



AB 2175 and Water Use Efficiency

California has tremendous opportunity to transform water use practices and reclaim a leadership role in water conservation. Growing population, local and regional water shortages, climate change, and the need to protect California's fish and wildlife make it imperative that the State manage its water resources as efficiently as possible. In addition to helping existing water supplies go further, investments in water conservation also help to:

- Reduce dependence on water diversions from severely stressed ecosystems;
- Reduce dependence on imported water supplies that are at vulnerable to seismic events, flooding and climate change;
- Reduce energy use associated with water delivery, treatment and use
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, helping to reach California's climate change and greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals;
- Increase local water self-reliance; and
- Improve water quality by reducing polluted urban and agricultural runoff.

California has already achieved a great deal in the area of water conservation: over the past decade local agencies from across the state have invested in programs to help reduce water use by hundreds of thousands of acre-feet per year. However, much remains to be done. Improvements in technology and management practices offer the potential for increasing water conservation in California over time, better enabling California to meet its water supply needs for urban, agricultural, and environmental water uses.

The Department of Water Resource's California Water Plan (Bulletin 160-05) projects that, in addition to current conservation efforts, expanded urban water conservation has the potential to reduce water demand by between 2 and 3 million acre feet per year by the year 2030 through feasible and cost-effective measures. Bulletin 160-05 also projects that agricultural water conservation has the potential to provide up to 1 million acre feet per year by 2030 in additional water savings.

Recently the governor called for a 20 percent reduction in per-capita water use in California and indicated that he welcomed the introduction of legislation to achieve this goal.

Proposed Water Conservation Legislation

Assembly Members John Laird and Mike Feuer have proposed legislation, AB 2175, which seeks to ensure that California manages its water resources as efficiently as possible, thereby stretching state and local water and energy supplies, reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, reducing costs, and protecting the Bay/Delta and other aquatic ecosystems.

This legislation will build upon the recently enacted AB 1420 by establishing a statewide target for water conservation, and encouraging the development of new technologies and investments necessary to meet that target. The bill will address both urban and agricultural water use and will require the department to implement a plan of action, including funding, sufficient to fill the gap if the locally cost effective conservation measures do not meet the statewide target.