



NEWS RELEASE

Mammoth Community Water District
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MCWD Increases Water Use Restrictions in Response to Worsened Drought Conditions

Mammoth Pass snowpack 98 percent below normal conditions; District Expects to Rely Fully on Groundwater Wells to Meet Customer Needs

Mammoth Lakes, CA - The Mammoth Community Water District's (MCWD) Board of Directors voted to raise the District's water shortage conditions from Level 2 to Level 3 at a special meeting on April 1st. The Level 3 restrictions will go in to effect on April 10th. In addition to the Level 3 irrigation restrictions, the District is also urging customers to reduce indoor water use by 30 percent. The meeting was convened following the mechanical failure of two of the Water District's groundwater production wells and a record low snowpack water content measurement on Mammoth Pass, which found that conditions were 98 percent below normal conditions.

The MCWD Board's decision to increase the level of water restrictions coincided with Governor Jerry Brown's announcement of first ever statewide mandatory water restrictions calling for a 25 percent reduction in water use. The Governor's proclamation includes specific reduction measures, such as prohibiting irrigation of public street medians, replacing lawns and non-water efficient fixtures, and numerous additional requirements.

"This is clearly a call to action to make the most efficient use of our water supplies during this severe drought. Our intent in implementing Level 3 restrictions is to stretch out our resources and maintain a reliable water supply until we see a significant improvement in our water situation," said MCWD General Manager Pat Hayes. "Reducing our water use is a partnership, and we urge MCWD customers to visit our website and take advantage of our water-efficient fixture rebate program and landscape classes."

Increasing the District's water use restrictions to Level 3 will require increased conservation measures that will aid MCWD in achieving the Governor's call for mandatory reductions. However, the level of water shortage in the Mammoth area has reached an extreme level, as illustrated by a March 30 LADWP report finding only 1.0 inch of water on Mammoth Pass. This measurement represents the lowest April 1st reading ever recorded since 1931 and is just 2 percent of average conditions.

"MCWD relies on the area's surface and ground water to provide our community with drinking water, but the recent reports showing record low water content, combined with the mechanical failure of two groundwater production wells, have placed increased strain on the District. It is likely that we will need to rely solely on the water produced by our groundwater wells this year," Hayes added.

During normal conditions, surface water provides about half of the water supplied to customers. But, due to drought conditions, MCWD has been forced to depend heavily on groundwater sources, which provided 94 percent of the water last month.

“Our groundwater wells have been a crucial safety net as surface water supplies ran short during the drought, allowing us to continue to meet the supply needs of our region. However, with the recent well failures and the likely reality of sole reliance on groundwater in the months ahead, it’s more important than ever that we focus on conservation,” Hayes stated.

Under Level 3 restrictions, irrigation will only be allowed two days a week during the hours of 10 pm to 9 am and golf courses, schools and public parks are required to develop conservation plans. MCWD is also relying on all customers to achieve indoor savings by carefully monitoring and reducing their water use. Dropping demand by 30 percent under Level 3 Water Shortage Conditions will allow MCWD to ensure a reliable supply to the Mammoth Lakes community through the high water demand irrigation season.

Under the increased restrictions, MCWD urges all customers to consider what they can do to increase conservation measures. MCWD is also incentivizing customers to save water by offering a rebate program for indoor and outdoor water fixtures, providing free efficient showerheads and actively engaging with irrigation customers to increase landscape irrigation efficiency.

More information on water conservation are available from the MCWD website, www.mcwd.dst.ca.us.

About Mammoth Community Water District

MCWD provides water and wastewater utility service to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and surrounding areas. MCWD strives to provide reliable, affordable utility service to our customers and to conduct our operations in a manner reflecting our stewardship role. We encourage our customers to practice responsible use of our limited water resources, and to take advantage of the information and services available to support this goal.

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