

State Water Board's Emergency Water Use Regulations

In response to California's drought, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted emergency regulations to prevent wasteful water uses and promote urban water conservation. The emergency regulation took effect Jan. 18 and the prohibitions will be in place for one year unless extended, modified or removed.

ACWA has created the following summary to help member agencies understand and enforce the emergency regulation.



POTABLE WATER PROHIBITIONS IN EFFECT

Under the emergency regulation, the use of potable water for the following applications is prohibited:

- ⊘ Applying water to outdoor landscapes resulting in more than incidental runoff or unintended amounts of runoff (e.g. overspray from sprinklers that escapes the area of intended use)
- ⊘ Washing vehicles without an automatic shutoff nozzle
- ⊘ Washing impervious areas (e.g. sidewalks, driveways, buildings, parking lots or other hard surfaced areas)
- ⊘ Street cleaning or construction site prep
- ⊘ Decorative fountains, lakes, or ponds
- ⊘ Irrigating turf within 48 hours of one fourth of an inch (1/4") of rainfall
- ⊘ Irrigating turf (lawn) on public medians



ENFORCEMENT

In addition to being enforceable by the State Water Board, ACWA member agencies are expected to enforce the regulations which apply to all water users, including individuals, business and public agencies. Water agencies are able to pursue their own enforcement methods and may choose to enforce drought conservation rules from their local Water Shortage Contingency Plans. Enforcements may include warning letters, water audits or fines. The State Water Board is encouraging agencies to provide one or more warnings before imposing monetary penalties.

EXEMPTIONS

The State Water Board has included exemptions when the use of potable water is necessary to address an immediate health and safety need. This may include – but is not limited to – the use of water to control dust, suppress fires or remove animal waste from sidewalks.

View the emergency regulation and a frequently asked questions fact sheet on the State Water Board's website at waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/.