



Paradise Pines District Drought Frequently Asked Questions

Background:

1. Is the drought really that bad?

Yes, it really is. California is in the 4th official year of drought, but we have actually had 7 years of low rain and snowfall. In fact, the winter of 2014-2015 was the lowest in over 100 years.

The snowpack this year was just 5% of normal. Even in the severe drought of the 1970s, the snowpack was at 25%. Snowpack is important because mountain snow gradually melts off in the spring and summer filling reservoirs, lakes, rivers, and streams.

2. Why do we have to have mandatory conservation?

Because Governor Brown ordered it!

In accordance with Executive Order B-2915, the SWRCB implemented "Emergency Regulation for Statewide Urban Water Conservation (Resolution Nos. 2015-0013 & 2015-0032; California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 863-866) which detail the required restrictions and add the authority for law enforcement officers to issue \$500 fines for violations. In order to implement these restrictions, the CPUC issued Resolutions W-5034 & W-5041, which provide specific rules for what all CPUC-regulated water utilities, including DOWC, must do.

3. When does mandatory conservation start?

Mandatory conservation starts **June 1, 2015** and will be governed by Schedule 14.1, Stage 2.

Schedule 14.1 – Stage 2 Restrictions:

4. What is Schedule 14.1 & where can I view it?

Schedule 14.1 is DOWC's specific rules for mandatory conservation. The schedule may be downloaded at www.delorowater.com/paradise-pines.html in the "Advice Letters" section.

Common Abbreviations

cf – cubic feet

*1 cf = 7.48 gallons

Ccf – 100 cubic feet

*1 Ccf = 748 gallons

CPUC – California Public
Utilities Commission

DOWC – Del Oro Water Co.

SWRCB – State Water
Resources Control
Board (formerly
Cal. Dept. Public
Health)

WQ – Water Quantity

5. Why are we going straight to Stage 2?

In order to meet all of the requirements set by the SWRCB and CPUC, Stage 2 must be used. Stage 1 does not include all the required restrictions.

6. Are their higher Stages? Will DOWC move to another Stage?

Schedule 14.1 includes Stages 1, 2, 3, and 4. Each Stage is more severe than the previous ones. Although DOWC hopes not to invoke Stage 3 or 4, we will if conservation is not sufficient or if the State requires it.

7. When can I water? What can I water? What's not allowed?

Please refer to the handout "Stage 2 Mandatory Water Restrictions".

8. Can I fill my pool or spa?

No, not after May 31st, 2015. Filling and refilling of pools and spas is forbidden, even little ones.

Note: "topping off" with small amounts of water to replace water lost to evaporation is not considered by DOWC to be "refilling".

9. What if I do something that's not allowed?

The first time you violate the rules, you will receive a letter and DOWC field staff will be available to assist customers in complying with the restrictions. Each violation after the first time will incur a fine, and the fines increase. The fines in Stage 2 start at \$50 and increase to \$100.

Any customer who repeatedly violates the rules will have a flow restriction device installed or be required to undergo a water audit. The flow restriction device will remain installed for a minimum of 3 days, and a fee of \$100 must be paid before DOWC will remove the device. (The fee increases to \$150 if removed after hours). DOWC is not responsible for any problems that might occur as a result of reduced water flow. If, after the flow restrictor is removed, further violations occur, DOWC has the right to reinstall the flow restricting device at any time.

If a customer continues to violate the rules, or in the case of an egregious violation, DOWC has the right to disconnect service. In that case, service will not be restored until the customer can prove that all issues are resolved.

10. What if I see someone breaking the rules?

If you can, please alert the person to their error; they may have forgotten or not be aware that they are breaking a rule. Being a good neighbor can help us all to reach the required conservation level.

Violations may be reported online at www.delorowater.com/drought.html. Look for the link to the reporting form right at the top of the page. If possible, please take a photo and include it with your report, otherwise we may not have any evidence of the violation. For those without web access, please contact DOWC's Call Center at (530) 717-2502.

