

Mandatory Water Use Restrictions

Desert Water Agency Adopts Additional Mandatory Conservation Measures

Historic Drought Requiring Water Agencies to Adopt Tough Actions to Conserve Water

April 21, 2015--As California grapples with a historic drought, the Desert Water Agency (DWA) adopted new mandatory water use restrictions to comply with the State Water Resources Control [Board's](#) (State Water Board) and Governor [Brown's](#) conservation mandates following a public hearing at today's regularly scheduled meeting.

"Despite significant efforts to conserve, this unprecedented drought requires us to do more," said Jim Cioffi, vice president of DWA's Board of Directors. "The state has mandated additional conservation measures, and Desert Water Agency thoughtfully reviewed and enacted additional water use restrictions to comply and increase conservation in the region."

Following today's public hearing, DWA amended the Agency's drought contingency plan through [Resolution 1108](#), and **the following uses of water are now prohibited (or continue to be prohibited):**

- Washing of hardscapes
- Running water to wash vehicles (buckets and stop nozzles on hoses are permitted)
- Filling fountains or other decorative water features (unless necessary for aquatic pets)
- Using potable water outside of newly constructed homes and buildings that is not delivered by drip or micro-spray systems

Irrigation restrictions:

- Outdoor residential irrigation shall be restricted to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, after 7:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m.
- A commercial, industrial or institutional customer may implement an alternative water use reduction plan that achieves reductions in water use equivalent to those expected from the restrictions prescribed herein, if approved in advance by the General Manager.
- Runoff such that water flows onto adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, private and public walkways, roadways, parking lots, or structures is prohibited.
- Irrigating up to 48 hours after measurable rainfall is prohibited.
- The use of potable water to irrigate turf within street medians, and turf within the dedicated right of way on either side of a public street, is prohibited.

Additional restrictions for hotels and restaurants:

- Restaurants may provide water to customers only upon request.
- Operators of hotels and motels shall provide guests with the option of choosing not to have towels and linens laundered daily.

In addition to these mandatory restrictions, DWA has asked customers to refrain from emptying and refilling swimming pools from June 1 through October 31 (unless necessary to address a health or safety emergency).

The State Water Board extended and augmented its emergency drought regulations for statewide mandatory conservation on March 17, which preceded the Governor's Executive Order to reduce statewide water use by 25 percent on April 1. DWA's newly adopted mandatory water use restrictions comply with the State Water Board's emergency regulations and aim to incorporate aspects of the Governor's Executive Order. However, the Agency may have to adopt additional conservation measures to be compliant with the Governor's Executive Order once the final regulatory framework is adopted at the beginning of May.

To achieve the Governor's mandatory statewide 25 percent reduction, the State Water Board's proposed regulations assign different conservation goals to each urban area based on per capita water use. Using a sliding scale for implementation, the assigned conservation goals range from 4 to 36 percent. If adopted, the proposed regulations would force urban areas with the highest per capita water use to achieve a mandatory 36 percent reduction in water use, which includes the Coachella Valley. The proposed regulatory framework is currently undergoing a brief public comment period that ends tomorrow. Read the public comment letters – including DWA's – that have been submitted to date [here](#).

"To achieve a mandatory 36 percent reduction in water use, on top of the 20 percent we've already achieved, Desert Water Agency may have to consider adopting additional mandatory conservation measures, compelling desert residents to rethink their water use," added Cioffi. "We will continue to include the public in the process. We appreciate all of our customers who took the time to attend our public hearing this morning, and we encourage those of you who could not attend or were deterred by the crowd to reach out to us and get your questions answered."

DWA also offers a variety of voluntary water-saving programs and rebates, such as free Smart Irrigation Controllers. The Agency invested \$1 million into the agency's popular turf buy back program and launched a proactive public education campaign to increase customer awareness and drive actions in 2014. To learn more about the Agency's conservation programs, visit <http://www.dwa.org/conservation>.

New: [Resolution 1108](#)

New: [April 21, 2015 Staff Presentation](#)

[April 21, 2015 Staff Report and waste use recommendations](#)

For questions or comments about the mandatory water restrictions, please email [Katie Ruark](#) or [Vicki Petek](#).

The State Water Resources Control Board and Governor Brown have announced new emergency drought restrictions. DWA will discuss and take action upon these at public board meetings in April 2015. For more information on the State actions, please see the links below:

[State Water Board's Emergency Regulation for Urban Water Conservation](#)

[Governor Brown's Executive Order that directs the State Water Board to impose restrictions to achieve an aggregate statewide 25% reduction in urban water use through February 28, 2016](#)

Effective August 5, 2014, DWA has implemented Stage 2 of the Agency's water shortage contingency plan.

DWA's drought contingency plan includes the following water use restrictions which go into effect immediately:

Washing hardscape prohibited at any time

Running water for car washing prohibited (bucket allowed, nozzle allowed for rinsing only)

Commercial nurseries may only water between midnight and 6 a.m.

Parks, golf courses, and schools may only irrigate landscapes between sunset and sunrise

Lawn watering and construction meter use may only occur between 5 p.m. and 10 a.m.

Restaurants may only provide water upon request

Exceptions to these mandates will be made in situations where health and safety concerns exist. Recycled water users are also exempt. One such exemption is restaurants hosing off patios where customers are seated to eat. We will allow cleaning of hardscapes using pressure washers or steam cleaners to protect health and safety. We expect our customers to use water as efficiently as possible under these exemptions.

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Documents:

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[Press release](#)

[Staff Report and Board Documents](#)