



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: June 28, 2022

CATEGORY: Public Hearing

DEPT.: Public Works

TITLE: **Declaration of a Stage 2 Water Shortage
Emergency Condition**

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Mountain View Declaring the Existence of a Stage 2 Water Shortage Emergency Condition and Directing Implementation of Stage 2 Water Demand Reduction Measures, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

The City of Mountain View provides potable and recycled water to the majority of residents and businesses in Mountain View through its municipal water distribution systems. Mountain View's primary water supply (approximately 84%) comes from the San Francisco Regional Water System (Regional Water System), which is operated by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). The City receives approximately 10% of its water from Valley Water and 2% from local groundwater wells. The remaining 4% of Mountain View's water supply is recycled water from the Regional Water Quality Control Plant in Palo Alto. Recycled water is available in Mountain View's North Bayshore Area for irrigation and other nonpotable uses. A small number of properties in Mountain View (approximately 4%) receive water from the California Water Service Company (Cal Water), not from the City.

In response to two years of dry conditions, the City Council declared a Stage 1 Water Shortage Emergency Condition on [November 9, 2021](#), and the City increased outreach to encourage voluntary water conservation.

Existing Water Supply Situation

California is now entering its third consecutive dry year. Due to high temperatures and reduced precipitation, the Statewide snowpack was measured at just 38% of normal on April 1, 2022 and many of the State's largest reservoirs are below average. As of May 31, 2022, SFPUC has filled

74% of its system-wide water storage.¹ Valley Water's local reservoirs are at approximately 24% of maximum capacity.

Recent State and Regional Actions

Several actions have been taken by the State and our regional partners since Mountain View declared a Stage 1 Water Shortage Emergency Condition last fall.

- **California**—On March 28, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-7-22 directing the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to adopt emergency regulations to ban the irrigation of nonfunctional turf at commercial, industrial, and institutional sites and to require urban water agencies to implement the demand reduction measures from Level 2 of their water shortage contingency plans. These regulations were adopted by the State Water Board on May 24, 2022 and became effective in early June.
- **San Francisco**—In response to Executive Order N-7-22, SFPUC declared a Level 2 water shortage emergency on May 24, 2022 and increased the systemwide conservation goal to 11%, effective July 1, 2022. Previously, SFPUC had declared a Level 1 water shortage emergency on November 23, 2021 and set a 10% systemwide conservation goal.
- **Valley Water**—On April 12, 2022, Valley Water adopted a two-day limit on irrigation of ornamental landscaping. Valley Water has been requesting 15% conservation since June 9, 2021.

Mountain View Conservation Savings

Staff has continued to ramp up public outreach in preparation for increased water conservation needs. Examples include public signage, tabling at public events, direct mailings, media releases, and social media posts. This April, the City participated in the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation and placed 12th nationwide for our population size. Mountain View's water conservation savings results between July 2021 and April 2022 are shown below:

- Mountain View reduced its use of Valley Water supplies by 20% (compared to Valley Water's 2019 baseline), conserving 53 million gallons of water.
- Mountain View reduced its use of SFPUC supply by 3% (compared to SFPUC's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 baseline), conserving 69 million gallons of water.

¹ Although SFPUC's largest reservoir, Hetch Hetchy, is full, the Water Bank is below 50% capacity, resulting in 74% systemwide water storage.

- Mountain View reduced its use of all potable water supplies by 7% (compared to the Governor’s 2020 baseline), conserving 178 million gallons of water.

These savings were achieved thanks to the voluntary efforts of our water customers, including residents, businesses, and institutions.

ANALYSIS

In response to the ongoing drought conditions and in compliance with recent State and regional actions, additional measures are necessary to preserve water supplies for future years. Staff recommends declaration of a Stage 2 water shortage emergency condition and implementation of Stage 2 water demand reduction measures.

Stage 2 Water Shortage Measures

Mountain View’s Water Shortage Contingency Plan was prepared in conjunction with the City’s 2020 Urban Water Management Plan and approved by Council on [June 8, 2021](#). Stage 2 of the City’s Water Shortage Contingency Plan is designed to respond to supply shortages between 11% and 25%, which would allow the City to meet the current water conservation targets from our two water wholesalers. During a Stage 2 water shortage, multiple measures are implemented to conserve potable water. The following includes a list of potable water use restrictions and requirements implemented during a Stage 2 water shortage (including those also in effect during normal water supply conditions and Stage 1 water shortages).

