



February 7, 2022

The California Drought Update is a weekly roundup of conditions, state actions and upcoming developments. It is produced by an interagency team that includes the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Public Health. For the latest on drought, please visit www.drought.ca.gov. For tips and resources for conserving water, please visit www.saveourwater.com.

Current Conditions

- The water year that ended Sept. 30 was the second driest on record. All of California's 58 counties are under a drought emergency proclamation.
- After two dry years, reservoir storage is below 2019 levels, underscoring the need for ongoing water conservation.
- Following substantial rain and snowfall in December, January 2022 has been extremely dry. With very little precipitation on the horizon, the statewide Sierra snowpack has gone from 160 percent of average at the beginning of January to just below average on February 1. December, January and February are typically California's three wettest months.
- Californians are being asked to reduce their water use by 15 percent over 2020 levels to protect water reserves and help maintain critical flows for fish and wildlife wherever possible.
- As of Feb. 7, the state's [voluntary household dry well reporting system](#) received reports of 9 dry wells in the past 30 days.
- The state is providing hauled or bottled water to eight separate small water providers experiencing supply outages in Monterey, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Tulare, Shasta, El Dorado and Los Angeles counties. The providers together serve a population of a little under 3,000 people.

Recent Events and State Actions

Dry January erases snowpack gains from December storms (Feb. 1): DWR conducted the second snow survey of the season at Phillips Station near Echo Summit in the Sierra Nevada. Following a dry January, the manual survey recorded 48.5 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 19 inches, which is 109 percent of average for that location for the date. Statewide, the snowpack is 92 percent of average for this date. Snowmelt during January was minimal but additional storms will be needed to keep snowpack at or above normal levels.



Californians reduced water use by 16.2 percent in December (Feb. 1): Urban water suppliers reported a statewide average savings in water consumption for December 2021 of 16.2 percent compared to December 2020. That puts the cumulative statewide savings rate at 7.4 percent since July, when the Governor called on Californians to voluntarily conserve at least 15 percent. Strong precipitation in December contributed to the state's water savings by reducing the need for outdoor irrigation, a major factor in household water use. Regionally, the month saw a departure in prior months' trends, with the southern part of the state conserving more on average than the north. The North Coast, for instance, usually the leading region in conservation, had its lowest savings to date in December at 8.1 percent. In contrast, the South Coast, the most populous region, had its highest savings to date at 18.4 percent.

Workshop held on drinking water needs assessment (Feb. 2): The Water Board held a public workshop on the second annual SAFER Drinking Water Needs Assessment. Staff proposed changes to indicators used in the Risk and Affordability Assessment for public water systems, introduced a new combined methodology for the Risk Assessment for State Small Water Systems and Domestic Wells, and provided an overview of a cost estimate for Senate Bill 552 requirements. A webinar recording will be available soon on the [program's website page](#).

Bureau of Reclamation awards \$20.5 million to build drought resiliency (Jan. 28): The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has selected 13 projects in five states to receive \$20.5 million in grants to build long-term drought resiliency. The projects will leverage more than \$66.7 million in non-federal funding. In California, funding will go to projects sponsored by Bella Vista Water District (\$2 million), Casitas Municipal Water District (\$2 million), City of Fresno (\$293,450), Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District (\$2 million), North Kern Water Storage District (\$500,000), Rancho California Water District (\$2 million), San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (\$2 million), South Coast Water District (\$2 million), and South San Joaquin Municipal Utility District (\$2 million). Project details can be found on the Bureau's [Drought Response Program webpage](#).

Curtailments adjusted (ongoing): The Water Board lifted curtailments in most watersheds following December's storms, but dry conditions in January and February have led to re-imposition of curtailments in some areas. Curtailments have been suspended in the Russian River and Shasta River watersheds through the end of February. Curtailments are currently suspended in the Scott River through Feb. 11 but flows are dropping rapidly and curtailments may be reimposed in the next few days. Curtailments have been reinstated in a few sub-watersheds of the Delta watershed. It is likely that additional curtailments will be reinstated in the Delta watershed soon if conditions remain dry. Water Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change.

Save Our Water ramping up for next phase (ongoing): After a dry January, and with no storms on the horizon, Save Our Water is preparing new messages and content that focus on engaging Californians with compelling reasons to save water, particularly outdoors, while taking care of trees. Save Our Water also recently launched a monthly newsletter with tips and news. Subscribe [here](#).

Tribal / Local Actions

- **Tribal governments:** Tribal emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Tule River Indian Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Wiyot Tribe.

- **Local government:** Local emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo.
- **Water suppliers:** The following public water suppliers have imposed mandatory water use reductions on customers, according to information voluntarily provided to the Association of California Water Agencies and / or recent announcements. The list likely is not comprehensive:
 - Alameda County Water District – mandatory water use restrictions aimed at reducing water use by 15 percent.
 - Brooktrails Community Services District – usage cap of 9,000 gallons per month, all customers
 - Indian Wells Valley Water District – 20 percent
 - Marin Municipal Water District – 40 percent
 - Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Conservation Improvement District – 40 percent
 - Modesto Irrigation District – irrigation allocation capped at 36 inches per acre
 - Montague Water Conservation District – 95 percent
 - Nevada Irrigation District – 20 percent
 - Reclamation District 1500 – 25 percent
 - Richvale Irrigation District – 50 percent
 - City of Santa Rosa – 20 percent
 - Westlands Water District – no outdoor water use by municipal and industrial customers
 - Zone 7 – 15 percent

The following private water companies have imposed a 15 percent mandatory water use reduction:

- San Jose Water Company, with drought surcharges for excessive water use
- Great Oaks Water Company, with drought surcharges for excessive water use
- California-American Water Company (in the Larkfield and Geyersville districts of Sonoma County, as well as the Los Angeles and San Diego districts of the respective counties, with fines for non-essential water use)
- Cold Springs Water Company in Tuolumne County
- North Gualala Water Company in Sonoma County

Upcoming Decisions / Milestones

Hearing planned on Water Loss Performance Standard Regulation: The Water Board will conduct a public hearing **Feb. 10** on a proposed regulation on water loss performance standards. The public hearing will provide a detailed overview of the proposed regulation, overall framework, timeline, and proposed requirements. The hearing will be preceded by a staff presentation summarizing the proposed regulation, followed by an opportunity for the public to ask questions. While a quorum of the Water Board may be present, the Board will not take formal action at the public hearing. Agenda and information are on the [program's web page](#).

Key Data Points and Resources

- Daily Hydrological & Climate Information summary: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=DLYHYDRO>
- Statewide water conditions: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html
- Daily Reservoir Storage Summary: <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reservoir.html>
- Water Year Forecast and Monthly Distribution: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=B120DIST>
- Monthly water supplier reports on water production and conservation: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/conservation_reporting.html
- Latest groundwater conditions and information: <https://sgmatest.water.ca.gov/CalGWLive/>
- Information on state drought actions and assistance: <https://www.drought.ca.gov>
- Conservation tips and resources for consumers: <https://saveourwater.com/>