(continues on next page)

Schedule 14.1 – Stage 2 Water Budgets:

11. What is a *Water Budget*?

Your water budget is the amount of water that may be used between monthly reading dates before the drought surcharge applies.

12. How much is the surcharge?

\$6.50 per 100 cubic feet (Ccf). 100 cubic feet is 748 gallons.

a. Why \$6.50?

CPUC-regulated water companies, including Del Oro, are setting the drought surcharge at twice the standard cost of water, which is currently \$3.25/Ccf in Paradise Pines.

13. How is my water budget determined?

Your Water Budget is a safety net minimum of 474 cubic feet (3,546 gallons) OR 24% less than the water used at your property in the same period in 2013, whichever is higher.

A calculator is available online at www.delorowater.com/drought.html which will calculate your budget for you. Below is an **example** of how the math is done:

Safety Net Budget Example	Higher Budget Example
500 cf ← Water used in July 2013	1000 cf ← Water used in August 2013
24% x 500 = 120 ← How much water needs to be saved	24% x 1000 = 240 ← How much water needs to be saved
<u>500 – 120 = 380</u> ← Budget calculation	<u>1000 – 240 = 760</u> ← Budget calculation
474 = YOUR BUDGET	760 = YOUR BUDGET
<i>Because the calculated budget is below 474 cf, your budget is the minimum budget of 474 cf</i>	<i>Because the calculated budget is above 474 cf, your budget is the calculated budget of 720 cf</i>

a. I heard 28% before. Where did 24% come from?

Good news! As of June 11, 2015, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has accepted Del Oro's request and reduced the Paradise Pines District mandatory conservation budget from 28% to 24%. Paradise Pines District is now required to achieve **24% reductions** in water use as compared to 2013. For more information, please review the SWCRB's UWS conservation tiers (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/docs/supplier_tiers.pdf).

14. Where does the safety net minimum of 474 cf come from?

The minimum is based on the California's State Law. Specifically, the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill x7-7), sets a standard of 55 GPCD (gallons per capita per day). This 55 GPCD is the health "safety net" standard that is being used throughout the state by water utilities to set their minimums.

The Math: As of the 2010 census, Paradise Pines had an average of 2.08 people per household.

55 gallons	← Daily health “safety net” minimum
x 2.08	← Times average household size
x 31	← Times days in month
3,546 gallons	= Monthly Minimum Budget (gal)
3,546 x 7.48 = 474 cubic feet	= Monthly Minimum Budget (cf)

15. What if I wasn’t at the property in 2013?

If the property was vacant, the minimum budget of 474 cf will apply. If the property was occupied by someone else, the budget will be based on the property history. **The budgets are based on property history, not account history.**

16. I think my budget is too low. How can I request a higher budget?

If you believe your budget is too low, you will be able to appeal for a higher amount. The appeal process and form will be posted on www.delorowater.com/drought.html no later than June 1st. If you do not have web access, call **after** June 1st to request appeal instructions. Do not send letters in now; only appeals submitted on the proper forms will be accepted. Please be aware, appeals will be handled on an individual basis.

a. What are possible valid reasons to appeal?

- Medical need – If you have a medical condition that requires water, please submit an appeal. You will need a signed letter from your physician, so it would be a good idea to get that letter now. **The letter must:** **A)** specify the patient’s name and property address, **B)** state that water is needed for your condition, **AND C)** provide an estimated amount of water needed daily for medical purposes. This estimate should NOT include daily living water, as that is already accounted for in the minimum. **Example:** *My patient, John Smith, who resides at 123 Main Street in Magalia, has a medical condition which requires extra water. Approximately 10 gallons per day are needed specifically for medical purposes.*
- Increased household size – If the number of people in your household has increased since 2013, you may be eligible for an increased safety net minimum. **However**, your budget may already be substantially higher than the 474 cf minimum if you had a higher water usage in 2013. In fact, your budget may already be larger than the minimum for your household size. If your budget it already large enough to support your household size, your appeal will be denied. The 55 GPCD standard is equivalent to 228 cf per person, per month, so please compare your budget to your household size in the table below before submitting an appeal.

