



November 22, 2021

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WEST BASIN ESCALATES WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN TO SHORTAGE LEVEL THREE

District calls on region to step up water saving actions

CARSON, Calif. – At the November 22nd meeting of the West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) Board of Directors, the Board moved to escalate its Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) from shortage level one to level three for its service area representing nearly one million people in 17 cities and unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County.

“West Basin’s action today signifies the urgency to use less water to ensure lasting supplies for our communities, region and state during this drought,” said Board President Harold C. Williams, MSCE, P.E. “The availability of our imported water supplies from Northern California and the Colorado River continue to be extremely limited by a second year of severe drought, with critically dry conditions projected to continue into 2022. Unfortunately, cumulative statewide water use savings for the months of July, August, and September 2021 stands at 3.6% -- significantly short of the 15% reduction target for all Californians. West Basin is confident that our communities can and will continue to make progress saving water.”

On July 26, 2021 the West Basin Board of Directors activated the WSCP, entering into shortage level one. Given recent emergency drought declarations by the Governor and water wholesaler Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, along with the need to proactively ensure water reliability in the midst of worsening conditions, the West Basin Board declared a shortage level three to reflect its resolution to seek immediate increased water savings.

WSCP level three will increase regional drought response actions to include more water use efficiency measures, and expanded outreach and public information to support water savings in the West Basin communities.

West Basin currently offers grass replacement rebates of up to \$5 for every square foot of grass replaced with drought-resilient landscaping, with plans to offer even higher rebate levels to the region’s public agencies.

“Grass replacement rebate amounts have never been higher in our region, so we highly encourage our residents, public agencies, and businesses to take advantage of the funding as soon as possible, while funds are available,” added Williams.

In addition, on Nov.16, West Basin launched its SUPER-CALI-FRUGALISTIC drought campaign, calling on district communities to “Save Water, Save California.” The campaign challenges individuals in the service area to be prudent with their water use to preserve limited supplies for the region and State. The campaign will also offer memorable community outreach experiences like drought kit giveaways that highlight the substantial benefits of West Basin’s water use efficiency programs in the months ahead.

West Basin’s WSCP includes six standard water shortage levels, corresponding to increasingly severe shortage conditions as compared to normal reliability conditions. Each level aligns with specific response actions that West Basin can implement to address and resolve any current or expected supply-demand gaps created by the associated water shortage. At present, West Basin is not implementing mandatory water use reductions or rationing. The 2021 WSCP and a summary of drought actions is available online at www.westbasin.org/drought.

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