

Executive Order
by the
Governor of the State of California

WHEREAS Statewide rainfall has been below normal in 2007 and 2008, with many Southern California communities receiving only 20 percent of normal rainfall in 2007, and Northern California this year experiencing the driest spring on record with most communities receiving less than 20 percent of normal rainfall from March through May; and

WHEREAS California is experiencing critically dry water conditions in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River basins and the statewide runoff forecast for 2008 is estimated to be 41 percent below average; and

WHEREAS water storage in many of the state's major reservoirs is far below normal including Lake Oroville, which supplies the State Water Project, at 50 percent of capacity, Lake Shasta at 61 percent of capacity and Folsom Lake at 63 percent of capacity; and

WHEREAS the Colorado River Basin has just experienced a record eight-year drought resulting in current reservoir storage throughout the river system reduced to just over 50 percent of total storage capacity; and

WHEREAS climate change will increasingly impact California's hydrology and is expected to reduce snowpack, alter the timing of runoff and increase the intensity and frequency of droughts in the western United States; and

WHEREAS diversions from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta for the State Water Project (SWP) and federal Central Valley Project (CVP) are being greatly restricted due to various factors including federal court actions to protect fish species, resulting in estimated SWP deliveries of only 35 percent, and CVP deliveries of only 40 percent, of local agencies' requested amounts for 2008; and

WHEREAS dry conditions have created a situation of extreme fire danger in California, and these conditions resulted in devastating fires last year, resulting in proclamations of emergency for the counties of El Dorado, Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and San Diego, with wildfires there causing millions of dollars in damages; and

WHEREAS on May 9, 2008, I signed an Executive Order directing various agencies and departments within my administration to respond to these dry conditions and prepare for another potentially severe wildfire season; and

WHEREAS the current drought conditions are harming urban and rural economies, and the state's overall economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS some communities are restricting new development and mandating water conservation and rationing, and some farmers have idled permanent crops and are not planting seasonal crops this year, because of unreliable or uncertain water supplies; and

WHEREAS, recent supply reductions have jeopardized agricultural production in the San Joaquin Valley; and

WHEREAS it is not possible to predict the duration of present drought conditions; and

WHEREAS while communities throughout the state have worked to significantly improve their drought preparedness, the readiness to cope with current and future drought conditions varies widely; and

WHEREAS immediate water conservation measures are needed this year to address current conditions and prepare for a dry 2009; and

WHEREAS the State of California is committed to enhancing drought response and drought preparedness and to protecting the state's economy and its environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim a condition of statewide drought, and in accordance with the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of California, do hereby issue the following orders to become effective immediately:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) shall take immediate action to address the serious drought conditions and water delivery limitations that currently exist in California, and that are anticipated in the future, by taking the following actions:

1. Expedite existing grant programs for local water districts and agencies for new or ongoing water conservation and water use reduction programs and projects that are capable of timely implementation to ease drought conditions in 2008 or 2009.
2. Facilitate water transfers in 2008 to timely respond to potential emergency water shortages and water quality degradation, and prepare to operate a dry year water purchasing program in 2009.
3. In cooperation with local water agencies and other water-related organizations, conduct an aggressive water conservation and outreach campaign.

4. Immediately convene the Climate Variability Advisory Committee to prioritize and expedite drought-related climate research that will assist in responding to current drought conditions and help prepare for a potentially dry 2009.
5. Provide technical assistance for drought response to local water agencies and districts for improving landscape and agricultural irrigation efficiencies, leak detection and other measures as appropriate.
6. Review the water shortage contingency elements of Urban Water Management Plans and work cooperatively with water suppliers to implement improvements.
7. Coordinate and implement State Water Project operations and water exchanges to alleviate critical impacts to San Joaquin Valley agriculture.
8. Implement additional actions to facilitate drought response, preparedness and promote water conservation in 2008 and 2009, and which will contribute to achieving long term reductions in water use.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DWR and the Department of Public Health (DPH) prioritize processing of loan and grant contracts for water suppliers and public water systems demonstrating drought-related hardships.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DWR and DPH coordinate with the State Office of Emergency Services and local offices of emergency services to identify public water systems at risk of experiencing health and safety impacts due to drought conditions and water delivery limitations, and to mitigate such impacts.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DWR and DPH work with local water districts to evaluate system interconnections among the state's large water purveyors, review the status or availability of mutual aid agreements among those large water purveyors, and work with the parties to those mutual aid agreements to correct any deficiencies that restrict the movement of water in an emergency situation.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DWR coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission to identify investor-owned water utility systems at risk of experiencing health and safety impacts due to drought conditions and water delivery limitations, and to mitigate such impacts.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DWR work with the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Bureau of Reclamation to identify potential federal funding for local water agencies and farmers to facilitate the rapid installation of best available irrigation management and conservation systems.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the CDFA work with county Agricultural Commissioners and others as necessary to identify and gather data on crop losses and other adverse economic impacts caused by the drought and, when necessary, transmit that information to the appropriate federal and state agencies.

IT IS FURTHER STRONGLY ENCOURAGED that local water agencies and districts work cooperatively on the regional and state level to take aggressive, immediate action to reduce water consumption locally and regionally for the remainder of 2008 and prepare for potential worsening water conditions in 2009.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Executive Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given to this Executive Order.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have here unto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this Fourth day of June 2008.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor of California

ATTEST:

DEBRA BOWEN
Secretary of State