



Recommendations to the State Water Resources Control Board to Reduce Water Demand in CA

December 17, 2014

Tracy Quinn, P.E.
Water Policy Analyst
Natural Resources Defense Council

Themes of NRDC's Recommendations



- Data Collection
- Improved Enforcement and Implementation of Existing Laws
- Leverage Funding Opportunities

Mandatory Reporting of Revenue and Rate Information



California law requires each Urban Water Management Plan to include an “urban water shortage contingency analysis” containing:

“An analysis of expected revenue effects of reduced sales during shortages and proposed measures to overcome those effects”.

RECOMMENDATION: Monthly urban supplier reports to the Board should include the following information on water rates:

- Effective date and description of the current rate schedule
- Comparison of forecasted revenues with revenues received year to date
- Current measures to address revenue shortfalls, including:
 - Drought surcharge rates
 - Excess water use penalty charges
 - General rate increase
 - Use of previously established reserve funds
 - Any other specific measures.

Mandatory Reporting of Water Main Breaks & Repair Activity



CUWCC BMP 1.2 requires urban water suppliers to maintain a record-keeping system for the repair of reported leaks.

RECOMMENDATION: Monthly urban supplier reports to the Board should include the following information on water main breaks and repair activity:

- time of report
- leak location
- type of leaking pipe segment or fitting
- leak running time from report to repair
- estimated leakage volume from report to repair, and
- cost of repair (including pavement restoration costs and paid-out damage claims, if any)



Local Enforcement of SB 407



Existing California law requires all inefficient plumbing fixtures to be replaced with water-conserving fixtures; however, SB 407 merely authorizes, *but does not require*, cities, counties, and water suppliers to enact local ordinances or policies to enforce the bill's provisions.

Potential Water Savings:



Replacing inefficient toilets in single-family homes could save **90,000 AF**



Additional savings from replacing inefficient showerhead & faucets could bring total to more than **150,000 AFY**

RECOMMENDATION: The State Board should require retail water suppliers to develop and implement a local enforcement strategy to achieve the replacement of inefficient fixtures required by state law.

At a minimum, each retail water supplier should adopt procedures to ensure that all inefficient plumbing fixtures have been removed and replaced with water-conserving fixtures whenever there is a change of name on the customer account for a pre-1994 building.

Water Loss Reduction



One way to locate leaks

A better way . . .



Losses – and potential savings – are substantial:

- 870,000 AF lost to leaks in California statewide (2009 est.)
- 350,000 AF could be cost-effectively eliminated

Water Loss Reporting & Validation



SB 1420 now requires urban water suppliers to include standardized water loss audits in Urban Water Management Plans, beginning with 2015 plans.

Many urban water suppliers have been filing water loss audits with the CUWCC since 2011. However, the data is “buggy”, not accurate enough to use for setting statewide benchmarks.

RECOMMENDATION: SWRCB should solicit a water loss data validation project for DWSRF funding.

Note: the state of Georgia –

- Requires annual water loss audits to be filed with the state;
- Established a process for validating all water loss audits prior to submission using DWSRF funding (2% set-aside for small system technical assistance).
- Is developing a certification process to make data validation an integral part of water loss reporting

Leverage Funding Opportunities to Improve Conservation Reqmts



“All state agencies that distribute funding for projects that impact water resources, including groundwater resources, will require recipients of future financial assistance to have appropriate conservation and efficiency programs in place” – Governor Brown, April 2014



Approximately **\$7.5 Billion** will be available for water projects from the Bond

Approximately **\$100 Million** available annually through State Revolving Funds

RECOMMENDATION: Condition funding for ALL state financial assistance programs for water suppliers on the implementation of conservation practices meeting the following criteria:

- Conservation requirements will apply to all recipients of state funding
- Conservation requirements will be clear and consistent
- State Board & DWR should develop and implement a validation or certification process for verifying implementation of conservation practices
- Funding will include a contractual commitment to implement conservation practices and noncompliance could result in loss of funding and prosecution

Conclusion



The most important actions the Board can take in the near term are:

- Collect data to inform future decision making
- Enforce the implementation of existing policy
- Leverage funding to create opportunity for additional conservation as directed by the Governor