

California Drought Forum

Drought Impacts on Small Water Systems

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About National Rural Water Association

- NRWA was Formed in 1976- California Rural Water Association is an affiliate of NRWA
- It has 31,000 members with the collective membership of all the state associations
- It is an advocate for rural and small systems, including maintaining legislative and regulatory staff in Washington D.C.
- The efforts of NRWA ensure that funding resources are available to rural and small water utilities



About CRWA

- Incorporated in 1990 501 (c) 6 non-profit
- Currently has 1127 member systems
- A California affiliate of NRWA, CRWA is dedicated to providing on-site technical assistance and training to rural water and wastewater systems.
- CRWA is funded through state and federal sources
 - CRWA is approved as an Authorized Provider by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) including State CDPH contact hour provider.
 - We provide fee-based training and free trainings throughout the state
- CRWA assists systems with:
 - Developing a new rate schedule
 - Operator/Management certification training
 - Understanding government regulations
 - Preparing Consumer Confidence Reports (CCR)



How does the drought impact small water systems?

- 30% of water systems use groundwater
 - Larger portion of small, rural systems are on groundwater
 - Hard to connect reservoir levels to groundwater
 - Water quality issues
- Small systems on surface water have less usage
 - Smaller water need leads to feelings of being unfairly targeted
 - Funding not available for alternative sources

Information Dissemination

- Lack of Information
 - Drought Conditions
 - State Response and Assistance
- Media Support
 - Local v. Regional media
- Drought Indicators/Triggers

Infrastructure

- Infrastructure is a major challenge to maintain for small systems
 - Aging infrastructure and inefficient wells and pumps require more water
 - Leak detection is costly and labor intensive
 - Lack of metering
 - Incomplete records of water usage
 - Unaccounted for water losses

Water Conservation Programs

- Education and conservation programs are costly and labor intensive
- Greater participation by shareholders makes mandating and regulations difficult to pass
- Enforcement options are limited in rural areas
- Budget constraints limit rebate, cash back, and leak detection programs
- Lack of metering prevents mandatory restrictions

Budget Constraints

- Large portion of small systems working with limited budgets
 - Fewer customers within a “community”
- Revenue drops are main concern for water conservation
- Prop 218 requires water conservation rate planning
 - Rate changes do not occur on a regular basis
 - Community make-up often makes it difficult to raise rates or add fees/surcharges

Contacts

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