



Message from the General Manager Are we headed for drought?



Tom Gallier

When this newsletter went to print in late February, a week and a half of rain and snow had just ended in El Dorado County. It was welcome, and so are predictions of more to come.

Will it be enough to help turn the tide on nearly three consecutive years of dry conditions across the state? That remains to be seen.

EID's water supply has been more "normal" than in many areas of California over the past couple of years. But 2009 may prove otherwise. We are constantly monitoring conditions, paying close attention to what the state Department of Water Resources and federal Bureau of Reclamation have to say, and watching the governor's office carefully for any declarations that might affect how we do business.

Most important, we are putting our own drought preparedness plan into action. That plan, our water waste regulation, and actions the District and customers alike can take to help lessen the impacts of drought were highlighted in issues of this newsletter all last year.

And we're highlighting them again.

"Update and Drought Stages" on this page summarizes what can be expected should we need to declare drought. The bottom line is that during a declared drought, we rely on our customers to help us achieve water savings.

We know that many EID customers are already wise water users. The "Update" and its list of water-saving steps remind us all of what we can do on a daily basis. The steps may seem small, even insignificant. But when we take those steps together, they add up to big water savings.

As winter becomes spring, we are making plans to notify you if we need to declare drought. In the meantime, we encourage you to act in the best interests of water conservation—now and throughout the year.

Update and Drought Stages

Despite February's rain and snow and the hopes for more, EID is preparing for a potential drought declaration. It appears that even a normal winter's rainfall and snowpack may not compensate for the low amounts of precipitation our area has experienced dating back to last spring.

The District's drought preparedness plan outlines the stages of drought. This article summarizes those stages and gives examples of what customers will be asked to do to reduce their water use during each stage.

First, **Stage 0** represents normal conditions, like we have generally experienced for the past several years. In this stage, the District encourages water conservation practices, but we do not set a target for customers to reduce their water use. During Stage 0, as with all drought stages, EID's water waste regulation is in effect. You can find the regulation on our website or call and ask for a copy.

During **Stage 1**, the District will ask customers to reduce water use—voluntarily—to help us achieve a District-wide 15-percent drop in consumption from the average of the past three years. As one example of a conservation measure in this stage, we would ask customers to irrigate their landscapes only during the evening, nighttime, and early morning hours to help reduce evaporation losses.

In **Stage 2**, we will begin by asking customers to take additional voluntary conservation measures such as limiting irrigation not only to non-daylight hours but also to three nights a week. If water supply conditions continue to worsen, the voluntary measures will become mandatory—with penalties for non-compliance. The goal is to reduce water use by 30 percent District wide from the past three-year average.

The goal of **Stage 3** is a 50-percent reduction in water use from the three-year average. Stage 3 includes mandatory measures in addition to those in Stage 2, again with penalties for non-compliance.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.eid.org to view the entire drought preparedness plan or call and request the executive summary. And remember, every drop of water not used is a drop for the water-savings bank.

Water-saving steps that add up!

- Water outside only when necessary and don't saturate to the point of causing runoff into streets and gutters.
- Sweep, don't wash, paved areas.
- Wash cars using buckets of water and rinse only with hoses equipped with shut-off nozzles.
- Locate and repair faucet drips and leaky toilets.
- Don't dawdle in the shower—an extra five minutes means 25 gallons or more down the drain.
- Wash only when your dishwasher and clothes washer are fully loaded.
- Don't run water continuously while shaving, brushing your teeth, peeling vegetables, or washing dishes by hand.

EID in the community: Third graders learning about the ecosystem at Jenkinson Lake



Where does our water come from? What is an ecosystem? These are just a couple of the questions that EID's **Cheri Jagers** and **Dena McCann** asked each of four classes of third graders at Pinewood Elementary School (Pollock Pines) in late February. Hands flew up with questions from the eager students as they listened and learned about the importance of the ecosystem at Sly Park's Jenkinson Lake.

Cheri, the District's parks and recreation superintendent, began each presentation with an overview of where EID's water originates. The youngsters had a chance to see a bird's eye view of the watershed that feeds Jenkinson Lake, EID's main source of drinking water. She then described the interconnected flumes, canals, and tunnels that distribute drinking water to many of the children's homes.

Dena, who is the District's environmental review specialist, used a hands-on, interactive display of the ecosystem at the lake to engage the students in a discussion of the various plants and animals that call the area home—from the smallest microbes to the larger mammals—and how they interact.

"Working with young people is a great way to connect with our communities," Cheri said. "Sly Park Recreation Area, with Jenkinson Lake at its heart, is such a vital part of Pollock Pines as well as the rest of our service area. Watching the students' enthusiasm in learning more about this resource was very rewarding."

Dena added, "Helping the students gain insight into how a healthy ecosystem functions—and its importance to our water system—was a fantastic experience!"



Clockwise from top left: 1. Cheri (l) presents an overview of Jenkinson Lake within Sly Park Recreation Area. 2. Dena fields questions from a sea of eager students on what is included in the Jenkinson Lake ecosystem. 3. Students investigate samples from the ecosystem.

Fish stocking update

In late February, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) moved EID's Forebay reservoir and our Upper and Lower Echo Lakes to the list of waters to be stocked with fish through January 1, 2010.

DFG is meeting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in early March to discuss the results of the Jenkinson Lake habitat evaluation to determine whether this lake can also be moved to the list of waters that will be stocked.

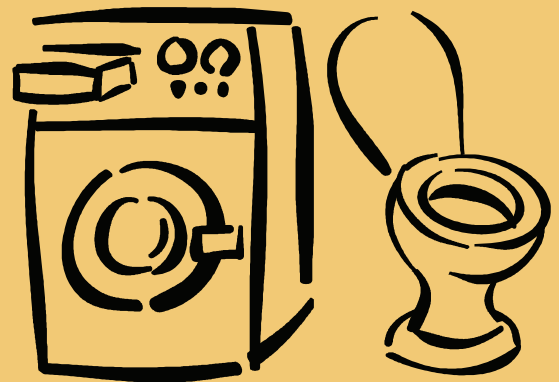
For more information, visit the DFG website at www.dfg.ca.gov.

2009 regular Board meetings

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	13	11	8	13	10	14	14(W)	9	14
23	27	--	22	--	24	--	26	23*	--

Board meetings occur on Mondays. The first October meeting will take place on a Wednesday.
* tentatively scheduled

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