10/3/2022	13:55	0.00	Gallons per minute	0.000	Acre-feet	0.00	Gallons per minute
5	10/4/2022	13:57	0.00	Gallons per minute	0.000	Acre-feet	0.00	Gallons per minute
6	10/5/2022	14:00	174.67	Gallons per minute	0.773	Acre-feet	174.67	Gallons per minute
7	10/6/2022	14:09	210.67	Gallons per minute	0.937	Acre-feet	210.67	Gallons per minute
8	10/7/2022	13:48	210.67	Gallons per minute	0.917	Acre-feet	210.67	Gallons per minute
9	10/8/2022	14:12	211.33	Gallons per minute	0.949	Acre-feet	211.33	Gallons per minute
10	10/9/2022	14:07	211.33	Gallons per minute	0.931	Acre-feet	211.33	Gallons per minute

Figure 8: Data File Best Practices for Water Year 2026 (if not using one of the provided templates).

Appendix B: Temporary Exemptions

B.1 Zero Diversions

You are required to complete annual reports for each of your claimed water rights, regardless of whether you are subject to the Water Measurement Regulation, and even if you did not divert any water under that claimed water right during the year. However, you do not need to submit a data file if you did not divert. Instead, in your annual report, you must indicate that you did not divert any water.

B.2 Destroyed Diversion Equipment

The State Water Board recognizes that natural disasters and other unforeseeable events can damage pumps or other equipment and prevent water from being diverted. If such an event prohibits you from diverting under your claimed water right, you are temporarily relieved from measurement requirements. When submitting data files with your annual report, simply indicate when the diversion equipment or infrastructure was inoperable. Requirements resume effect when diversions resume.

B.3 Destroyed Measurement Equipment

The State Water Board recognizes that natural disasters and other unforeseeable events can damage measuring devices and render them inoperable. If you are unable to measure your diversions due to damaged or destroyed measuring devices, you may request a temporary exemption. Any temporary exemption request must be submitted in writing to the Board within 30 days of detecting that the measuring device has become inoperable and it must include a reason for the request, a description of what measurements are affected (for example, are you unable to collect any data at the point of diversion, or can you still collect information about diversions to storage, etc.), and a timeline in which the measuring device will be repaired or replaced.

If your request is approved, you may be temporarily excused from measuring the affected point of diversion for up to 180 days after the device became inoperable (with the possibility of extending the exemption for an additional 180 days). While the device is inoperable, you should provide estimates of the affected parameters. All requirements resume when the measuring device becomes operable or the exemption has expired.