

Allocation Action/Drought/Water Supply Talking Points
(4/8/2015)

Top-Line Messages:

- Metropolitan supports Gov. Jerry Brown's call for statewide urban water use reductions of 25 percent while continuing to take actions that can have lasting benefits in future years.
- Next week, the Metropolitan board will consider limiting deliveries to its member agencies through a water allocation plan that takes into account available water supplies and local conditions.
- The allocation would start July 1 and help further reduce water use and stretch available supplies, especially during the upcoming hot summer months.
- The allocation is just part of a series of actions and tools that will be used by Metropolitan and its 26 member public agencies to help customers reduce water use including:
 - Expanded outreach and media strategy geared at achieving greater consumer awareness and knowledge on how to reduce water use
 - Additional funds to continue regional conservation incentives
 - Partnering with the State to fund new rebate and outreach programs
 - Modifications to the turf removal program to maintain and encourage broad participation while focusing on a long-term transition toward drought tolerant landscapes
 - Monthly tracking of member agency water use and enforcement actions to achieve greater reductions in consumer water use
 - Working with the State on accelerating funding from Proposition 1 for local projects
 - Recommendations on key elements of local water use landscape ordinances, and tiered rate structures that can help achieve long-term changes in water use
- These actions will build on and be supported by Southern California's proven track-record of aggressively implementing water conservation. Potable per capita water use in the region has declined by about 24 percent since 1990.
- Metropolitan and its member agencies have invested \$12 billion over the past 20 years to lower demand through conservation and develop a diverse and flexible water portfolio that includes more local supplies such as groundwater and water recycling.
- To promote even greater conservation at homes and businesses throughout the region, Metropolitan is spending \$100 million this year on rebates and other water-saving incentives to help Southern Californians conserve water inside and outside their homes.
- Working together, water providers, consumers and businesses can weather this drought by making water conservation part of our daily lives. Visit our conservation website, www.bewaterwise.com, (also available in Spanish) to get tips and incentives for saving water.

General Talking Points

California is facing unprecedented drought conditions

- This year follows on the heels of California's hottest year on record in 2014 and the driest year ever recorded in 2013. This year is already seeing some of the warmest and driest months on record, including a record low snowpack in the Sierra Nevada.
- Extreme conditions require us to step up our efforts to conserve and use water more efficiently.
- Metropolitan's deliveries from Northern California through the State Water Project are currently at just 20 percent of its contracted amount. The SWP typically provides about a third of the Southland's water.
- Storage in the district's other supply source—the Colorado River—stands at less than 50 percent of capacity after 15 drought years in the Southwest.
- Governor Brown issued an Executive Order on April 1 that calls for the first-ever statewide mandatory water reductions, prohibits watering of medians with potable water, requires water efficient landscape irrigation in all new residential construction, launches a statewide rebate program for turf removal, other water-saving landscape changes and appliance replacement, and calls for new actions to increase water efficiency from business and agriculture.

Metropolitan's Supply Allocation Plan

- Through its water allocation process, Metropolitan can adjust regional supplies to meet demands and maintain reasonable reserves.
- Under the plan, Metropolitan's member agencies and their retailers are allocated supplies partly based on their dependency on the district's imported supplies, while taking into account other local supply sources and conservation actions.
- While the numbers will vary among agencies based on their local supply conditions, each level of allocation is roughly a 5 percent reduction in wholesale water use on a regional level.
- The adjusted water allocation plan establishes a surcharge for excess water use. If member agencies exceed their allocated supply of water, they will be charged approximately \$1480 - \$2960 per acre foot of additional water demands – roughly four times the normal price of an acre foot of water delivered by Metropolitan. [An acre foot is a water measurement equivalent to the volume of water to fill one square acre one foot deep.]
- Funds collected from the surcharge will go toward the district's water management fund and used for additional conservation and water supplies.
- The allocation plan is one tool Metropolitan will be using to support the Governor's call for a 25% reduction in water use statewide. Other actions include conservation programs, local water supply development, and working with the state on new rebate, outreach and funding initiatives to support drought response activities.

Investments by Metropolitan and its member agencies have helped to ensure reliable water supplies for Southern California.

- The region has helped prepare for drought and growing water needs by investing \$12 billion over the past 20 years to lower demand, expand the region's storage network and increase water reserves in wet years.
- Since 1990, Southern California has added 5 million people while decreasing imported water demands. But this unprecedented drought requires we all do a little bit more.
- Two of Metropolitan's biggest investments were to construct Diamond Valley Lake (DVL) and the Inland Feeder. DVL was built in the late 1990s at a cost of \$2 billion and doubled the region's water storage capacity. The Inland Feeder is 44-mile tunnel pipeline project that allows us to move water and refill DVL rapidly.
- We've added another \$1 billion in treatment plant upgrades to better integrate all qualities of source water and another \$1 billion in other regional storage, local supply and conservation programs.
- Currently Southern California is producing about 400,000 acre feet a year in groundwater cleanup and recycling. We estimate another 800,000 acre feet of demand reduction has been achieved through conservation.
- Without these investments the Southland would have been rationing water at the start of the drought three years ago.

Recent Actions in Response to Drought Conditions

- In February 2014, Metropolitan declared a "Condition 2 – Water Supply Alert" to provide public messaging and to urge local water agencies within the Metropolitan service area to adopt and enact water saving ordinances.
- Metropolitan followed with the creation of the Water Management Fund which set aside \$232 million for financing drought-related projects and actions.
- Recognizing the importance of indoor and outdoor conservation in managing the ongoing drought and in establishing water efficiency for a sustainable future, the Board approved the addition of \$40 million from the Water Management Fund to the conservation budget, increasing Metropolitan's total conservation budget to \$100 million.
- Metropolitan also authorized additional expenditures from the Fund to improve storage withdrawal capabilities and acquire additional dry-year supplies through transfers and exchanges.
- In addition, Metropolitan conducted an enhanced public outreach program including an extensive radio and television advertising campaign that has greatly increased the public awareness of the water supply situation and has encouraged significant conservation savings. This year, up to \$5.5 million will be spent to get the water conservation message out to millions of Southern Californians through a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-generational outreach campaign.
- More than half a million people have visited the bewaterwise website in the past year to get tips and information about water conservation.

We applaud the Governor's call to remove additional turf throughout the state and end the wasteful practice of irrigating ornamental lawns on street medians with potable water.

- Metropolitan increased its annual conservation budget five-fold from \$20 million to \$100 million, doubled the financial incentive for turf removal to \$2 per square foot, and launched two multimedia outreach campaigns to educate the public about water conservation.
- Metropolitan's highly popular turf removal program currently has requests for 100 million square feet, the equivalent of about 60,000 front yards.
- It is time to stop watering turf that serves no function.
- In the month of February 2015 alone, Metropolitan spent \$15 million on its conservation programs, the amount it spent in an entire year prior to the drought.

If we all do a little, it will save a lot of water

- In 1990, the average Southern Californian used about 200 gallons per day. Today, the average is closer to 150 gallons across the region. That's great progress, but right now we need to conserve even more.
- Washing only full loads of dishes and laundry saves 50 gallons of water a week. If every family in the Southland did this, we'd save over 200 million gallons of water every week working together. That's over 10 billion gallons of water a year.
- Outdoors, check your sprinklers for leaks, water in the morning or in the evening when it's cooler. Or better yet, change your thirsty lawn into a yard with California Friendly plants that use a lot less water.
- In addition to supporting short-term actions that save water and stretch available supplies during the drought, Metropolitan also is leading the way in shaping a more sustainable long-term water future and making water conservation a permanent way of life.