



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



Drought Update

Thursday, October 20, 2016

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS MONTH

- **Statewide Water Conservation Drops Below 18 Percent in August:** On October 5, the State Water Resources Control Board [announced](#) that urban Californians' monthly water conservation declined to 17.7 percent in [August](#), down from 27 percent savings in August 2015. These declines highlight the need for continued education and dialogue with customers on the importance of conserving and using water as efficiently as possible. As the State Water Board continues to monitor conservation levels, a return to state-mandated conservation may be necessary beginning next year.

The cumulative average savings from June 2015 through August 2016 was 23.3 percent, compared with the same months in 2013. Since June 2015, two million acre-feet of water has been saved which is enough water to supply 10 million people, more than one-quarter the state's 38 million population, for a year. For more details, visit the State Water Board [Water Conservation Portal](#).

- **Water Year 2015-16 Ends, California Suffered 'Snow Drought':** On September 29, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) released a new [report](#) and [announced](#) that California's 2015-16 Water Year will officially close with lower-than-expected rainfall and a "snow drought" as the state's snowpack measured well below average. Water year 2015-16, which ran from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016, will be officially categorized as "dry" statewide, continuing California's five-year drought.

While mandatory water restrictions vary statewide, making water conservation a California way of life remains a statewide goal and a top priority in Governor Brown's [California Water Action Plan](#). Approximately sixty percent of California still remains in severe or extreme drought. For more details, visit the DWR [Water Conditions](#) web portal.

- **DWR Releases Final Changes to Groundwater Basin Boundaries:** On October 18, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) [released](#) the [final 2016 modifications](#) to California's groundwater basin boundaries, which completes a critical step in the implementation of the state's [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#). The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires DWR to develop emergency regulations describing the process for requesting changes to groundwater basin or subbasin boundaries. For more information, visit DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management [Basin Boundary Modifications](#) webpage.

- **Draft Report Released on Regulating Direct Potable Reuse of Recycled Water:** On September 9, the State Water Resources Control Board [released](#) a draft [report](#) to the Legislature that states it is feasible to develop regulations for the direct potable reuse of recycled water. Direct potable reuse is the addition of recycled water directly into a public water system or into a raw water supply immediately upstream of a water treatment plant. No other state has yet developed regulations specifically for direct potable reuse.

The report is described as one of the many steps in furthering Governor Brown's goal of a more sustainable water management strategy, as outlined in the [California Water Action Plan](#). For more information, please visit the State Water Board's [Recycled Water Expert Panel](#) and [Advisory Group](#) website.

- **Clean Water Fund Receives \$3 Billion in Financing Applications for Vital Water Quality Project:** On September 14, the State Water Resources Control Board [released](#) the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) [Intended Use Plan](#), which identifies the water quality projects that may receive financing during the Fiscal Year 2016-17. For this fiscal year, the State Water Board received more than \$3 billion in completed applications that request financing for water infrastructure projects. In the 2015-16 fiscal years, more than \$1 billion was financed for various water quality projects.

CWSRF provides low-interest financing and loan forgiveness for the construction of wastewater treatment and water recycling facilities that help prevent pollution and protect water supplies and public health in communities statewide. For more information, visit the State Water Board [CWSRF](#) website.

- **State Water Board Hears Update on Salmon Recovery:** On September 8, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), in partnership with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Northern California Water Association (NCWA), provided [updates](#) to members of the State Water Resources Control Board on efforts to aid the recovery of salmon in the Sacramento River. Officials from DFW, NCWA, and NMFS provided overviews including the [Sacramento River salmon five-year action plan](#), proposed projects and implementation planning, and the [Fisheries Restoration Grant Program](#).
- **Tidal Restoration Project to Contribute to Integrated Endangered Species Act Approach:** On September 19, the California Natural Resources Agency [announced](#) that the Tule Red Restoration Project construction is underway to restore tidal wetlands. The project will provide habitat for Delta smelt, salmon, and other fish and wetland species. Ecological processes within the wetlands are expected to support the growth of phytoplankton and other microscopic organisms to bolster the food web for native fish including the endangered Delta smelt. For more information, the project details are available at [California EcoRestore](#).

- **East Porterville Residents Urged to Attend October 5 Meeting on Water Connection Information:** On October 5, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), in partnership with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), held a [meeting](#) for East Porterville homeowners eligible for a cost-free connection to a new sustainable water supply. During the meeting, officials provided an overview of the [East Porterville Water Supply Project](#) and answered questions about the process property owners must follow to receive water deliveries through City of Porterville distribution lines.

DWR and SWRCB are jointly leading the effort to connect East Porterville residents with the City of Porterville’s municipal water supply as a long-term solution to the current drought emergency in East Porterville. SWRCB worked with local organizations and a community group, East Porterville for Water Justice, on a series of meetings to inform the community and get feedback about the project. For more information, visit the DWR [Drought Information](#) web portal.

