

Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation



The State Water Resources Control Board on July 3 adopted the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation. The regulation implements Assembly Bill 1668 and Senate Bill 606, which were signed into law in 2018, to develop a regulatory framework to achieve long-term water use efficiency with the purpose of adapting to climate change and more intense and frequent droughts in California.

What is included in the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation?

Under the regulation, urban retail water suppliers must comply with three major components:

- A unique **urban water use objective**;
- **Commercial, industrial and institutional (CII) performance measures**; and
- **Annual reporting**.



Urban Water Use Objective

The **urban water use objective** is a supplier-specific water budget that is the sum of water use efficiency standards for urban water uses for residential indoor water use, residential outdoor water use, CII landscapes with dedicated irrigation meters and supplier system real water loss. These standards are applied to unique local service area characteristics, such as population, climate and landscape area. The urban water use objective also includes adjustments for specified unique water uses, such as evaporative coolers and seasonal tourism, temporary provisions, and/ or a bonus for potable reuse, if applicable.

Urban retail water suppliers can learn more about their expected urban water use objective by visiting the State Water Board's [Water Use Objective Exploration Tool](#) and reviewing the [Provisional Data](#).



Residential Indoor

+



Residential Outdoor

+



CII-DIM Outdoor

+



Water Loss

+



If applicable:
Variations, Temporary Provisions & Bonuses

CII Performance Measures

Every urban retail water supplier must comply with the following CII performance measures. These CII performance measures are services and programs water suppliers can offer to increase the indoor and outdoor water use efficiency of CII water users. A simplified overview of the CII performance measures is as follows:

- **Classification of CII water accounts** into ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager's broad categories, plus four additional categories.
- Convert **CII large landscapes** (over 0.5 acres) with mixed use meters (MUMs) to dedicated irrigation meters or employ in-lieu technologies such as advanced metering infrastructure. This requires identifying all CII-MUM landscapes that meet this threshold in a service area.
- Implement **CII best management practices** for the top CII water users (with three possible track options).

Annual Reporting

Starting Jan. 1, 2024, and by Jan. 1 every year thereafter, each urban retail water supplier is required to submit annual reporting requirements to the State Water Board and the Department of Water Resources that includes their urban water use objective, actual urban water use, documentation of the implementation of CII performance measures and a description of progress made towards meeting their urban water use objective (§ Water Code 10609.24).

When does compliance start?

Suppliers must work with their customers to achieve water savings that may be needed to meet the new regulation. Individual customers are not required to comply with the urban water use objective.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2025, and by Jan. 1 every year thereafter, each urban retail water supplier is required to calculate its urban water use objective for the previous year. Each year, the objective will be based on dynamic data such as weather and population. Beginning Jan. 1, 2027, each urban retail water supplier must demonstrate compliance with its urban water use objective.

CONTACT

Chelsea Haines

ACWA Regulatory Relations Manager

(916) 669-2431

chelseah@acwa.com

