



Staff Report

File #: 23-0770

**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL AND
CORONA UTILITY AUTHORITY ACTION**

DATE: 11/15/2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
Honorable President and Board Members

FROM: Utilities Department

SUBJECT:
CITY COUNCIL RECEIVE AND FILE AN UPDATE ON WATER CONSERVATION REGULATORY
FRAMEWORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Report asks that the City Council receive an update from the Utilities Department on the State of California water conservation efforts. Over the past several years, the State of California has made significant adjustments to water conservation requirements related to indoor and outdoor water use, and is setting new standards for commercial, industrial, and institutional customers. This includes a mandatory Urban Water Use Objective for each agency. These changes, while still in draft form, are anticipated to be finalized in summer of 2024. The regulations as written are aggressive, disproportionate, and will have a significant impact to Corona residents.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council received and file the update.

That the Corona Utility Authority review, ratify, and to the extent necessary, direct the City Council to take the above actions.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

In 2018, the State of California passed Assembly Bill (AB) 1668 and Senate Bill (SB) 606 which directed the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt efficiency standards as well as performance measures for commercial, industrial and institutional water use. Additionally, in 2022, the State passed SB1157 adopting residential indoor water use standards that were significantly lower than previous targets. These changes will impact water agencies throughout the State of California trying to implement these changes.

ANALYSIS:

Compliance with these new regulations will be a significant administrative lift for the Utilities Department and will require an increase in staffing from current levels. Changes to the water budget calculations will need to be considered as part of the upcoming rate study. Additionally, administration of the programs and external rate changes from wholesale agencies like Western Water and Metropolitan Water District will affect the City's rates. In addition to higher rates impacting them financially, significant reductions in both indoor and outdoor water use criteria will affect consumers daily lives.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact on the City has yet to be determined until the regulations are finalized.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action is a receive and file. There is no possibility that approving the recommended action will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, the item is exempt from CEQA.

PREPARED BY: TOM MOODY, DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES

Attachment:

1. Exhibit 1 - Presentation