- **Reclamation to Provide \$3.3M for Friant-Kern Canal Pump-Back Project:** On September 20, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced that \$3.3 million will be provided to the Friant Water Authority for its Friant-Kern Canal Reverse Flow Pump-Back Project. The new facilities would improve the Friant Division’s ability to recirculate and return recaptured Restoration Flows as part of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program. The estimated \$9.3 million total project will improve the Friant Division’s operational flexibility, including the ability during dry years to recover banked groundwater. For additional information, visit the [San Joaquin River Restoration Program](#) website.
- **Bureau Launches American River Basin Study:** On September 7, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) announced that it is partnering with local water agencies and cities in launching a new comprehensive water basin study in the American River Basin to help inform water management in the Central Valley Project. The study will include the development of detailed hydrologic analysis and models of the basin, which will include consideration of the impacts of climate change. For more information, visit the Reclamation [WaterSMART Basin Study Program](#) website.
- **California’s Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** In October, Save Our Water, in coordination with the [Plant California](#), launched a statewide marketing effort to encourage Californians to “[reimagine your landscape](#)” and conserve water with California-friendly yards. Save Our Water and Plant California will share and promote [gardening tips](#) and projects on their websites and social media platforms to demonstrate best practices for being a more [water wise gardener](#), including beautiful and hardy low water use plants and the water saving benefits of mulch and organic fertilizer. This conservation campaign aims to help residents maintain their strong commitment in saving water by promoting ideas, tools, and inspiration to help make saving water an everyday habit.

In addition, Save Our Water continues to promote the “[Real People, Real Savings](#)” campaign, which showcases California homeowners and their water-wise gardens and yards, as well as easy outdoor tips to reduce water use. Save Our Water is the state’s official water conservation program managed in partnership between the Association of California Water Agencies and the Department of Water Resources. For more tips and tools to help conserve water, learn about rebates on turf and toilet replacement, and keep trees healthy during the drought, please visit the new [SaveOurWater.com](#), available in both English and [Spanish](#), or connect with the program on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

- **Governor’s Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought. During the September 8 meeting, the Task Force provided updates on water operations and environmental habitat, water conservation, and drought impacts and response efforts. The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services also reported that approximately \$19.7 million in California Disaster Assistance Act funding has been approved for local government assistance to provide emergency water supplies to households without water for drinking or sanitation purposes.

CURRENT DROUGHT CONDITIONS

- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, firefighters from CAL FIRE, U.S. Forest Service and other federal agencies have responded to over 6,441 wildfires across the state, burning 554,935 acres. Fire activity across California is high resulting in 253 new wildfires over the past week.
- **CAL FIRE Burn Suspension Status:** To date, CAL FIRE has [suspended](#) all burn permits for outdoor open residential burning in Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Eastern San Joaquin, Eastern Stanislaus, Eastern Trinity, El Dorado, Fresno, Glen, Humboldt, Inyo, Imperial, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, San Benito, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Siskiyou, Tehama, Tuolumne, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba counties.

This suspension bans all residential outdoor burning of landscape debris including branches and leaves. The department may issue restricted temporary burning permits if there is an essential reason due to public health and safety. For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires visit [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](#).

- **Weather Outlook:** Dry weather with mild daytime highs will continue today and Friday as strong high pressure and light winds persist statewide. Temperatures will cool off closer to normal by this weekend as the high pressure ridge weakens. Early next week an unsettled weather pattern is expected bringing rain chances to the area will be possible as early as Sunday.

- **Reservoir Management:** Since the last report on October 7, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net loss in storage of 130,645 acre-feet (AF), with total gains of 7,374 AF for a total loss of 138,019 AF. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 49,553 AF, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, decreased its storage by 632 AF.

As of October 6, Shasta, Orville, and Folsom Reservoirs recorded approximately 2.7 million AF, 1.5 million AF, and 292,311 AF, respectively. The 10-day average changes were -7,597 AF, -5,249 AF, and -970 AF per day, respectively.

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of October 18 have remained steady, including: Castaic Lake 72% of capacity (93% of year to date average); Don Pedro 65% of capacity (98% of average); Exchequer 36% of capacity (80% of average); Folsom Lake 32% of capacity (61% of average); Lake Oroville 44% of capacity (72% of average); Perris Lake 37% (48% of average); Millerton Lake 42% of capacity (109% of average); New Melones 22% of capacity (39% of average); Pine Flat 18% of capacity (51% of average); San Luis 25% of capacity (50% of average); Shasta 59% of capacity (100% of average); and Trinity Lake 39% of capacity (59% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is available.

- **Dry Well Reports:** California's Water Year 2015-16 ended on September 30 with lower-than-expected rainfall and a "snow drought" as the state's snowpack measured well-below average. As the state enters a new water year, the Governor's Drought Task Force continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. A cross-agency team, led by the Department of Water Resources (DWR), continues to improve and streamline data collection and reporting for [household water shortages](#) for California water systems with fewer than 15 household connections.

As of September 8, approximately 2,411 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, affecting an estimated 12,055 residents. Cal OES reported that 2,228 of the 2,411 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley. For Californians experiencing a water supply shortage, residents can [submit a report](#) on DWR's Household Water Supply Shortage Reporting System website.

