

August 24, 2021

Dear Neighbors,

**The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has ordered us to reduce our water consumption to the minimum amount of water necessary for human health and safety, and no more than 55 gallons a day per person. We can no longer water grass or garden beds, wash vehicles, fill swimming pools, pressure wash, etc. A list of allowable uses is at the end of this letter. That's the gist; keep reading for the rest of the story.**

Last Saturday (August 21) we asked you to conserve water so that we could stay below the limit set by our Water Rights Permit. Since then, we received a new order from the SWRCB to immediately stop using any water! They did allow that an exception *may* be authorized if our diversion (the technical term for taking water) “is your only source for human health and safety purposes”. We immediately applied for an exception, but to do so we had to certify the following:

- Not more than 55 gallons per person per day will be diverted.
- The diversion is necessary to achieve the minimum amount of water necessary for human health and safety after all other alternate sources of potable water have been used (the official version of what is considered the minimum amount of water necessary for human health and safety is at the end of this email).

- We are operating under the strictest existing conservation regime for our place of use, if such a plan exists for the area or service provider or shall be operating under such regime within 30 days.
- We have either pursued steps to acquire other sources of water, but have not yet been completely successful, or we will pursue steps to identify and secure additional water.

According to state records, our water system serves 150 people. 55 gallons a day per person is 8,250 gallons per day for 150 people, and that is 11% less than the maximum we are normally permitted to use. In terms of units (thousands of gallons), 55 gallons per person corresponds to 11.6 units per quarter for each of our 64 household connections. We must also allow for leaks, so we really need to keep our household rate of consumption below 10 units per quarter.

We need to do this. We are required to submit weekly reports of our water usage. If we don't comply, we can be fined up to \$1,000 per day and there will be a record of each violation. Too many violations and the state hands our water company over to a for-profit (\$\$\$\$\$) company. The good news is we *know* we can do this. In the second quarter of this year, 46 of our 63 households (73%) stayed below our new limit of 10 units, while half of our water was used by the top 9 users. To be clear, nobody in our community broke any rules or is responsible for our current predicament. But what these numbers do show is that if we just follow the new restrictions, we will easily get our water consumption down to where it needs to be. Although we should conserve in every way possible, we are allowed ample water for cooking, toilet flushing, showers,

etc. We can even use a little water to keep our trees alive. However, we can no longer water grass or garden beds, wash vehicles, fill swimming pools, pressure wash, etc.

We are counting on everyone to do their part; we don't want to become the "water police". However, we will be monitoring usage and posting progress reports on our website ([water.acmwc.net](http://water.acmwc.net)). On our website, you can also see the notifications we received from the state, and soon we will have guides for using your water meter to take control of your water usage, how to recycle gray water, and other useful tips. As always, we want to hear from you with your questions, advice, and comments.

Thank you,

The Board of Directors

ACMWC

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The follow is an excerpt from a document posted at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_info/agendas/2021/jun/061521\\_5\\_drftregs.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/agendas/2021/jun/061521_5_drftregs.pdf)

The minimum amount of water necessary for human health and safety is limited to the following:

- Indoor domestic water uses including water for human consumption, cooking, or sanitation purposes. For the purposes of this article, water provided outdoors for human consumption, cooking, or sanitation purposes, including but not limited to facilities for unhoused persons or campgrounds, shall be regarded as indoor domestic water use. As necessary to provide for indoor domestic water use, water diverted for minimum human health and safety needs may include water hauling and bulk water deliveries, so long as the diverter maintains records of such deliveries and complies with the reporting requirements of Section 879, and so long as such provision is consistent with a valid water right.

- Water supplies necessary for energy sources that are critical to basic grid reliability, as identified by the California Independent System Operator, California Public Utilities Commission, California Energy Commission, or a similar energy grid reliability authority.
- Water supplies necessary to prevent tree die-off that would contribute to fire risk to residences, and for maintenance of ponds or other water sources for fire fighting, in addition to water supplies identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection or another appropriate authority as regionally necessary for fire preparedness.
- Water supplies identified by the California Air Resources Board, a local air quality management district, or other appropriate public agency with air quality expertise, as necessary to address critical air quality impacts to protect public health.
- Water supplies necessary to address immediate public health or safety threats, as determined by a public agency with health or safety expertise.
- Other water uses necessary for human health and safety which a state, local, tribal or federal health, environmental, or safety agency has determined are critical to public health and safety or to the basic infrastructure of the state.