



UPDATE ON THE STATE DROUGHT AND EMERGENCY DROUGHT REGULATIONS

Riverside Public Utilities

Board of Public Utilities

May 8, 2023

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LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

1. 2019 – Drought conditions return and are further exacerbated in 2021.
2. July 2021 – Governor Newsom declared a drought emergency urging residents to voluntarily reduce water usage by 15%.
3. January 2022 - The SWRCB adopted an emergency regulation prohibiting wasteful water use practices.
4. May 2022 – The SWRCB adopted new emergency drought regulations requiring the implementation of demand reduction actions and prohibiting the use of potable water to irrigate non-functional turf.
5. December 2022 – The SWRCB readopted emergency regulation prohibiting wasteful water use practices.
6. March 2023 – Governor Newsom rescinded the emergency drought regulation requiring the implementation of demand reduction actions.

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BACKGROUND

1. Recent rain and snow have exceeded state's historical peaks but will not make up for the last three years of drought – the driest ever recorded in state history.

2. Some emergency drought regulations remain in place.
 - a. Prohibitions on wasteful water practices
 - b. Irrigating non-functional turf in HOAs and commercial sectors



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PROHIBITIONS ON WASTEFUL WATER PRACTICES

1. Already permanently prohibited by Riverside's Municipal Code
2. Examples:
 - a. Irrigation run-off
 - b. Watering during rain
 - c. Washing hard surfaces with potable water



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LEVEL 2 SHORTAGE AND NON-FUNCTIONAL TURF

1. Implementation of demand reduction actions for a Level 2 (10-20%) shortage - Rescinded March 24, 2023
 - a. Watering between 6pm-10am
 - b. Limit irrigation to 3x/week
 - c. Adjust timers to changing weather patterns
 1. In March 2023, RPU customers reduced their consumption by 31% compared to the same month in 2021 mainly due to wet 2023 month, but the reduction averaged about 10% since June 2022.
2. Prohibition on the use of potable water to irrigate non-functional turf in HOAs and CII
 - a. In effect until June 2023



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MOVING FORWARD

1. 2018 Framework Legislation "Making Conservation a California Way of Life"
 - a. Permanent water efficiency targets for suppliers
 - b. Requirements to assist customers become more efficient water users through efficiency programs, rebates, and best management practices



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STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT



Strategic Priority 4 - 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.

Cross-Cutting Threads



Community Trust



Fiscal Responsibility



Sustainability & Resiliency



Equity



Innovation



RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Public Utilities receive an update on the state drought and emergency drought regulations.

