

## What a wet winter!

California has experienced record wet conditions following five consecutive dry years. Locally, Palm Springs has received over four inches of rain and the local mountains have received upwards of 8-10 feet of snow. The precipitation locally is not what has had the biggest effect on the drought. Local water agencies rely on water from the Sierras and reservoirs in Northern California to replace water pumped out of our groundwater basin each year. Statewide, the California snowpack is at an estimated 185% of normal for this time of year.

### Snowpack comparison



In February, the State Water Board decided to extend the drought emergency until May, when they will reassess the impact this wet winter has had on drought conditions. DWA is still asking customers to save 10-13% compared to 2013 so that we can achieve long-term sustainability. DWA customers can water only Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays before 7 a.m. and after 7 p.m. State mandatory water use restrictions prohibit the following:

- Hosing off hardscapes (sidewalk, driveway, etc.)
- Water flowing off of landscaped areas
- Using a hose (without a shut-off nozzle) to wash vehicles
- Irrigating during or within 48 hours after measurable rainfall
- Water waste

## New DWA website

DWA launched a new website that is more user-friendly and easy to navigate. The site offers helpful tips, news and information, as well as a new frequently asked question section. Our website works well on both desktop computers, cell phones and tablets making it more convenient for the public to access information. Check out the new site at [www.dwa.org](http://www.dwa.org).



## Update on lawsuits

### Water rights suit

**Court ruling:** Agua Caliente's claim to a reserved right to groundwater was upheld.

**Case background:** Agua Caliente sued CVWD and DWA in 2013 to establish exclusive rights to an unquantified portion of the groundwater supply in the Coachella Valley. All of the groundwater is currently accessible to the public on an equal basis. Local public water agencies, like DWA, charge only the cost of service to deliver and import water.

The case is divided into three phases. The recent ruling giving Agua Caliente rights to groundwater is part of phase one. The second phase of the trial will determine the Agua Caliente's water quality and storage rights, and the third phase will quantify how much water Agua Caliente has an exclusive right to use.

The Agua Caliente has not indicated what they plan to do with the water.

**Next steps:** DWA and CVWD will petition the Supreme Court to accept an appeal of the phase one decision.

### Taxation suits

**Court ruling:** DWA's case against the Department of Interior (DOI) was dismissed.

**Case background:** In 2011, the DOI issued a regulation that exempted private buildings and investments on land leased from tribes from state or local charges. Riverside County collects taxes for Desert Water Agency, which help pay for the capital costs of the State Water Project (imported water source). There are two cases DWA is involved with surrounding this DOI regulation. The case that was dismissed recently focused on the threat that the DOI rule poses directly to DWA fees and charges.

In 2014, DWA joined the Agua Caliente v. Riverside County lawsuit, which will determine how the DOI rule impacts the County's collection of taxes on leased tribal land (1% tax). In addition to its own charges, DWA gets a portion of the 1% tax levied by the County.

**Next steps:** The Agua Caliente v. Riverside County lawsuit is still pending. DWA is still involved in that case. DWA could wait for demonstrable revenue losses and re-file against the DOI.

Learn more: [www.dwa.org/lawsuits](http://www.dwa.org/lawsuits)

## Emergency preparation

There was a lot of attention to the evacuation of area surrounding Lake Oroville, a State Water Project reservoir. The drought and very wet winter both highlight the need for emergency preparedness. Continued investment in infrastructure both at the local level and for the State Water Project will help prevent emergencies like this from occurring.

DWA works on emergency planning with cities, the fire department, utilities and other stakeholders. We also encourage our customers to be ready for emergencies. Some tips to be prepared:

- Make sure to have a week's supply of bottled water (a gallon per person per day)
- Have an emergency kit and check contents every six months
- Prepare an evacuation plan

## Events

### ONE-PS Annual Picnic & Expo



### Desert Garden Tour



## Want to know more about what we're doing?

The public is always welcome at our board meetings on the first and third Tuesday of every month, beginning at 8 a.m., at DWA Operations Center, 1200 S. Gene Autry Trail, Palm Springs. To see an up-to-date schedule of all our meetings, please visit our website: [www.dwa.org/calendar](http://www.dwa.org/calendar).

## Conservation program update

### Control your sprinklers from your smartphone

DWA launched a flexible smart irrigation controller program. Customers can now choose where to shop (online or in-store) and which model of weather-based controller to install. Simply purchase the device, then fill out an application and submit receipts.

Single-family homes: up to \$150 for the device and \$100 for professional installation

Businesses & HOAs: up to \$2,500 for the device(s) and \$750 for professional installation

Applications are available at our office, in local hardware and irrigation stores and online at [www.dwa.org/controller](http://www.dwa.org/controller). Please call DWA to check funding availability.

### Nix runoff with new nozzles

Get free efficient sprinkler nozzles today and increase your irrigation efficiency up to 30 percent. Visit [FreeSprinklerNozzles.com](http://FreeSprinklerNozzles.com) to determine the number of nozzles needed and print your voucher. Present your voucher as payment at the store listed on the voucher.

Single-family homes are limited to 25 nozzles

Businesses/HOAs are limited to 100 nozzles

Once you've got your nozzles, install them right away to start saving water.

### Remove, replace and rebate!

Funding for turf buy back projects is still available to replace grass with beautiful desert landscaping. Front yards or grass areas visible from the street are eligible. DWA has also expanded the turf program to include common areas in homeowners associations if the HOA has already removed exterior turf. Applications are available at [www.dwa.org/turf](http://www.dwa.org/turf).

## CV Water Counts

CV Water Counts is a collaboration of all five public water agencies serving the Coachella Valley. The group has developed and funded conservation programs, rebates and incentives. Working together through CV Water Counts allows all of the local public agencies to better serve the community and streamline resources. With hard work and cooperation, the Coachella Valley has saved more than 23 billion gallons of water since emergency drought restrictions went into effect in June 2015.

If you haven't visited [CVWaterCounts.com](http://CVWaterCounts.com), now is the time. The site offers a variety of information on water tips, conservation programs and rebates. Customers who aren't sure which water district serves their property can also find a handy map to help locate their water agency.



The site has also introduced new mascot Splash! Look for Splash out in the community and on social media. Splash is on a mission to share ways to save water and remind our community the importance of water conservation rain or shine.

Visit [www.CVWaterCounts.com](http://www.CVWaterCounts.com) and add CV Water Counts on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

## Board of Directors

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## Contact information

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