

# Water Conservation Programs

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*The Department of Water Resources maintains several conservation programs to provide assistance or funding to water suppliers, agencies, districts, and users. Below is a description of each program.*

**Urban Water Management Planning** – Water suppliers that serve more than 3,000 customers, or provide more than 3,000 acre feet of water per year, are required to submit water management plans to DWR per the 1983 Urban Water Management Planning Act. Its intent is to actively pursue water use efficiency. DWR staff help urban water suppliers with preparing plans, implementing water conservation programs, and understanding the requirements of the Act.

**Drought Planning** – During the fall of 2007 DWR released an updated draft Urban Drought Guidebook and conducted a series of workshops statewide to help water agencies plan for possible drought conditions. Following the workshops, DWR made additional improvements to the guidebook and published the final version on the web. This guidebook outlines the essential steps local agencies can take to prepare for, and cope with, drought conditions. The Urban Drought Guidebook can be accessed at: <http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/docs/UrbanDroughtGuide.pdf>

**Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance** – The Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance was developed in 1992 to ensure the best design and efficiency for outdoor watering on newly constructed landscaping projects. This model ordinance is available to local agencies who may adopt it as their own. The model ordinance addresses topics including landscape design, irrigation system design, and proper maintenance. DWR is currently updating the ordinance through a public participation process. The law requires DWR to adopt an updated model ordinance by 2009, and agencies must adopt the ordinance or equivalent standards by 2010.

**Agricultural Water Use Program** – DWR promotes irrigation practices that result in water use efficiency by supporting workshops on the latest irrigation technologies. DWR partners with other agencies, growers, and colleges and universities to develop innovative water efficiency projects. DWR also supports the work of the Agricultural Water Management Council, helping irrigation districts to prepare and implement good water management plans.

**CIMIS** – The California Irrigation Management Information System is a network of more than 120 automated weather stations in the state of California. CIMIS was developed in 1982 by DWR and UC Davis to assist California's irrigators manage their water resources efficiently. Besides saving water, efficient use of water resources saves energy and money. The data collected at these stations is available on the DWR website to the public free of charge. Growers were the initial users, and are still the largest group, accessing the data for the purpose of irrigation scheduling. Over the years, registered users have grown to include educators, planners, homeowners associations and more.

**Financial Assistance** – DWR provides financial assistance for urban and agricultural water efficiency projects. Priority is given to projects that achieve multiple benefits such as reducing losses, making water available for irrigation or instream flow during dry periods, improving water quality, decreasing diversion impacts, and improving water supply reliability. DWR has released its Draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) for the 2008 Water Use Efficiency Program. This grant program implements Chapter 7(g) of Proposition 50, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002. DWR also supports the work of the Agricultural Water Management Council, helping irrigation districts to prepare and implement good water management plans.

The Draft PSP is available online at: <http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/finance/index.cfm>. Cities, counties, joint power authorities, public water districts, tribes, non-profit organizations (including watershed management groups), other political subdivisions of the State, regulated investor-owned utilities, incorporated mutual water companies, universities and colleges, and State and federal agencies are eligible applicants and are encouraged to apply.