



March 24, 2017

Contact:

Ted Thomas, Department of Water Resources
(916) 653-9712 ted.thomas@water.ca.gov

Doug Carlson, Department of Water Resources
(916) 653-5114 doug.carlson@water.ca.gov

Final Sign-Up Deadline Set for East Porterville Homeowners Who Want a Permanent Water Connection

City of Porterville Will Host March 31 Event

SACRAMENTO – East Porterville homeowners eligible for a cost-free connection to a new sustainable water supply must sign up for the service by March 31, 2017 or miss this final opportunity to do so. After this date, no additional sign-ups will be accepted for the project. This final sign-up to meet the deadline will be hosted by City of Porterville Community Development Manager Julie Phillips from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Drought Resource Center, 185 South Leggett Street in East Porterville. All eligible home owners are urged to take advantage of this unique opportunity.

Hundreds of homeowners whose wells went dry during California's five-year drought are eligible for the project, which is financed by the State of California to end East Porterville's drought emergency. By completing a three-step sign-up process, homeowners can avoid a connection cost of up to \$10,000 or more.

To be connected to the City of Porterville's water distribution system, property owners must sign a consent form and a contract called an extraterritorial service agreement (ESA) and must open a utility account with the City of Porterville. The actual timing to connect to the system will depend on the schedule to lay new distribution lines and complete additional infrastructure. The project's first connection to an East Porterville home with existing water lines was made on August 19, 2016.

Department of Water Resources (DWR) Project Manager Steve Doe said approximately 300 East Porterville properties are eligible for Phase 1 of the project, which began last summer. Of that number, 290 have been connected to the distribution system. Those remaining in Phase 1 should be connected by the end of this month.

An additional 765 homes are eligible to be connected to new distribution lines during Phase 2. Of that number, about 290 homeowners have not signed up for Phase 2 and have until March 31, 2017 to do so. Of the eligible residents, 67 have said they do not wish to participate in the program. Home connections for Phase 2 are scheduled to begin in June 2017.

The East Porterville Water Supply Project is a joint effort by three State agencies – DWR, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services – and the governments of Tulare County and the City of Porterville. Non-profit organizations participating on the project are the

Community Water Center, Self Help Enterprises, Community Services Employment Training and the Porterville Area Coordinating Council.

Residents of East Porterville, an unincorporated area in Tulare County, have been relying on deliveries of bottled water and non-potable water to large temporary tanks installed on their properties. This unsustainable enterprise has been funded by the State at a monthly cost of more than \$650,000.

DWR and SWRCB are jointly leading the effort to connect East Porterville residents with the City of Porterville's municipal water supply as a long-term solution to the current drought emergency in East Porterville (see Feasibility Study linked below from the project's website). SWRCB worked with local organizations and a community group, East Porterville for Water Justice, on a series of meetings to inform the community and get feedback about the project.

Eligible East Porterville residents who participate in the project by agreeing to have their property eventually annexed to the City of Porterville will bear none of the connection costs. Once connected, the residents' State-funded water deliveries will end, the temporary water tanks will be removed from their properties and their water wells will be capped. Property owners will receive a monthly bill for their City of Porterville water service.

Additional information can be found at [DWR's web page devoted to the project](#).

###