Water Use Restrictions—Normal Water Supply Conditions (and Stage 1 Water Shortages)

- Wasting water from broken or defective water systems is prohibited. Repair-time allowed is 10 days.
- Using water in a manner that results in flooding or runoff into the gutter is prohibited.
- Cleaning hard-surfaced areas with a hose is prohibited, unless equipped with a shutoff valve.
- Washing vehicles with a hose is prohibited, unless equipped with a shutoff valve.
- Serving water in restaurants is prohibited, except on request.
- Operating a single-pass cooling system is prohibited.

Water Use Restrictions—Stage 2 Water Shortage Conditions

- Washing paved or hard surfaces is prohibited, except by bucket or for health and safety.
- At-home vehicle washing is prohibited, except by bucket.
- Watering or irrigating landscapes with potable water is prohibited:
 - Between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (except by bucket, hose, or for system repair).
 - More than one to three days per week, as determined by the Public Works Director (except for system repair).
 - More than 15 minutes per day per irrigation station (except for drip irrigation or for system repair).
 - During a rain event.
- Filling decorative water features is prohibited, except to sustain aquatic life.
- Constructing or installing and operating new commercial car washes and commercial laundry systems that do not use water-recirculating technologies is prohibited.
- Using potable water for construction is prohibited when recycled water is available.
- Water-conserving restaurant dishwashing spray valves are required.
- Hotels must offer guests the option to reuse sheets and towels.
- Time allowed to repair leaks is five days.

As an alternative to the Stage 2 restrictions limiting irrigation days and duration, large landscape customers may instead limit irrigation to a reduced percentage of their irrigation budget, as determined by the Public Works Director, based on the severity of the water shortage. In order to meet the City's current conservation goals, it is estimated that large landscapes will need to reduce summer water use by at least 20% below their monthly water budget. These irrigation restrictions do not apply to recycled water users.

To maintain consistency throughout most of Santa Clara County, the following two-day watering schedule is proposed for all Mountain View potable water customers:

- Even addresses—Irrigation allowed Tuesdays and Fridays.
- Odd addresses—Irrigation allowed Mondays and Thursdays.

The Stage 2 water conservation measures allow the City to meet conservation targets, as a whole, and reduces the need for individual customers to monitor their water use and compare to historical use to meet reduction targets. However, if residents were interested in tracking how their water use compares to previous years, they may log into City’s web-based “WaterInsight” program to review historical water-use records (www.WaterInsight.MountainView.gov). City staff enforces water-use restrictions on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on outreach and education and working with customers to resolve issues as they arise. In cases where a violation persists, the City may install a flow restriction device, issue administrative penalties, or discontinue service.

Next Steps

To comply with our wholesaler requests and the State Water Board’s new regulations, staff has already begun increasing public outreach to notify customers of the need for increased conservation. Utility bill inserts encouraging water-use efficiency and promoting a two-day irrigation limit were sent to customers during the May and June billing periods. Additional outreach activities include: a banner posted on the barrier at Castro Street and Evelyn Avenue, ads placed on Mountain View Shuttles, signage posted in City parks, a Citywide postcard to provide drought updates concurrent with our announcement for the annual water-quality report, and a new utility bill insert publicizing the Stage 2 water shortage declaration. Staff will notify relevant businesses of other industry-specific restrictions that may apply to their specific businesses (e.g., restaurants, hotels, large landscape owners) and coordinate with Community Development and other City departments as needed.

FISCAL IMPACT

Declaration of a Stage 2 water shortage emergency condition and implementation of Stage 2 water demand reduction measures will require new expenditures related to public outreach. These costs can be absorbed by the Water Conservation operating budget and Drought Response, Capital Improvement Program, Project 15-54, which have sufficient funds to cover increased public outreach.

Increased water conservation will reduce revenues to the Water and Sewer Funds, which have been considered in the rate recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022-23. Mountain View’s water supply contract with SFPUC includes a minimum-purchase requirement, which has been waived

for Fiscal Years 2021-22 and 2022-23 due to the drought. The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 includes funding to conduct a utility rate study, which will consider drought impacts to the City's Water and Sewer Funds.

CONCLUSION

In response to recent State actions and regional requests for water conservation related to current drought conditions, staff recommends declaration of a Stage 2 water shortage emergency condition, which would impose new restrictions in order to conserve potable water for future years.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not declare a Stage 2 water shortage emergency condition.
2. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting. The public hearing notice was published in the *Daily Post Journal*, and a courtesy notice was published in the *Mountain View Voice*.

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Attachment: 1. Resolution