



# Fact Sheet

## ***GENERAL INFORMATION***

### **MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS TO ACHIEVE A 25% STATEWIDE REDUCTION IN POTABLE URBAN WATER USE**

With California facing one of the most severe droughts on record, Governor Brown declared a drought State of Emergency in January 2014 and issued a series of Executive Orders in April and September 2014 and January 2015, that streamline the State's drought response and makes California more drought resilient for the future.

The April 2014 Executive Order asked the State Water Board to assess voluntary conservation levels for urban water agencies and granted authority to adopt emergency conservation regulations, which the Board did in July of 2014 and updated in March of 2015. With the lowest snowpack on record and a lack of sufficient conservation to deal with the continuing drought emergency, the Governor, on April 1, 2015, directed the State Water Board to implement mandatory water reductions in urban areas to reduce potable urban water usage by 25 percent statewide. He also directed that this regulation take into account the different levels of conservation already achieved by communities based upon their relative per capita water usage.

This savings amounts to approximately 1.3 million acre-feet of water over the next nine months, or nearly as much water as is currently in Lake Oroville. To achieve these savings, the State Water Board is expediting an emergency regulation to set usage targets for communities around the State.

The Board's task is to implement a regulation which is equitable, achievable, and enforceable for every urban water supplier in the state, and which can be implemented quickly given the state of the drought and the uncertainty of when it will end. To maximize input in a short amount of time, the Board began discussions with water suppliers, stakeholder groups, and others to solicit feedback on approach on the day that the Executive Order was issued.

On April 7, 2015, the Board released a draft framework and received more than 250 comments. Suggestions from the comments were incorporated into the draft regulation issued on April 17, 2015. The Board is soliciting additional comment on the draft regulation by April 22. The draft regulation will be further refined based on comments received and the Notice of Proposed Emergency Rulemaking and accompanying documents will be released on April 28<sup>th</sup> for public comment and consideration by the Board at its May 5-6, 2015 meeting.



### **Content of Emergency Regulation**

This emergency regulation will address the following provisions of the April 1, 2015 [Executive Order](#) :

- Ordering Provision 2: Mandatory 25% reduction in potable urban water use with recognition of past conservation achievements;
- Ordering Provision 5: Reductions in potable water use at commercial, industrial and institutional properties;
- Ordering Provision 6: Prohibition on using potable water for irrigation of ornamental turf in street medians; and
- Ordering Provision 7: Prohibition on using potable water for irrigation outside of new home construction without drip or microspray systems.

This emergency regulation does not address rate structures and other pricing mechanisms required by Ordering Provision 8, which will be developed separately.

### **Schedule for Adoption and Implementation of the Emergency Regulation**

Stakeholder comments on the proposed emergency regulation must be submitted by **Wednesday April 22, 2015**. Staff will use those comments to finalize the draft emergency regulation, which will be published on April 28, 2015, along with supporting documents. Final public comment on the emergency regulation can be made at the Board meeting on May 5, 2015. The specific prohibitions in the emergency regulation will take effect immediately upon approval by the Office of Administrative Law. Urban water suppliers will be expected to begin implementing measures to meet their mandatory reduction targets by June 1, 2015 to ensure maximum conservation during the summer months. The schedule is listed below.

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|---|----------------|
| • Notice announcing release of draft regulation for informal public comment   | April 17, 2015 |
| • Deadline for comment on draft regulation                                    | April 22, 2015 |
| • Formal Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and written comment period             | April 28, 2015 |
| • Board hearing and adoption  | May 5-6, 2015  |
| • Office of Administrative Law approval                                       | May 15, 2015   |
| • Specific prohibitions become effective                                      | May 15, 2015   |
| • First (June) report on water production and other conservation measures due | July 15, 2015  |

### **How to Provide Input**

Information including discussion drafts, draft regulations and related materials is available on the State Water Board's website at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/emergency\\_mandatory\\_regulations.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/emergency_mandatory_regulations.shtml) .

Written comment and questions can be sent to Jessica Bean at [jessica.bean@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:jessica.bean@waterboards.ca.gov) .