



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2021

Contact: Jeanne Mariani-Belding

Cell: 415.231.4638

JBelding@MarinWater.org

Marin Water adopts additional water use restrictions to address drought

With reservoirs at historic lows and worsening drought conditions, Marin Water's Board of Directors unanimously adopted new restrictions Tuesday that limit spray irrigation to two days a week, and drip irrigation to three days a week. Covers for pools and spas will also be required. The board also called for regular reviews of water usage in response to the restrictions and incentive programs, and will consider further action as needed to ensure demand reductions are met.

The new water rules are in addition to restrictions adopted last month that prohibit washing vehicles at home, power washing homes and businesses, washing driveways and sidewalks, and flooding gutters. Watering grass on public medians and using potable water for dust control, sewer flushing and street cleaning are also prohibited. The new water rules also prohibit outdoor watering between the hours of 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. to reduce evaporation, and require shut-off nozzles on hoses. The new rules take effect immediately.

The restrictions come after two consecutive dry years. With only 20 inches of rainfall last year, 2020 marked the second-driest year in 90 years. The district declared a drought in mid-February and launched a public awareness campaign asking customers to conserve water by voluntarily cutting back on irrigation, not washing vehicles, and conserving water indoors. Persistent warm, dry weather lowered Marin Water's reservoir storage capacity to 50 percent—the lowest level in nearly 40 years. Storage levels for this time of year are typically more than 90 percent. In April, the district declared a water shortage emergency and adopted mandatory restrictions.

"Outdoor water use accounts for half of our water use," said Cynthia Koehler, president of Marin Water's board of directors. "So expanding outdoor water use efficiency is not only our largest, but also our most affordable, reservoir of opportunity. We typically see demand double during the summer, and that is largely due to landscape irrigation."



The district's goal is to reduce overall water use by 40 percent districtwide. The district will closely monitor its water supply, and the board will periodically review the restrictions to see if any additional measures are needed.

The board also approved additional incentives and rebates to help customers save water, including increasing its lawn replacement rebate to \$3 per square foot through October 2021, and offering a program that provides free delivery and installation of sheet mulching materials. The district is also offering discounts on Flume flow meters that provide real-time water use information directly to the customer, \$100 rebates for pool covers, and a \$50 rebate for hot water recirculating systems. In addition to the new programs, the district also offers discounts on graywater kits that reuse laundry water for irrigation, and free water-efficient nozzles, showerheads, and faucet aerators for customers. A full list of rebates is available at MarinWater.org/Rebates.

"Partnering with the community is a priority for us," Koehler said. "Marin Water provides a full range of programs and incentives to support all of our customers and to make it easier and affordable to save water now and in the long term."

For more information about the new restrictions and water conservation, visit MarinWater.org/Conserve or email the district at Conservation@MarinWater.org.

###