



Statement

Preliminary data show water savings increase for May 2022 compared to May 2020

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SACRAMENTO – As we heard this morning during the State Water Board’s meeting, California continues to experience severe dry conditions and extreme weather as summer officially begins. Many reservoirs throughout the state sit at critically low levels, the Sierra snowpack is essentially gone, and runoff has peaked for the year. Having foreseen this possibility last July, Governor Newsom called on all Californians to voluntarily cut back their water use by 15% in comparison with 2020, but there was a disappointing increase in water consumption in March and April of this year.

However, based on the latest preliminary data, I am hopeful that recent state actions, including regulations passed by the State Water Board to curb water waste and ban non-essential watering, will have an impact. Last month, the Governor directed water suppliers to report their water usage data more frequently to enable us to track water usage closer to real time.

Since then, water agencies covering more than half the state’s population have provided us with preliminary or final data two weeks earlier than required. So far, we are seeing a statewide increase in water savings for May 2022 in comparison to May 2020. There is room for improvement, but also optimism based on these early numbers.

These preliminary numbers don’t fully reflect the impact of the statewide emergency conservation regulation that came into full effect in June. That said, we are not close to where we need to be by any stretch of the imagination. We will have final numbers for the month of May in early July, which will give us a more complete picture of how the state is tracking to our conservation goals. Right now, one of the most important actions we all can take together is saving more water, especially outdoors where we tend to use more during hot summer days.

I want to thank the water suppliers who answered the call for reporting early and those who are doing their part to use water wisely. I encourage water suppliers who have not yet reported to do so as quickly as possible so that we can share more complete, more accurate data on May water savings.

- Joaquin Esquivel, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board

