

DROUGHT LEGISLATION UPDATE

California Governor Jerry Brown Officially declared an end to the drought and rescinded two drought-related executive orders from 2014, including the one that declared a drought state of emergency, excepting four counties in Central California. The Governor's action reinstates the ability for California community associations to impose fines or otherwise enforce their governing documents related to an owner's decision to not water grass or other vegetation.

Executive Order B-40-17 lifts the drought emergency in all California counties except Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Tuolumne, where emergency drinking water projects will continue to help address diminished groundwater supplies. The order also rescinds two emergency proclamations from January and April 2014 and four drought-related executive orders issued in 2014 and 2015.

In a related action, state agencies have issued a plan to continue to make conservation a way of life in California, as directed by Governor Brown in May 2016. The framework requires new legislation to establish long-term water conservation measures and improved planning for more frequent and severe droughts. Permanent restrictions shall prohibit wasteful practices such as:

- Hosing off sidewalks, driveways and other hardscapes;
- Washing automobiles with hoses not equipped with a shut-off nozzle;
- Using non-recirculated water in a fountain or other decorative water feature;
- Watering lawns in a manner that causes runoff, or within 48 hours after measurable precipitation; and
- Irrigating ornamental turf on public street medians.