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Water Resources Management in the Sacramento Valley: A Regulatory Proposal for Effective Water Measurement

Legislative Mandate - Measurement

Paragraph 10608.48(i)(1) of SBx7-7 states:

The department shall adopt regulations that provide for a range of options that agricultural water suppliers may use or implement to comply with the measurement requirement in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b).

Agricultural water suppliers are deemed to be in compliance with the legislation if they have a scheduled process or have completed the implementation of programs that meet the following criteria:

- (1) *Measure the volume of water delivered to customers with sufficient accuracy to comply with subdivision (a) of Section 531.10 [summarizing aggregated farm-gate delivery data] and to implement paragraph (2).*
- (2) *Adopt a pricing structure for water customers based at least in part on quantity delivered.*

Proposed Regulation

(1) To comply with the 531.10 reporting requirement as required in AB1404, agricultural water suppliers, not excluded under Section 10853 of SBX7-7, shall report aggregated farm-gate deliveries to the Department using devices on individual farm-gates capable of ± 15 percent accuracy in a laboratory setting, or using devices on laterals, which aggregate individual farm-gates, capable of ± 5 percent accuracy in a laboratory setting. All devices shall be maintained in a manner consistent with manufacturer recommendations and best professional practices.

(2) To comply with adopting a pricing structure for water customers based at least in part on quantity delivered, agricultural water suppliers, not excluded under Section 10853, shall measure water delivered utilizing one of the following:

(a) Lateral Measurement. Devices installed to comply with this section shall be capable of ± 5 percent accuracy in a laboratory setting and shall be maintained in a manner consistent with manufacturer recommendations and best professional practices. Lateral measurement and volumetric use shall be apportioned to customers as determined by the agricultural water supplier.

(b) Existing farm gates. Existing in-place devices shall be capable of ± 15 percent accuracy in a laboratory setting and shall be maintained in a manner consistent with manufacturer recommendations and best professional practices.

(c) New farm gates. Any new devices installed to comply with this section shall be capable of ± 10 percent accuracy in a laboratory setting and shall be maintained in a manner consistent with manufacturer recommendations and best professional practices.

The location of measurement shall be at the farm gate unless a supplier includes in its Agricultural Water Management Plan pursuant to Section 10820 a plan to demonstrate that farm

gate measurement is not technically or financially feasible as a long-term measurement means and/or that measurements taken at other locations in the water distribution system will support implementation of aggregated farm delivery measurement and adoption of a water pricing structure based at least in part on volume delivered.

Agricultural water suppliers that cannot utilize farm gate level measurement by the date set forth in Section 10608.48(a) shall use lateral measurement and apportionment to customers in accordance with Proposition 218 rates and pricing requirements as required by Article XIID of the California Constitution. Where best professional practices allow, agricultural water suppliers shall migrate from lateral level measurement to turnout level measurement.

(3) Agricultural water suppliers who are Central Valley Project contractors and in compliance with USBR water conservation plans shall be deemed to comply with these provisions.

Definitions

"Measurement standard" is defined as a manufacturer's accuracy rating for proprietary devices or a laboratory accuracy by an independent testing and certifying entity/laboratory or verified by irrigation specialists, a registered professional engineer, or by water supplier's water conservation coordinator. This measurement standard shall be fully documented in the Water Supplier's Agricultural Water Management Plans.

"Lateral" is defined as

AB1404 Form Changes

1. Delete optional questions,
2. Insert Reporting requirements, i.e. acreage limits for reporting, etc.
3. Change Important Note below to a disclaimer.

Disclaimer: Agricultural water supplier's total water use will always be different than Farm-Gate deliveries since measurement at these points do not account for other water management practices such as groundwater recharge/conjunctive use, conveyance losses, water transfers, water delivered for environmental purposes, reuse, wheeling to other agencies, urban use, recreational uses, rainfall, and spills entering or leaving the agency's service area, etc. Farm-gate delivery information should not be used to quantify agricultural water use efficiency pursuant to Section 10608.64.