



Del Oro Water Company, Strawberry District

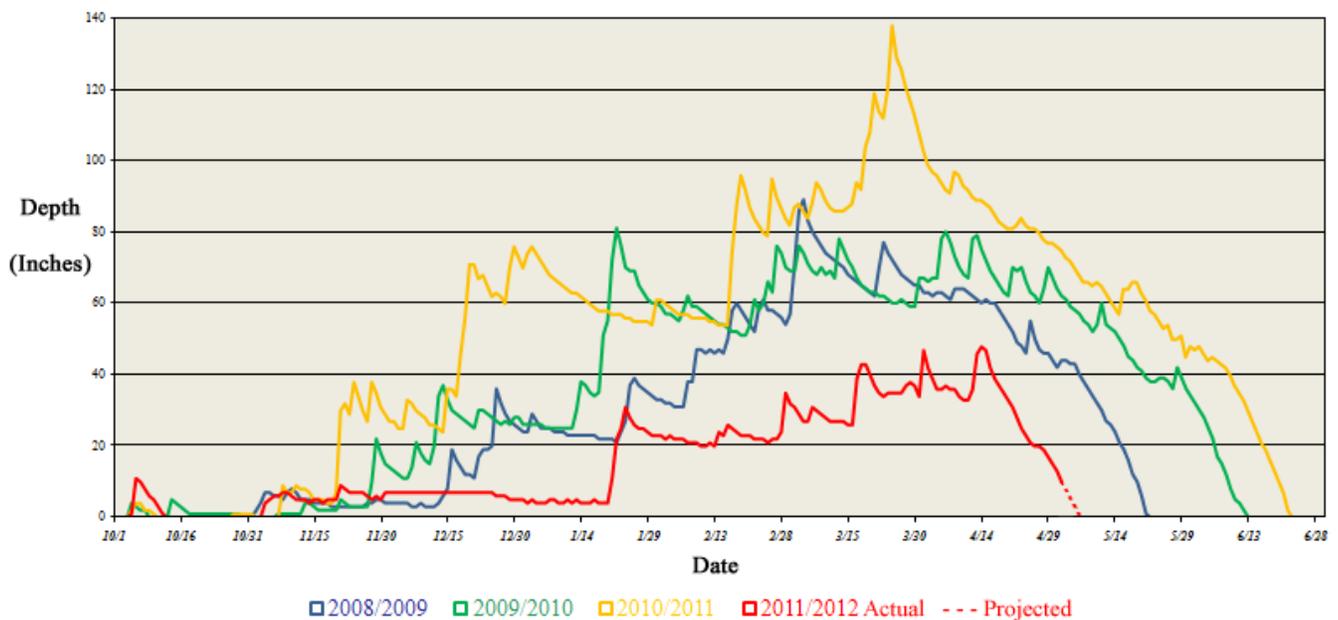
Urgent Drought Update - May 2, 2012

2012 Projected Water Supply Shortage

This winter was surprisingly mild, with the rain arriving late and little snowfall. While this has been pleasant for us all, it puts Del Oro Water Company, Strawberry District, in the unfortunate position of facing a probable water supply shortage this summer.

Strawberry District is dependent on Herring Creek for its water supply and the creek is, in its turn, dependent on snowmelt to maintain adequate water levels throughout the summer. This year has not just been mild; **it has resulted in one of the smallest snowpacks on record**. As a result, the snow is estimated to completely melt away more than a month earlier than usual. Snow levels at Sonora Pass (about 30 miles above Strawberry) show us just how severe the shortage is. The graph below shows the snowpack for the last four “water years”, which begin on October 1st and end on June 30th. The current year is shown in red, as of May 2, 2012. The dashed line represents the project snow levels for the remainder of this water year.

Del Oro Water Company Strawberry District
Snowpack Levels @ Sonora Pass (in inches)
 Water Years: October 1, 2008 to May 2, 2012



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PARADISE PINES – LIME SADDLE – MAGALIA – FERNDAL – JOHNSON PARK – COUNTRY ESTATES – PINE MOUNTAIN – PINE FLAT
 WALNUT RANCH – ARBUCKLE – STRAWBERRY – MT. LASSEN – RIVER ISLAND – EAST PLANO – GRANDVIEW GARDENS – METROPOLITAN

What Is Del Oro Doing About It?

Based on the current snow levels and the amount of rainfall received this year, as well as the normal average water use in Strawberry in the summer, Del Oro is estimating that Herring Creek will run dry this summer. Del Oro has already requested permission from PG&E and Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) for an allocation of 50 acre feet of water from the South Fork of the Stanislaus River, and has also begun filing for the necessary government permits. Permission has not yet been granted; Del Oro hopes to receive a response soon. This water comes at substantial cost, but no other less costly alternative is available.

What Does This Mean For Me?

Strawberry District faces a severe water shortage this summer. Fortunately, you can do something about it. Del Oro is urging all customers to **voluntarily reduce their water consumption**. We encourage you to **reduce outside watering** and adopt aggressive conservation strategies. Cooperation from everyone is critical. If drought conditions prevail, **mandatory water rationing may be implemented**.

Water Conservation VS. Rationing

Rule 14.1 Water Conservation and Rationing Plan (see page 4 of this letter), which was established and is enforced by the State of California Public Utilities Commission, represents a concerted effort to avert a perceived or actual emergency water shortage. In Section A of the Water Conservation and Rationing Plan, specific activities are regulated and/or prohibited as a means of implementing a rather conservative effort to monitor and reduce consumption of our planet's most precious resource. The "rules" outlined in Section A are always encouraged, but are not officially in place until consumers have been notified they are in effect. **This letter constitutes notice that Del Oro is putting Rule 14.1A into effect and asking all consumers to begin following the conservation strategies therein.**

By contrast, Section B outlines measures that the utility may use to implement and enforce much stricter water rationing strategies. Customers would no longer have the luxury of participating in voluntary conservation efforts, but would be forced to follow more stringent guidelines where water consumption is concerned. However, before rationing is initiated, the utility must obtain approval from the Public Utilities Commission and provide ample notice to all its customers. A move toward initiating water rationing is a distinct possibility, given the current weather and water level outlook.

