

Compliance Actions to Support Achievement of the Emergency Regulation for Urban Water Conservation

Beginning in June, all urban water suppliers were required to reduce water use, in keeping with Governor Brown’s April 1 Executive Order that called for an average 25 percent reduction statewide. June reporting data showed that California residents conserved enough water to exceed the Governor’s statewide conservation target, saving an average of 27.3 percent. Some 263 water suppliers, serving nearly 30 million people met or exceeded their individual conservation standard which ranged from 8 percent to 36 percent.

The State Water Resources Control Board’s Office of Enforcement is targeting its compliance efforts on the suppliers that did not meet their June conservation standard. Urban water supplier compliance was classified based upon how far their savings fell below the conservation standard as shown in the table below.

Priority	Description	Number of Suppliers*	Details
1	More than 15% from meeting standard	16	Each Priority 1 supplier received a Notice of Violation and Information Order and met with State Water Board staff to assess the circumstances preventing the supplier from achieving their conservation standard. Some of the 16 suppliers will receive Conservation Orders.
2	5% - 15% from meeting standard	74	Each Priority 2 supplier was sent a Notice of Violation and Information Order on 8/7/15. Priority 2 suppliers were given until 8/19/15 to provide information on water production, water use, and water conservation efforts.
3	1% - 5% from meeting standard	59	Warning letters were sent to Priority 3 suppliers on 8/11/15.
0	Met or within 1% of meeting standard	263	The State Water Board congratulates the 263 suppliers that exceeded, met, or were within one percent of meeting, their conservation standard.

* After the initial categorization, urban water suppliers may have submitted updated water production numbers that may have changed their priority group.

During July and August, Office of Enforcement staff met individually with the water suppliers that were greater than 15 percent below their conservation standard in June to assess the efficacy of their current conservation programs and determine what additional actions are needed to reach each supplier's conservation standard. Some of the suppliers will receive Conservation Orders requiring them to take additional actions to increase water savings. Conservation Orders are tailored to the specific circumstances faced by each water supplier. Examples of the actions required in a Conservation Order include:

- Additional education and outreach
- Further reductions to outdoor irrigation days and times
- Targeted outreach to high volume users
- Additional personnel for enforcement of prohibited water uses
- Allocating funds to fix leaks

In addition, the Office of Enforcement has issued Information Orders to the 74 water suppliers in the Priority 2 group. Information Orders are designed to gather information that the State Water Board can use to assess the adequacy of the conservation programs and whether, and what, additional actions are necessary to reduce water use.

For the water suppliers in the Priority 2 group, enforcement staff will look at the responses to the Information Orders as well as the July conservation data to determine whether further action is needed. Conservation Orders will be issued to water suppliers in both the Priority 1 and 2 groups whose programs have been found inadequate or whose July savings do not show improvement over their June savings.

Information and Conservation Orders were established in the Board's May Emergency Regulation. Parties that receive these orders may request reconsideration of the order by the Board's Executive Director. Violation of either one of these orders is subject to a penalty of up to \$500 per day, separate from any violations of the Emergency Regulation itself. Water suppliers that fail to comply with the Emergency Regulation or with a Conservation or Information Order may also be subject to imposition of a Cease and Desist Order. Violation of a Cease and Desist Order is subject to a penalty of up to \$10,000 per day.

Information and Conservation Orders will be posted on the Enforcement page of the Board's Water Conservation Portal [here](#) as they are issued, as will any notices of draft Cease and Desist Orders issued violation or threatened violation of the Emergency Regulation. The Enforcement page also has links to other correspondence with water suppliers that missed their June 2015 conservation standard.

Why were orders issued after only one month of data?

The hot summer months, when outdoor water use is usually highest, offer the best opportunity for significant conservation savings. Water suppliers that do not meet their conservation standard during the summer months are unlikely to meet their cumulative standard over the nine months the emergency regulation is in effect. For the suppliers whose June savings fell

significantly below their conservation standard, the Conservation Orders will detail the specific additional steps they must immediately take to reduce water use.

How is compliance assessed?

The compliance period for 25 percent statewide conservation began on June 1, 2015 and runs through February 2016. Each month, urban water suppliers report their total potable water production to the State Water Board. To determine if a water supplier is on track for meeting its conservation standard, the State Water Board compares the supplier's reported total production with the supplier's total production for the same month in 2013. For example, June 2015 total production was compared to June 2013 total production.

Beyond June, the State Water Board will track compliance on a cumulative basis through February 2016. Cumulative tracking means that conservation savings will be added together from one month to the next and compared to the amount of water used during the same months in 2013.

Background

In his [April 1 Executive Order](#), Governor Brown mandated a 25 percent water use reduction for cities and towns across California.

On May 5, 2015, the State Water Board adopted an [emergency regulation](#) requiring an immediate 25 percent reduction in overall potable urban water use. The regulation uses a sliding scale for setting conservation standards, so that communities that have already reduced their residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD) through past conservation will have lower mandates than those that have not made such gains since the last major drought.

(This fact sheet was last update Aug. 31, 2015.)