

# Memorandum

*Serious drought.  
Help Save Water!*

To: DIRECTOR  
CHIEF DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
DEPUTY DIRECTORS  
DISTRICT DIRECTORS  
DIVISION CHIEFS

Date: June 26, 2014

File:

From: KARLA SUTLIFF  
Chief Engineer



Subject: **Water Conservation for Highway Construction Projects**

Effective July 1, 2014 enhanced water conservation practices will be required for all Caltrans highway construction projects. Based on the ongoing drought in California and in anticipation of future water shortages, Caltrans has established policy on what water conservation practices will be required on highway construction projects based on the severity of the water shortage. For Highway planting work, water conservation requirements are described in the Project Delivery Procedures Manual Chapter 29 and are addressed in my Memorandum, dated March 11, 2014, Evaluation of Current Planting Work.

The water conservation practices developed for highway construction projects address Caltrans continuing water conservation objectives, as required by Deputy Directive 13. Water conservation practices apply to all projects even when there are no water use restrictions. As restrictions on water usage become more severe, projects must include additional water conservation practices. Caltrans has established the following water conservation categories to define the level of water shortage:

### Water Conservation Categories

Category	Description
Caltrans water conservation	Water use is not restricted but must be in compliance with Deputy Directive 13.
Voluntary water conservation	At least one of the following actions occur: 1. Local water agency has requested water conservation of customers 2. State requires water conservation statewide.
Mandatory water rationing	At least one of the following actions occur: 1. Local water agency has implemented mandatory rationing 2. State requires mandatory water rationing statewide.
Severe public drinking water shortage	California Department of Public Health has identified severe public drinking water shortage. Department of Public Health determines a public drinking water shortage exists if 60 days or less of drinking water supply is available.

Project engineers must determine the water conservation category for projects and then based on the water conservation category take appropriate action such as providing letters of water availability and including water conservation standard special provisions in project specifications. Projects that are submitted to DES-OE for advertising after June 30, 2014 must include appropriate water conservation standard special provisions based on the water conservation category for the area where the project is located. No addendum for water conservation requirements is required for projects advertising before July 14, 2014.

To ensure uniform implementation of the new water conservation requirements Water Conservation Guidance and other water conservation information is available at:

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/esc/oe/construction\\_standards.html](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/esc/oe/construction_standards.html)

For questions regarding Water Conservation Guidance, contact Chuck Suszko by email at [chuck.suszko@dot.ca.gov](mailto:chuck.suszko@dot.ca.gov) or by phone (916) 798-6029.