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Kenneth V. Payne, P.E.  
*General Manager*

June 22, 2022

To: All Small Water Systems in El Dorado County

Dear Sir/Madam:

In September 2021, Senate Bill (SB) 552 was signed by Governor Newsom and enacted into law. SB 552 includes new responsibilities and requirements at both the state and local levels to help small water suppliers and rural communities reduce their risk of inadequate water supply during a water shortage event. Under the directive of the Board of Supervisors, the County of El Dorado (County) has requested assistance of the El Dorado Water Agency (Agency) to meet SB 552 requirements in coordination with the County's Environmental Management Department—which oversees the small water systems as the Local Primacy Agency—and the County Public Health Officer. This letter is to inform you about the new requirements that may be pertinent to your water system and wells, and the assistance provided by the Agency. Attachment includes the list of affected small water systems in El Dorado County.

## Background

SB 552 was the result of a County Drought Advisory Group (CDAG), which was organized by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) per Assembly Bill 1668 of 2018 to assist DWR in identifying small water systems and rural communities at risk of drought and water shortage and developing recommendations to improve drought planning of these communities. The Agency was a member of the CDAG along with 31 other water agencies, interest parties, and professionals. DWR's recommendations were provided to the Legislature in 2021 and served as the basis of SB 552.

## What Are the New Requirements?

SB 552 imposes new drought planning requirements on small water systems and counties throughout the state. These requirements include:

- Small Water Suppliers with 1,000-2,999 service connections and school water systems:
  - Develop and maintain an abridged Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP)
  - Report annually specified water supply condition information to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board)
  - Implement certain resiliency measures outlined in the legislation
- Small Water Suppliers with 15-999 service connections
  - Add drought planning elements to Emergency Response or Notification Plans
  - Report annually specified water supply condition information to the State Water Board

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- Counties to aid Small Water Systems with 5-14 service connections (also known as State Small Water Systems) and domestic wells with 4 connections or less
  - Establish a standing Drought and Water Shortage Task Force (Task Force)
  - Develop a County Drought Plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risks and proposed interim and long-term solutions

The legislation also includes a timeline for the implementation:

- January 1, 2022 – Counties to establish the Task Force
- December 31, 2022 – DWR and State Water Board to provide abridged WSCP template for affected small water suppliers and schools.
- July 1, 2023 – Small water suppliers with 1,000 to 2,999 service connections and school water systems to develop and maintain an abridged WSCP with updates every 5 years
- January 1, 2032 – Small water suppliers with 1,000 to 2,999 service connections and school water systems to implement, subject to funding availability, drought resiliency measures

DWR and State Water Board have developed a Primer for SB 552, which can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/mfnrbtkk>.

### Agency's Actions for SB 552 Implementation

The Agency's mission is to ensure that El Dorado County has adequate and affordable water to maintain economic prosperity, protect the environment, and support the rural-agriculture way of life for today and in the future. Our role and responsibilities in countywide water resource development and management are outlined through the Agency's 2019 Water Resources Development and Management Plan (WRDMP), which was prepared in collaboration with water and land-use managers in El Dorado County. Both the WRDMP and Agency's Strategic Plan recognize the importance of drought planning and water shortage preparedness in the Other County Area (OCA) that are not served by large water purveyors and where small water suppliers and domestic wells are. Consistent with these directives, the Agency has taken an approach to pursue the needed water resilience for all small water suppliers and domestic wells in the OCA, a scope beyond the requirements of SB 552.

The Agency has established the Task Force in June 2022 that included members from the County EMD, Public Health Officer and Office of Emergency Services, as well as representatives of small water suppliers, schools, and domestic wells. In addition, the Agency has engaged the state implementation agencies, including DWR and State Water Board, to be a conduit and voice for the El Dorado County and mountain regions on SB 552 implementation, and will participate workshops and working groups for developing templates of the abridged WSCP and guidance for the County Drought Plan. Additional communications on these templates and guidance, as well as possible technical assistance to affected small water systems will be rolled out in the future.

To support the County Drought Plan development, the Agency just initiated a study to conduct condition assessments on small water systems and domestic wells to establish better understanding of their corresponding vulnerabilities and identify the options and barriers for improving their drought resilience. The initial outreach to small water systems and domestic wells will start in late June/early July. Opportunities of federal and state assistances will also be explored for implementing actions and infrastructure improvement to improve water resilience for small water systems and domestic wells, and emergency response actions including providing emergency water supply.

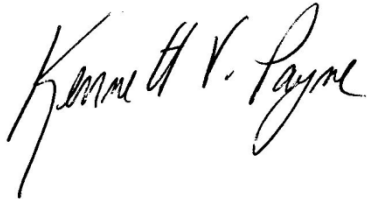
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If you have any questions about SB 552 implementation efforts or what may be required of your small water system, please do not hesitate to contact Kyle Ericson at [kyle.ericson@edcgov.us](mailto:kyle.ericson@edcgov.us) or (530) 621-5403.



Kenneth V. Payne, P.E.  
General Manager

Attachment: Small Water Systems in El Dorado County Affected by Senate Bill 552

cc: Don Ashton, El Dorado County Chief Administrative Office  
Jeff Warren, El Dorado County Environmental Management Agency  
Nancy Williams, El Dorado County Public Health Officer  
Scott Bare, El Dorado County Office of Emergency Services  
Jim Abercrombie, Brian Mueller, El Dorado Irrigation District  
Adam Coyan, Adam Brown, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District  
John Thiel, South Tahoe Public Utility District  
Sean Barclay, Tahoe City Public Utility District  
Kyle Ericson, El Dorado Water Agency Groundwater Sustainability Agency  
Ivo Bergsohn, South Tahoe Public Utility District Groundwater Sustainability Agency

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