



# CMUA Members Respond to Drought Emergency

2013 was the driest year in California since the state started measuring rainfall in 1849. The Sierra snowpack, where the state gets about a third of its water, was 84 percent below average as of January 10. The statewide drought emergency declared by Governor Brown on January 17 will help ensure the efficient transfers of water around the state and heightened public awareness about the critical need to conserve water.

## Local Communities Ramp Up Water Conservation

Each CMUA member agency is responding to the drought in various ways that are right for their community. Local agencies statewide have ongoing conservation programs that continue to yield major water savings, and investments in water infrastructure in Southern California have created reserves that are now being tapped to stretch those regional supplies even further. A recent CMUA poll detailed a number of actions CMUA members are taking in response to the drought:

- Raising public awareness of the need for immediate water conservation through outreach to the media;
- Requesting customers implement 20 percent voluntary water conservation;
- Limiting outdoor watering or offering financial incentives to switch to drought tolerate plants;
- Accelerating recycled water projects.

## Reduced Reservoirs Impact Hydropower Resources and Carbon Goals

CMUA's poll shows that members with hydroelectric power have begun planning for some loss of hydropower resources, while balancing environmental needs.

Nearly 14 percent of all the power generated in California comes from hydropower – a completely carbon free source of energy, according to the California Energy Commission. Hydropower's flexibility is also crucial for the development and integration of future renewable energy sources (33% by 2020).

The power output from wind and solar generation can fluctuate widely and can be challenging to grid operators when renewable energy is a large percentage of the generation portfolio. These resources increase the need for system reserves or firming such as hydroelectric power. Hydroelectric plants must also maintain certain reservoir levels for environmental and other purposes. A severe drought will impact the State's RPS goals as well as carbon reduction goals if hydroelectric plants are not available when needed.

For more information contact CMUA's Director for Water Jennifer West, 916.326.5800

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