

California Department of Water Resources

News for Immediate Release

October 18, 2002

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**Workshop on Orange County Water Conditions
and Drought Preparedness**

FOUNTAIN VALLEY-The Department of Water Resources and the Orange County Water District are holding a public workshop from 9 a.m. to noon on October 24, 2002, to summarize current water conditions and preparations for the possibility that 2003 may be a dry year. The workshop will be held at OCWD, 10500 Ellis Avenue in Fountain Valley. Topics to be covered include the weather outlook, the status of local groundwater resources, and potential water supply conditions if next year is dry.

Water years 2001 and 2002 were both classed as dry. Water year 2002 runoff in key Sierra Nevada watersheds, the source of part of Southern California's imported water supplies, ranged from 45 percent to 80 percent of average. The Colorado River Basin, the source of the region's remaining imported supplies, is experiencing sustained drought conditions, with the Governors of five of the seven Basin States having declared drought emergencies or requested federal designation as disaster areas. The river basin's reservoir storage is only about 62 percent of capacity.

Southern California precipitation was substantially below normal in 2002, reaching record or near-record lows in many areas. However, customers of most large urban water agencies experienced normal water supplies due to the combined availability of imported water sources and local storage in major groundwater basins. Water shortages were confined to isolated small communities in inland Southern California relying on fractured rock groundwater sources.

For background on droughts and drought preparedness, see:

<http://watersupplyconditions.water.ca.gov/>.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

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