What Conservation Strategies Can I Use?

In addition to the rules specified in Rule 14.1A (see page 4 of this letter), residents are encouraged to:

- Evaluate various elements of your current landscaping and consider using native and drought-tolerant plants in favor of those requiring more water.
- Water plants at night, and only on alternate days or less often.
- Replace baths with showers, and take shorter showers.

- Check for leaks, both inside and outside. Toilet leaks are the most common.
- Completely shut off water to the property when not in use to prevent unchecked leaks.
- Sweep driveways and walkways instead of washing them with a hose.
- Request a free water conservation kit from Del Oro.
- Go online to <https://www.delorowater.com/view/water-conservation> for additional resources and easy tips for reducing your water use.

Daily Herring Creek water levels, as well as the Sonora Pass snow levels, are available on the Del Oro Strawberry District webpage at: <https://www.delorowater.com/view/strawberry-district>. Both graphs are updated every weekday.

Strawberry residents have a history of successfully conserving water, for which Del Oro is grateful. In addition, numerous repairs and improvements to the distribution system over the last several years have greatly reduced the overall demand for water by approximately 50% from when Del Oro acquired Strawberry in 2006. Therefore, it is Del Oro's sincere hope that, with concerted voluntary conservation efforts, mandatory rationing will not be necessary.

For further updates, visit our website at www.delorowater.com or speak with a Customer Care Representative at (530) 809-3985 or 1-877-DEL-ORO-H2O.

DEL ORO WATER COMPANY

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Rule 14.1: VOLUNTARY WATER CONSERVATION and RATIONING PLAN

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. If water supplies are projected to be insufficient to meet normal customer demand, and are beyond the control of the utility, the utility may elect to implement voluntary conservation using the portion of this plan set forth in Section A of Rule 14.1, after notifying the Director of the Commission's Division of Water and Audits of its intent, via a letter.
2. Prior to declaration of mandatory rationing, a utility may request authorization of a Schedule 14.1-Staged Mandatory Water Conservation and Rationing tariff via a Tier 2 advice letter.
3. If, in the opinion of the utility, more stringent water conservation measures are required, the utility shall request Commission authorization to modify this plan and rationing measures set forth in Sections B through E.
4. The utility shall file a Tier 1 advice letter to request activation a particular stage of Schedule 14.1-Staged Mandatory Water Conservation and Rationing tariff;
 - a. If a Declaration of Mandatory Rationing is made by the utility or governing agency,
 - b. If the utility is unable to address voluntary conservation levels set by itself or the governing agency, or
 - c. If the utility chooses to subsequently activate a different stage.
5. When Schedule 14.1 is in effect and the utility determines that water supplies are again sufficient to meet normal demands, and mandatory conservation and rationing measures are no longer necessary, the utility shall seek Commission approval via a Tier 1 advice letter to deactivate the particular stage of mandatory rationing that had been authorized.
6. In the event of a water supply shortage requiring a voluntary or mandatory program, the utility shall make available to its customers water conservation kits, as required by Rule 20. The utility shall notify all customers of the availability of conservation kits via an insert or separate mailing.

A. CONSERVATION - NONESSENTIAL OR UNAUTHORIZED WATER USE

No customer shall use utility supplied water for nonessential or unauthorized uses as defined below:

1. Use of water through any connection when the utility has notified the customer in writing to repair a broken or defective plumbing, sprinkler, watering or irrigation system and the customer has failed to make such repairs within five (5) days after receipt of such notice.
2. Use of water that results in flooding or run-off in gutters, waterways, patios, driveways, or streets.
3. Use of water for washing aircraft, cars, buses, boats, trailers or other vehicles without a positive shut-off nozzle on the end of the hose. Exceptions include washing vehicles at commercial or fleet vehicle washing facilities operated at specific locations where equipment is properly maintained to avoid wasteful use.
4. Use of water through a hose for washing buildings, structures, sidewalks, walkways, driveways, patios, parking lots, tennis courts, or other hard-surfaced areas in a manner which results in excessive run-off or waste.
5. Use of water for watering streets, except for initial wash-down for construction purposes (if street sweeping is not feasible), or to protect the health and safety of the public.
6. Use of water for construction purposes, such as consolidation of backfill, dust control or other uses, unless no other source of water or other method can be used.
7. Use of water for more than minimal landscaping for any new construction.
8. Use of water for outside plants, lawn, landscape and turf areas between the hours of 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, or more than every other day, with even numbered addresses watering on even numbered days of the month and odd numbered addresses watering on odd numbered days of the month. This provision shall not apply to commercial nurseries, golf courses and other water-dependent industries.
9. Use of water for watering outside plants, lawn, landscape and turf areas during certain hours if and when specified in Schedule No. 14.1 when the schedule is in effect.
10. Use of water for watering outside plants and turf areas using a hand-held hose without a positive shut-off valve.
11. Use of water for decorative fountains or the filling or topping off of decorative fountains, lakes or ponds, except those which utilize recycled water.
12. Use of water for the filling or refilling of swimming pools.
13. Service of water by any restaurant, except at the request of a patron.
14. Use of water to flush hydrants, except where required for public health or safety.

For the complete text of Rule 14.1, including section B Mandatory Rationing, visit:

<http://www.delorowater.com/go/Rule14-1>