



Santa Barbara's Water Outlook Remains Good as City Council Declares Stage Two Water Shortage Alert in Response to Statewide Drought

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The Santa Barbara City Council today declared a Stage Two Water Shortage Alert. This is in response to Governor Newsom's recently issued executive orders declaring a statewide drought emergency and request for California residents to voluntarily reduce their water use by 15 percent. Currently over 95 percent of California is experiencing severe or extreme drought conditions.

With the conservation practices already adopted by residents and businesses, and the City's investment in a diversified water supply, including the activation of City's desalination plant, Santa Barbara's water supply outlook is good, even if extremely dry conditions persist. While Santa Barbara has experienced below-average rainfall, the City's water demands can be met for at least the next two years, even if there is no rainfall during that time. However, in recognition of the severity of drought conditions statewide and in response to Governor Newsom's executive orders calling on all urban water providers to enact a level two water shortage response, Santa Barbara is taking the next step to encourage conservation.

"I'm proud of the investment our community has made in diversifying our water supply for long-term reliability, and in our community members who have made real lifestyle changes to conserve and use water wisely," said Joshua Haggmark, Water Resources Manager. "I'm confident we'll continue to band together to use only what we need, making sure we extend our water resources for whatever lies ahead in the future."

Santa Barbara residents are currently using the same amount of water used in the 1950s, but with nearly double the population, highlighting the impact of water efficiency and increasingly more efficient building codes. The community's water use currently averages 25 percent less than pre-drought water use in 2013. "Our residents and businesses have truly invested in a "conservation as a way of life" approach to water use," Haggmark said. "But now is the time for all of us to do a little more and be part of the water-saving solution for California."

Under the Stage Two measures, community members will be asked to prevent wasteful water use by:

- Using a shut-off nozzle when using a hose or outdoor water faucet, including for vehicle or boat washing,

- Refraining from hosing down hard surfaces such as sidewalks and patios with potable water, unless for preventative maintenance or health and safety,
- Irrigating with an automatic or manually-controlled, in-ground irrigation system only between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., and
- Following the statewide ban on using potable water to irrigate non-functional turfgrass (that is solely ornamental and not regularly used for human recreational purposes or for civic or community events) at commercial, industrial, and institutional sites.

Even with local rainfall totaling at 67 percent of normal this winter, Santa Barbara's diverse water supply can meet demands using a combination of supplies including Lake Cachuma, Gibraltar Reservoir, ocean desalination, groundwater, imported water through the State Water Project, and recycled water. For more information on water supplies, drought, and conservation, visit www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Drought