

DROUGHT UPDATE

California is facing a serious water shortage due to four straight years of poor rain and snowpack in the Sierras. A similar drought in the early 1990's demonstrated that reliance on imported water from the Sierras put our region and economy at the mercy of sometimes mercurial weather patterns. Over the last 20 years, the San Diego region has invested nearly \$3 Billion in projects designed to mitigate the risk related on our dependence on imported water.



The District is happy to report that these investments have paid off. San Diego now gets only a small amount of our water from the Sierras. The transfers from the Imperial Irrigation District, which are comprised of conserved water from canal lining and fallowing of farmland make up well over 30% of our supply. The Carlsbad Desalination Plant will come on line later this year and add another 7-10% of our supply. This is the drought we have planned for.

As a result, the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) has determined that our reliable water supplies for the next year will be over 99% of the expected demand for customers who are not on the Transitional Special Agricultural Water Rate (TSAWR - see below). With the increased media attention created by the actions of the Governor, we expect that supply will exceed demand next year and we will actually be putting water into storage – even in the midst of this drought.

The proposed regulations promoted by the Governor have placed arbitrary reduction percentages on water agencies across the State. Rainbow has been incorrectly lumped into a category that requires a 36% reduction in residential consumption, but they have not properly deducted our agricultural use from their data (which we will correct). Our actual cutback percentage will likely be considerably lower once this gets cleared up.

The final regulations are not expected to be issued by the State until May 6th and the San Diego County Water Authority won't meet until May 14th to finalize their projections, so we can't say with 100% certainty what the impact will be for Rainbow customers. Because of our advanced planning in the region, at this time the District has no intention of establishing fines or allocations as our supply in San Diego County does not warrant such actions. Customers who are practicing efficient water use will not be penalized for doing the right thing in the past. At the regional level we are making the same argument to the State – San Diego County uses almost 20% less water than we did 20 years ago with nearly a million more people and yet the State is calling for heavy cutbacks even when we have supply.

We have certain agricultural water customers who are part of the TSAWR program. These customers agreed to conservation cutbacks in shortages in exchange for discounted water. These customers must start cutting back their consumption by 15% starting July 1, 2015 or face significant penalties.

For customers who are not on the TSAWR program we encourage them to do what they can to conserve water. Even though San Diego has the supply we need, every gallon we conserve can be put into storage so that it will be there if this drought continues and there is a good chance that it will. At this time we are not calling for drastic actions but we will enforce our rules related to water waste as defined in our current drought ordinance.

So what should you do? Focus on the rules that are already in effect (a copy of those rules is attached). Do what you can to conserve but since we have a secure supply for this year, we are not asking you to cut down trees or rip out lawns. If this drought persists into next year it will be a different story, so as I indicated earlier - every gallon that is conserved this year will be put into storage by SDCWA for our use next year.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by phone at 760-728-1178 or by email at tkennedy@rainbowmwd.com.

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DROUGHT RESPONSE LEVEL 2 DECLARED

At their August 5, 2014 Special Board Meeting, the RMWD Board of Directors voted to approve Resolution No. 14-20 declaring a Drought Response Level 2 Condition which establishes a Drought Response Conservation Program pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-05 ("Drought Ordinance"). By approving such, all Drought Level 1 conditions become mandatory, along with Drought Level 2 conditions. These mandatory restrictions will become effective on August 15, 2014. These restrictions are as follows:

- Residential and commercial landscape irrigation will be limited to no more than three (3) assigned days per week and no more than ten (10) minutes per watering station per assigned day, except for irrigation systems using water efficient devices such as weather based controllers, drip/micro-irrigation systems and stream rotor sprinklers.

The last number of your address determines your days to irrigate:

Odd Number: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Even Number: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

- Stop washing down paved surfaces, including but not limited to sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts, or patios, except when it is necessary to alleviate safety or sanitation hazards.
- Stop water waste resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation, such as runoff, low head drainage, or overspray, etc. Similarly, stop water flows onto non-targeted areas, such as adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, hardscapes, roadways, or structures.
- Irrigate residential and commercial landscape before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m. only.
- Use a hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle or bucket to water landscaped areas, including trees and shrubs located on residential and commercial properties that are not irrigated by a landscape irrigation system.
- Irrigate nursery and commercial grower's products before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m. only. Watering is permitted at any time with a hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle, a bucket or watering can. Irrigation of nursery propagation beds is permitted at any time. Watering of livestock is permitted at any time.
- Use re-circulated water to operate ornamental fountains.
- Wash vehicles using a bucket and a hand-held hose with positive shut-off nozzle, mobile high pressure/low volume wash system, or at a commercial site that re-circulates (reclaims) water on-site. Avoid washing during hot conditions when additional water is required due to evaporation.
- Serve and refill water in restaurants and other food service establishments only upon request.
- Offer guests in hotels, motels, and other commercial lodging establishments the option of not laundering towels and linens daily.
- Use recycled or non-potable water for construction purposes when available.
- Repair all water leaks within seventy-two (72) hours of notification by RMWD.

For more information, visit our website at www.rainbowmwd.com and click on "Conservation" to view Resolution No. 14-20 and Ordinance No. 14-05 or call (760) 728-1178 and speak to customer service.