- **Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. Since July 2016, 0 out of the 13 projects approved to receive emergency funding for interim replacement drinking water have been executed. These funding sources include SB 826 funds, as well as the \$4 million set-aside approved by [Resolution 2016-0039](#). On July 19, 2016, the State Water Board approved the allocation of up to \$4 million from the Cleanup and Abatement Account to provide interim emergency drinking water to disadvantaged communities with a contaminated water supply. To date, the State Water Board has received requests for \$1.2 million of those funds

ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT

- **Emergency Food Aid, Utility and Employment Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) Drought Food Assistance Program (DFAP) provides food assistance to affected communities that suffer high levels of unemployment from the drought. To date, over 1,689,629 boxes have been provided to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 1,522,267 boxes of food have been picked up by 788,392 households.

Food boxes distributions vary by county and occur 1-4 times per month. This past week, nearly 50% of the food distributions have occurred in the Tulare Basin (Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare). An estimated 10,800 boxes are scheduled for delivery to Fresno, Kern, Kings, Merced, Riverside, and Tulare the week ending October 21.

The Labor Workforce Development Agency reported that the federally funded Drought Temporary Jobs program has enrolled 1,193 participants at 199 worksite projects in 24 counties. The program is funded through the U.S. Department of Labor's National Dislocated Worker Grant program which offers 6 months of employment on drought-related public works projects for up to 1,000 workers affected by the drought.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD), in partnership with the Department of Water Resources, continues to implement the Toilet Retrofit Program, which administers Proposition 1 funds to install high-efficiency toilets (HETs) in disadvantaged communities throughout the state. As of September 6, the program has administered \$5.3 million to over 30 energy service providers and entities. To date, approximately 4,037 HETs have been installed, which have saved over 8.1 million gallons of water. It is expected that approximately 12,000 HETs will be installed during this program.

In response to California's historic drought, CSD has received an additional \$7.5 million in 2016-17 General Funds to implement the Drought Emergency Assistance Program. This program provides emergency relief and support services to drought-impacted individuals including low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families and households. As of October 17, \$168,550 has been issued to 94 households.

- **Drought Response Funding:** The \$3.7 billion in state drought funding appropriated in the 2014 and 2015 Budget Acts, as well as in March 2015 through emergency legislation, continues to advance toward meeting critical near-term needs and long-term drought resiliency and water supply needs.

In June 2016, Governor Brown [approved](#) an additional \$254.7 million for the 2016-17 budget to continue the state's response to the drought. These additional funds will be available to aid in emergency drinking water for communities, emergency food assistance, enhanced fire protection, environmental and wildlife assistance, assistance to communities to help dispose of the dead and dying trees in high hazard zones for public safety issues, and the continued statewide awareness campaign.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 58 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **25 Counties:** Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
 - **10 Cities:** Fort Bragg (Mendocino County), Live Oak (Sutter County), Lodi (San Joaquin County), Manteca (San Joaquin County), Montague (Siskiyou County), Porterville (Tulare County), Portola (Plumas County), Rancho Cucamonga (San Bernardino County), Ripon (San Joaquin County), and West Sacramento (Yolo County).
 - **11 Tribes:** Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County), Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Madera County) Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Del Norte County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians (Tuolumne County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County).
 - **12 Special Districts:** Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Groveland Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Mariposa Stanislaus County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), and Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County).

- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** Last year, the Association of California Water Agencies ([AWCA](#)) launched an interactive gallery to showcase the local drought response activities by ACWA members statewide. As the drought stretches into its fifth year in 2016, the [Drought Response Gallery](#) continues to highlight conservation and efficiency projects and program actions in five categories.

In June 2016, ACWA [released](#) a Water Conservation Communications Toolkit to assist water agencies in messaging to customers the transition to a new emergency conservation regulation and the importance of ongoing water conservation.

- **County and Tribal Drought Task Forces:** A total of 16 county and tribal drought task forces continue to coordinate local drought response in 2016. Inland regions counties include: Butte, Colusa, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Tulare, and Tuolumne. Coastal regions counties include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Humboldt, Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou County), San Mateo, Trinidad Tribe (Humboldt County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt and Del Norte County). Southern regions counties include: Orange, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara.

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save Our Water](#)
 California Natural Resources Agency, [California WaterFix](#)
 Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)
 California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought Information](#)
 California Department of Water Resources, [Current Water Conditions](#)
 Department of Fish and Wildlife, [Drought Web Portal](#)
 California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
 State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
 State Water Resources Control Board, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)
 California State Water Project, [Information](#)
 Department of General Services, [Water Conservation Efforts](#)
 State of California Sustainable Buildings, [Water Usage from 2010 to 2015](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Current Conditions throughout the Region
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)
 National Weather Service, [Climate Predictor Center](#)
 USDA Drought Designations by County, [CA County Designations](#)
 USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information, [USDA Programs](#)
 U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance, [Disaster Loans](#)