



New Drought Requirements for Small Water Suppliers



Senate Bill Number 552 (SB 552)

Signed in September 2021, [SB 552](#) introduces and summarizes the new responsibilities and requirements for state and local government (counties and small water suppliers) in preparation of a water shortage event.

Scope of SB 552

Under SB 552, state and local governments will share the responsibility in preparing and acting in the case of a water shortage event. The new law outlines basic steps for small water suppliers, county governments, California Department of Water Resources, and the State Water Board to implement more proactive drought planning and impact prevention and to be better prepared for future water shortage events.

What does SB 552 require from Small Water Suppliers?

SB 552 considers several categories of small water suppliers: those suppliers with 15 to 999 connections, those with 1,000 to 2,999 connections inclusive, and non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems that are schools (see Table 1).

Table 1. Requirements for Small Water Suppliers by Size, per SB 552

Summary of Requirement	Community Water Systems 1,000-2,999 connections	Community Water Systems 15-999 connections	NTNC Water System Schools
Drought Resiliency Measures	Yes	Yes	Yes
Abridged Water Shortage Contingency Plan	Yes	No	Yes
Drought Element added to Emergency Notification or Response Plan	No	Yes	No
Annual reporting of water supply condition information to the State Water Board	Yes	Yes	Yes
Annual water demand reporting to the State Water Board	Yes	Yes	Yes

For more information about the State's Drought Response and Assistance, please visit: drought.ca.gov.

Small Water Suppliers with 15-2,999 connections + NTNC schools

New Annual Reporting Requirements

All small water suppliers (community water systems with 15-2,999 connections) and non-transient non-community water systems that are schools (NTNC schools) must report water supply condition, production, and demand information to the State Board annually.

Implement drought resiliency measures, subject to funding availability

- Detect production well groundwater levels - *January 1, 2023*
- Mutual aid organization membership - *January 1, 2023*
- Continuous operation during power failures - *January 1, 2024*
- Backup source of water supply or a water system intertie - *January 1, 2027*
- Meter each service connection and monitor water loss - *January 1, 2032*
- Meet fire flow requirements - *January 1, 2032*

Water Shortage Contingency Planning

1,000-2,999 connections + NTNC schools: Small water suppliers serving 1,000 to 2,999 service connections and NTNC schools must develop and maintain a Water Shortage Contingency Plan that includes specified drought-planning elements no later than July 1, 2023. Suppliers must prepare an updated plan every five years thereafter. The State Water Board and Department of Water Resources are preparing a template for the water shortage contingency plan for small suppliers by December 31, 2022. Required plan elements include:

- Specified drought planning contacts
- Water shortage levels corresponding to water supply conditions
- Triggering mechanisms to acknowledge water shortage levels
- Response actions to address each of the shortage levels

15-999 connections: Small water suppliers serving 15-999 service connections must incorporate drought planning elements (including, but not limited to, drought-planning contacts and standard water shortage levels) into their Emergency Notification Plan (ENP) or Emergency Response Plan (ERP).

Resources

Tools, updates, events and other resources are available here:

<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/SB552>

Contact: drought@waterboards.ca.gov

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