

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 10, 2021
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Alameda County Water District Declares a Water Shortage Emergency Adopts Ordinance and Implements Water Use Restrictions

Fremont, Calif. – Following two critically dry years and with expected water supply constraints, the Alameda County Water District declared on December 9, a water shortage emergency in Fremont, Newark and Union City and adopted an ordinance with water use restrictions aimed at reducing water use by 15% across the Tri-City area.

Effective immediately and until further notice, customers are asked to eliminate water waste, limit outdoor irrigation while maintaining landscape viability, and minimize other non-essential water use.

Prohibited during the water shortage emergency:

- Runoff from irrigation or watering
- Leaks and breaks within customers' plumbing that are not fixed within 72 hours after the leak is discovered
- Draining and subsequent refilling of swimming pools
- Use of decorative water fountains
- Using hoses without quick-acting positive shutoff nozzles
- Hosing off sidewalks, driveways, etc.
- Irrigation while it is raining, or irrigation that results in ponding or excessive runoff

Lawns and other landscaping may be watered no more than one day every other week, November through February, with additional irrigation days in warmer months. Public parks and sports and playing fields are allowed one extra day of irrigation per week.

Customers are encouraged to maintain and irrigate trees to ensure survival during extended dry periods.

“With record low rainfall and dismal long-range forecasts, we need customers to conserve,” said ACWD Board President John Weed. “Reduced strain on our water supply will help us meet our customers’ needs, and we ask customers to save where they can,” he added. Weed stressed the importance of water use efficiency if the drought is prolonged.

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California is currently under a statewide drought emergency as much of the West braces for a third dry year. The Department of Water Resources has informed its 29 State Water Contractors to expect an unprecedented water allocation of 0% in 2022. ACWD typically receives 40% of its water from the State. ACWD's water supply from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is also impacted by requesting a 10% voluntary reduction. Local supply from the Alameda Creek watershed has been nearly half of normal for two consecutive years.

"This drought is serious. However, together with our customers' commitment to water conservation and ACWD's management of water resources and water supply planning, we can mitigate the severity of the drought's impact on the Tri-City area. Many customers are already efficient, leaving little room to conserve," said ACWD General Manager Ed Stevenson. "Still, some can dial back irrigation and make other changes that help them tighten up non-essential use," he said. Even the simplest measures to conserve water make a difference.

ACWD's goal to reduce water use by 15% is applied across the Tri-City area and does not impose water reductions to individual water accounts. Instead, the ordinance aims to educate customers on conservation though it does include a process to address violations. The three-step progressive process to address violations consists of a written warning, an onsite visit, and the termination of water service for repeated violations.

Exceptions to the ordinance will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Customers can learn about conservation programs, rebates and how to report water waste by visiting acwd.org/drought or calling 510.668.4200.

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