



# California Association of Mutual Water Companies

*CalMutuals: The Voice of Small Water Systems*

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## CalMutuals Monthly Newsletter

### June 2015

#### State Water Board Releases May Water Use Data

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) released water use data for the month of May. The data revealed that statewide residential water use overall declined by 28.9 percent - even higher than the Governor's 25 percent reduction mandate.



#### The following points were highlighted:

- The amount of water saved by the State's large urban water suppliers increased from 13.6 percent in April to approximately 28.9 percent in May, in same-month water use comparisons of 2015 to 2013. The year 2013 serves as the baseline for determining water savings statewide.
- The cumulative statewide percent reduction for June 2014-May 2015 (12 months) is 11 percent.
- The statewide residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD) for May 2015 was 87.5 gallons, a decrease compared to the April 2015 statewide average R-GPCD of 90.5 gallons.
- Between June 2014 and May 2015, approximately 237.3 billion gallons (728,136 acre-feet) of water were saved, as compared to the same time period for the year prior. This is enough water to supply approximately 2.38 million Californians for one year.

To review drought report cards for California's urban water districts, [click here](#).

For a complete list of water conservation data by supplier, [click here](#).

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## AB 1077 Successfully Amended to Remove Mandatory Requirements and Avoid Inclusion of Brown Act Provisions

As referenced in April's newsletter, the Association learned earlier this year of hostile legislation. AB 1077 would require that all mutual water companies allow any eligible person that was unable to provide at least 24-hour notice to attend a board meeting, the ability to participate by telephone or computer.



In early April, CalMutuals' Board of Directors and Executive Director Adán Ortega met with the author of the legislation, Assemblyman Chris Holden and his staff, in Sacramento to express concerns regarding the bill. The discussion centered around the fact that some mutual water companies have limited technological capabilities and the inability to monitor or verify who other than shareholders, via technology, would have access to information discussed during the meeting. Following our discussions with Assemblyman Holden, the bill was amended to include permissive language – allowing, but not requiring, a mutual water company to host its board meetings via technological means such as a telephone or computer, if unable to meet in person.

Unfortunately, in May the bill was amended by the Assembly Local Government Committee with its staff pushing for mandatory provisions that Assemblyman Holden and CalMutuals opposed. **Even worse, in early June when the bill was considered by the Senate Governance and Finance Committee, the committee staff analysis recommended full inclusion of the Brown Act.** In response to unacceptable amendments that were being recommended, CalMutuals Executive Director Ortega and General Counsel Jim Ciampa retruned to Sacramento to meet with the Committee's Chairman Senator Robert Hertzberg who agreed to avoid the Brown Act requirement advocated by the Committee's staff.

**The determined and persistent response by the Association resulted in the elimination of the bill's mandatory requirement language and did not include the Brown Act provisions as had been recommended.**

The bill passed the Senate Governance and Finance Committee on June 17th and is now headed to the Senate Floor.

For questions or to learn more, please contact Denise Peralta Gailey at (714) 449-3397 or via e-mail at [Denise@CalMutuals.org](mailto:Denise@CalMutuals.org).

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## July 9th Workshop on Drought Water System Consolidation

CalMutuals will host a two hour workshop on Thursday, July 9th at Oildale Mutual Water Company in Bakersfield.

**WORKSHOP**

**TOPIC:** Trailer Bill, [825 Drought Water System Consolidation](#)

Governor Brown signed Budget Trailer Bill 825 which grants the State Water Board the authority to mandate the consolidation of a public water system that fails to supply safe drinking water. This comes as part of a broader effort to help small systems comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act.

This workshop will discuss the trailer bill and possible funding opportunities for public water systems that choose to voluntarily consolidate.

**SPEAKER:** Phoebe Seaton, Leadership Counsel

**DATE:** Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>

**TIME:** 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**LOCATION:** Oildale Mutual Water Company  
2836 McCray Street, Bakersfield, CA 93308

**COST:** \$15 for Members / \$30 for Non-Members (For payment options, [click here](#))

**RSVP:** Denise@CalMutuals.org or call 714.449.3397

Drinks and snacks will be provided.

To download the flyer for this event, [click here](#)

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## AB 656 Successfully Moving Through Legislature

AB 656, CalMutuals sponsored legislation, was approved by the Senate Governance and Finance Committee on Wednesday, June 17th by a vote of 7-0, with the bipartisan support of Senate Governance & Finance Chairman Robert “Bob” Hertzberg and Vice Chair Janet Nguyen.

The bill is now headed to the Senate Appropriations Committee for its final hearing before it goes to the Senate Floor.

The Association has worked diligently to build broad support for the bill and we anticipate its successful passage in the coming weeks.



### **HOW AB 656 WILL HELP YOUR MUTUAL WATER COMPANY**

After hearing from a growing number of mutuals across California, the Association has expanded our view as to the types of services CalMutuals should be providing our members. Until now, mutuals have been assisted on a volunteer basis.

Although we are happy to help, our staff simply does not have the long-term capacity to grow services without additional funding; or without state resources that are insufficient, and that we know only a few mutual water companies can afford.

That's why AB 656 is so important. **Following the bill's passage, mutuals - like yours – will have the option to band together to achieve economies of scale in purchasing insurance.** Under AB 656, instead of residuals going to taxes, they would come back to the Joint Powers Authority to fund the informational, training and compliance services mutual water companies need.

For questions or to learn more, please contact Denise Peralta Gailey at (714) 449-3397 or via e-mail at [Denise@CalMutuals.org](mailto:Denise@CalMutuals.org).

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## Bill Tracker

Below are two bills we are monitoring closely.

**SB 385** (Hueso SD-40) would authorize the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to grant a limited period of time for public water systems affected by the new standard to work toward compliance without being deemed in violation as long as strict safeguards are met and the water systems demonstrate that they are taking all needed steps to comply with the standard by the earliest feasible date.



SB 385 would not exempt any water systems from compliance or delay the steps a water system must take to achieve compliance. The SWRCB oversees the state's water quality and is responsible for enforcing the chromium-6 standard.

The bill has passed through the Senate and is now in the Assembly (within the Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials). To read more about this bill, [click here](#).

**AB 617** (Perea AD-31) makes a number of changes to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) including allowing a private mutual water company to:

- a) Join Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) formed by one or more public agencies pursuant to a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA);
- b) Exercise the GSA power to include or exclude a water corporation regulated by the Public Utilities Commission;
- c) Hold in common the GSA powers provided by SGMA in order for the GSA to exercise those powers.

The bill has passed the Assembly and is currently in the Senate. To read more about this bill, [click here](#).

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