



FACTS ABOUT THE NEW WATER USE LAWS

By now many of you may have heard about the two new laws passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor related to water use efficiency. Assembly Bill 1668 and Senate Bill 606 work in concert to establish a new regulatory structure that seek to increase water use efficiency in the State. While the details of the bills would take up more space than we have here, they generally mandate local water districts work to establish water budgets for their customers.

Before getting into the details, it is important to note that Rainbow Board of Directors opposed this legislation as it went through the capitol and will do whatever we can to reduce the impact of these new laws on our ratepayers. In general, the Board feels trying to mandate water use from afar is nearly always a very bad idea.

The laws will set a standard for indoor use of 55 gallons per person per day for indoor use only. The State is then going to somehow figure out what the "appropriate" amount of outdoor irrigation will be allowed. We have no idea how they are going to do this – it will take several years to figure this one out. Their goal is to set a water budget for each and every property in the state that is connected to a public water system – a daunting task indeed. This outdoor budget will be based on irrigable acres of land so our larger lots should fare better than some urban areas, but it is unclear how all this will work.

There is no need to panic now. While the law was passed, it does not go into full effect for some time as there is a lot of work to do figuring out how to implement it. There is really nothing for RMWD to enforce now and we have no plans to put any enforcement into place at this time. It is not illegal to take a shower and do your laundry on the same day! We want everyone to use water wisely but use what you need for your family and property.

MORE FUN NEWS FROM SACRAMENTO

If the new water use laws weren't enough, there is another bill working its way through the legislature that will establish a tax on drinking water. Senate Bill 623 will establish a statewide tax on the water you buy from Rainbow that we will be forced to collect and send to Sacramento. While the goal of helping to provide clean drinking water to areas that struggle to afford it is a good one, the Rainbow Board has taken an official position against this bill and has helped fund an outreach campaign intended to let our legislators know this is a really bad idea.

All of the legislators that cover our District are in opposition to the bill – we thank Assembly Member Waldron and Senators Anderson and Bates for their vocal opposition. We don't know what the exact tax amount will be, but it will likely start at a few dollars per month. There is a real concern that once such a tax is established it will be ratcheted up from time to time.

If you want more information, please visit www.watertaxfacts.org.

EASEMENT ASSESSMENT



Rainbow Municipal Water District has roughly 1700 easements. These easements, otherwise known as a “right-of-way” are essential to the District’s operations and maintenance of its systems and access to infrastructure within these easements.

The District’s ongoing measures of monitoring and maintaining these easements is vital to making sure material interference, such as trees, shrubs, debris, and sometimes structures are removed from easements. When these easements are obstructed it hinders the District’s ability to access our pipelines and facilitate efficient operations of our water conveyance system. Tree roots can also damage pipelines.

District staff is regularly working with customers whose property has existing District easements to make sure they remain clear and accessible. If you have any questions regarding easements please feel free to contact the District’s Right-of-Way and Facilities Coordinator, Kim Brown, at 760-728-1178.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

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UPCOMING BOARD ELECTIONS FOR DIVISIONS 3 AND 4

The District is governed by a five-member board, with each director elected to represent one of five geographic areas. The term for two of its five divisions will expire in December 2018. Directors are elected officials representing each of RMWD’s five divisions. Directors are elected by voters in the November general election in even-numbered years and serve overlapping four-year terms.

The Board establishes policy on the District’s mission, goals and objectives. It represents the public in deciding issues related to water supply, reviews staff recommendations, and monitors the implementation of its policies. The Board also adopts policies and procedures to be implemented, followed, and enforced by the District.

Interested persons who have the time to commit to serving on the District Board of Directors may contact Dawn Washburn, Executive Assistant and Board Secretary, at (760) 728-1178 Ext. 129 to find out if they live in the applicable Division area or to request additional information.

IRRIGATION CHECKUP

Summer is fast approaching which means it’s time to do a check-up on your irrigation systems. As the weather conditions move from our traditional “May Grey” and “June Gloom” into our hot and dry Santa Ana summer conditions it results in increased watering periods.

We suggest an irrigation check-up to ensure your water use efficiency efforts are not diminished due to undetected irrigation breaks or leaks by making sure to adjust your timers and regularly check your irrigation lines and monitor your water consumption.