

Memorandum

*Serious drought.
Help save water!*

To: ALL EMPLOYEES

Date: July 5, 2016

From: MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Director

Subject: CALTRANS CONTINUING DROUGHT EFFORTS 2016

On May 9th, 2016, California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. issued the latest drought related Executive Order B-37-16, Making Water Conservation in California a Way of Life. The Executive Order can be found here: https://www.gov.ca.gov/docs/5.9.16_Executive_Order.pdf For the fifth consecutive year, dry conditions persist in many areas of the state. Although the severity has been reduced, 90 percent of the state is still in a drought condition. The Executive Order directs the California Department of Water Resources to develop emergency regulations to maintain many of the current prohibitions on potable urban water use.

Governor Brown commended Californians for stepping up last winter and conserving nearly 24 percent of their water use. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) exceeded the 25 percent mandated water reduction for state departments by reducing consumption by 62 percent compared to water use in 2013. All employees that had a part in this accomplishment should be commended. Governor Brown encouraged all Californians to manage irrigation to ensure existing trees remain healthy and do not become a public safety hazard. Information on how to maintain trees while reducing outdoor water use is available at: www.saveourwater.com/trees.

Although droughts are expected to be more frequent and persistent in California due to climate change and warmer winter temperatures, we are positioned to meet these demands. In the last year, Caltrans has made tremendous strides toward conserving water not only during the current drought but also in anticipation of future water shortages. In addition, we met or exceeded all prior restrictions, repaired our irrigation systems, transitioned to smart satellite-based systems as a permanent conservation strategy, and implemented statewide and district specific drought action plans. Caltrans also updated roadside planting guidance to ensure we meet water conservation mandates and trained almost 1,500 staff. These types of long-term changes are what Governor Brown called for in his May Executive Order.

Caltrans will continue to find new ways to use more non-potable water and drought tolerant plants in our right of ways and conserve water as a standard business practice in all our activities.

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As the summer season approaches, Caltrans must remain vigilant in meeting our previous water conservation commitments. To continue increasing the department's exemplary water conservation efforts over the last two years, the following actions are required:

- Implement practices to continue to meet our 50 percent water use reduction goal compared to 2013 usage. New planting added to the state right of way may modify this goal in some districts.
- Implement policies and practices to expedite converting our irrigation systems to non-potable water sources, with a goal of 100 percent conversion to non-potable water by 2036.
- Invest resources in modernizing facilities, equipment and practices that will efficiently use, measure and manage water consumption.
- Fully implement and continuously modify, as needed, Caltrans statewide and district drought action plans.
- Continue to strengthen our data collection systems and improve water use monitoring.

Based on Executive Order B-37-16 that directs the removal of statewide emergency water use restrictions and replacement with water use targets for urban water agencies, the following will now apply to highway construction and landscaping projects:

- For highway construction projects, obtain the status of the current water use restrictions from the local water agency that supplies water in the project area to determine the water conservation category that applies to a project. Based on the water conservation category for the project include required water conservation specifications in the project special provisions. More information on water conservation requirements for highway construction projects is available in Water Conservation Guidance under Miscellaneous Archives at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/des/oe/construction-contract-standards.html>
- Deferred planting work may be scheduled for construction implementation beginning November 2016.
- Deferred mitigation planting work may be rescheduled for construction implementation beginning November 2016.

Proposed planting must comply with the California Model Water Ordinance. Please see "Stormwater Management Plan Implementation and Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) Compliance memo at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/16_la_design/water_conserv/pdf/2013-10-23_LAP-SWMP_Implementation_&_MWELo_Compliance.pdf.

We must continue to be wise stewards of water resources and will continue to do our part to conserve water as we implement even more sustainable transportation practices.