



Office of the City Manager

February 28, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Christine Daniel, City Manager 
Subject: Drought Response; Water Conservation Measures

At its February 25, 2014 meeting the City Council requested that the City Manager provide a report on the measures proposed and already undertaken by the City to address the drought. The City has already implemented plans to scale back water use, curb leaks, and explore alternative sources of water. Additionally, City staff will be promoting water conservation measures to the general public, including advertising various policies and programs available to the community through the City or other agencies such as EBMUD. A summary of ongoing activity is detailed below.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley will reduce water consumption in its operations by 10 percent to minimize the impact of the ongoing drought. Areas of certain parks and medians will get less water, pipes are being checked for leaks, and the City is exploring the use of reclaimed water for street sweeping and the watering of medians.

The 10 percent reduction mirrors the goal set by EBMUD, which controls water distribution for much of the East Bay, including Berkeley. The City's goals are in addition to the existing community-wide water reductions in Berkeley, where water consumption has [dropped by 20 percent since 2000 and 36 percent since 1975.](#)

Reducing water waste, which residents and businesses can also do, is a priority for the City's water conservation. The City is assessing each building for leaks and looking into cost-effective fixes for some of the more aging infrastructure. One project coinciding with our conservation effort is the replacement of a cooling tower at 1947 Center Street, one of the City's largest buildings. This work will eliminate a leak in that system.

The Parks Recreation and Waterfront Department has surveyed each of the 273 water meters that gauge that department's water use. The department has prioritized water use so that parks and athletic fields will continue to receive water, while still reducing consumption by the 10% target. That reduction has already begun.

The City's Public Works Department is exploring the use of reclaimed water for various uses, such as median watering, and for vacator trucks which unclog storm drains. The department is looking into the most feasible ways to bring reclaimed water into the City. Such efforts will be easier in the future thanks to a recently announced grant given to EBMUD. The project, which EBMUD says will be completed in 2015, will pipe reclaimed water directly into Berkeley. The impact could be substantial. For example, the City's three vacator trucks, which operate an average of six days a week all year long, each use at least 1,600 gallons a day.

City policies and programs encourage community-wide water conservation, including irrigation by way of bathtub, shower and washing machine [graywater](#). The City also enforces new State standards for [high efficiency plumbing fixtures for new construction and alterations](#). The City also encourages people to install [rainwater harvesting](#) systems, which can reduce the impact of the drought for individual households.

EBMUD also provides a variety of water conservation tips and resources at this link: <http://www.ebmud.com/resource-center/water-conservation-resources>. The agency reports that 14 percent of household water use comes from leaks, something households can address for free with the agency's free [Home Survey Kit](#).

Resources:

City of Berkeley Climate Action Plan Water Consumption Analysis

http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_Energy_and_Sustainable_Development/Water%20CAP.pdf

City of Berkeley Graywater Guidelines

http://www.cityofberkeley.info/Planning_and_Development/Energy_and_Sustainable_Development/Graywater_Collection_Systems.aspx

City of Berkeley Plumbing Fixture Replacement Guidelines (PDF)

http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Online_Service_Center/Planning/SB%20407%20COB%20Guideline.pdf

City of Berkeley Rainwater Harvesting Guidelines

http://www.cityofberkeley.info/Planning_and_Development/Energy_and_Sustainable_Development/Rainwater_Harvesting.aspx

EBMUD Water Conservation Resources

<http://www.ebmud.com/resource-center/water-conservation-resources>

EBMUD Home Survey Kit

<http://www.ebmud.com/environment/conservation-and-recycling/watersmart-center/watersmart-home-survey-kit>

Page 3

February 28, 2014

Re: Drought Response; Water Conservation Measures

Free home improvement services for low-income residents:

Community Energy Services Corporation: <http://ebenergy.org/home-repair-program/>

Rebuilding Together: <http://rtebn.org/our-work/>

cc: William Rogers, Deputy City Manager
Andrew Clough, Public Works Director
Eric Angstadt, Planning Director
Ann-Marie Hogan, City Auditor
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager