New Drought Restrictions Result in Continued Water Use Efficiency

Western customers still expected to use water wisely during the drought

Riverside, Calif. – Western Municipal Water District’s Board of Director’s today adopted a resolution to implement Stage 3(b) of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan. This action follows May’s State Water Resources Control Board decision to allow water suppliers to self-certify their ability to meet water demands. The adopted plan will affect Western’s retail customers.

As California nears the fifth year of a state-wide drought, several water agencies, including Western, have been working with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), to implement a program for self-certification, based on an individual agency’s available water supply.

The state is still under a drought emergency as mandated by Gov. Brown; however, the SWRCB is changing the conservation requirements due to a wetter hydrology in Northern California. The revisions of the state water use restrictions, combined with the adoption of Western’s resolution to change stages in the shortage contingency plan means some relief for Western customers.

“Western supports the governor and State Water Resources Control Board’s new focus on locally appropriate actions and mandates, which highlights our long-term commitment to using water wisely in our region and strategic investment in local water supply projects,” said Western’s General Manager John Rossi.

Western’s move to Stage 3(b) returns the outdoor water budgets to 100 percent. Western customers can now apply the amount of water that is necessary to maintain a healthy landscape, within their allotted water budget. Previously, in May 2015, Western’s Board adopted Water Shortage Stage 4(b), which reduced all outdoor (landscape) water budgets by 30 percent.

Western will reinstate Tier 3 prices for water use between 100 and 125 percent of budget. In addition to receiving 100 percent of outdoor water budget allocations. Western customers who remain under the 125 percent allocation no longer pay hefty tier 5 pricing. Only customers exceeding the 125 percent of their budget will pay tier 5 costs.

“While customers will receive relief in the increase and are able to use 100 percent of their outdoor water budget, we are still asking for continued water use efficiency in our service area. California continues to face a drought and wasteful water practices are prohibited,” shared Rossi. “We thank our customers for continuing to conserving, and remind them that wise water use is still required.”

In the coming months, Western is working hand-in-hand with customers to educate them on the new water restrictions and programs to assist. Community meetings and presentations will be held during this time. Additionally, Western will reach out to customers through social media, print media, wmwd.com and video.

Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner.