



DROUGHT UPDATE

Water Resources & Planning

Public Utilities - Water Committee
December 8, 2021

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BACKGROUND

Past and Current Drought Timeline from 2014-2021:

1. 2014: Governor Brown declares a State of Emergency due to drought
2. July 2014: The State Water Board adopted Resolution No. 2014-0038, adding requirements for monthly reporting of urban water use and prohibiting certain wasteful water use practices
3. Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-40-17, rescinding the drought emergency declaration
4. 2020: Drought conditions return and exacerbated in 2021

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DISCUSSION

1. July 2021 – Governor Newsom declared a drought emergency for several counties (most in northern CA) and issued Executive Order N-10-21, calling for voluntary water reduction of 15% from 2020
2. Oct 9, 2021 – Governor extended drought emergency statewide and further urged water conservation
3. 15% cut to RPU's Oct 2021 customer demand = 955 AF
 - Actual reduction from Oct 2020 was 520 AF or 8%

WHAT DOES THE PROCLAMATION MEAN FOR RIVERSIDE?

1. Voluntary reduction aimed to minimize draws from State Water Project
 - a. Riverside's water supply is 100% local groundwater
2. RPU anticipates sufficient water supply for the next 5-dry years
3. Customers encouraged to use water efficiently and be stewards of local groundwater basin

WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN

1. Currently in Stage One – Normal Water Supply (0% reduction)
 - a. Voluntary
 - b. Best management practices (e.g. irrigate when water least likely to evaporate)
 - c. Outreach encourages efficient water use and promotes water efficiency rebates (e.g. available rebates on weather-based irrigation controllers, high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles)

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

If mandated, Riverside can potentially move forward with one or both of the following options:

1. City Council can trigger Stage Two of Water Shortage Contingency Plan
2. Implement operational changes

WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN – STAGES 1 & 2

Stage	Supply Reduction	Restrictions and Prohibitions
1	0%	Non-ag irrigation limited to 6:00 pm to 10:00 am
1		Graywater and recycled water for irrigation is permitted any day and time
2	15%	Stage 1 measures in effect, but become mandatory
2		Landscape irrigation limited to three days per week
2		Automatic timers shall be adjusted to irrigation time restrictions and eliminate runoff
2		Water appurtenances requiring repair or adjustment shall be corrected within 72 hours of notification by City
2		Construction operations receiving water from a construction meter or water truck shall not use water unnecessarily other than those required by regulatory agencies.

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ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

Consider pursuing legal action against State if mandatory water cutbacks are once again imposed

- Consider: Growing data indicates local groundwater basins are impacted by lower precipitation, reduced imported water, reduction of permeable surfaces.

WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

1. Water conservation during last drought caused unintended impact to health of trees.
2. Consider discussion on how trees can be protected during all stages of mandatory water restrictions.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

1. During last drought, Riverside residents conserved and reduced consumption by 20%.
2. RPU saw a financial impact of \$33 million in lost revenue.
3. A 15% demand cutback is project to cause another financial impact.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

1. RPU's engagement with the statewide drought supports the following City Council Strategic Plan 2025 priorities and goals:
 - a. *Community Well-Being - Goal 2.6.* Strengthen community preparedness for emergencies to ensure effective response and recovery.
 - b. *Environmental Stewardship – Goal 4.2.* Sustainably manage local water resources to maximize reliability and advance water reuse to ensure safe, reliable, and affordable water to our community.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

1. Being engaged with California's statewide drought updates aligns with City Council's Strategic Plan 2025 Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:
 - a. Community Trust
 - b. Equity
 - c. Fiscal Responsibility
 - d. Innovation
 - e. Sustainability & Resiliency

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Public Utilities Water Committee receive an update on the California drought and provide staff direction on future presentations relating to the Water Shortage Contingency Plan.