Household size	Safety Net Minimum
1-2	474 cf / 3546 gal
3	684 cf / 5116 gal
4	912 cf / 6822 gal
5	1140 cf / 8527 gal
Each Additional Person	add 228 cf / 1705 gal

Example: If you used 2000 cf in July 2013, your water budget for July 2015 will 1440 cf. If you appeal based on having 5 people in the house, you will be denied as your budget is already larger than the safety net minimum for 5 people.

- Another Reason? – There may be instances where an increased allocation on a permanent or temporary basis may be appropriate. If you think you have another valid reason to appeal, you may submit it; additional documentation may be required.

b. What are NOT valid reasons to appeal?

- New turf or landscaping – High water use activities, such as turf replacement, and new landscaping are not reasons to ignore a drought. If you must change your landscaping, consider using drought tolerant native plants or xeriscaping; these drought-friendly garden solutions can be very attractive.
- “My lawn isn’t green” – Lawn can yellow and still stay alive. Please, water just enough to keep the lawn alive. Keeping the grass trimmed higher/taller provides more shade for the roots, which reduces the amount of water needed. Also, consider posting a “Doing our part to save water” or “Yellow is the new green” sign in your lawn to let onlookers know that you’re conserving by watering less.
- “I have to clean everything, everyday” “I just can’t keep my floors spotless without mopping every day!” “I must shower 3 times a day.” “My kids get a bath every time they come in the house” – Please, be practical about the drought. Appeals will not be granted to keep that perfect shine on your floors. This is the time to figure out how you can save water in your cleaning routine. Dry mops are great on hard floors. Hanging your towels after showering and re-using them cuts down on water used for laundry. A bucket in the sink and shower that collects non-soapy water can be re-used to water plants.

Controlling Water Use:

17. What can I do to conserve water?

There are many ways to conserve water. Please refer to www.DelOroWater.com to find numerous tips, downloadable guides, and links to other resources. In addition to the drought page, hover your mouse over the “Water Information” section on the menu to access more webpages.



DRAWER 5172 CHICO, CALIFORNIA 95927 – WWW.DELOROWATER.COM

PARADISE PINES – MAGALIA – LIME SADDLE – STIRLING BLUFFS – FERNDAL – COUNTRY ESTATES – CALIFORNIA PINES
WALNUT RANCH – ARBUCKLE – STRAWBERRY – MT. LASSEN – RIVER ISLAND – TULARE – METROPOLITAN

Last updated 09/09/2015

18. How can I figure out how much water I use each day?

Read your meter each day at the same time, preferably first thing in the morning or last thing at night, and calculate your water used.

19. How do I read my meter & calculate my water use?

- Locate your meter box – it is usually located near the street, but may also be in an easement to the side or rear of your property. If you cannot find your meter, please contact DOWC for assistance.
- Open your meter box using the smaller lid and locate your meter. If gophers, squirrels, or other rodents are active in your area, you may need to clear some dirt from the meter.
- On most meters, the round meter face is visible; if your meter has a small round lid, flip it open to see the meter face. Near the top of the meter face is a row of numbers. The meter is read from left to right. Write down the entire visible number. Close your meter box.
- Come back at a later time and repeat the steps above. To determine your use, subtract the newer meter read from the older meter read.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \textit{Example:} \quad 10012399 \leftarrow \text{Read at 9 PM} \\
 - \underline{10012345} \leftarrow \text{Minus read at 8 AM} \\
 \hline
 54 = \text{Cubic feet used}
 \end{array}$$

- Further information on reading your meter, as well as information on testing for leaks is available on Del Oro's website. DOWC's call center is also here to help at (530) 717-2502.

20. What if I have a leak or a broken sprinkler?

Repairs must be undertaken as soon as possible. You will be charged for all water used, even if you have a leak. DOWC recommends testing your property for leaks and inspecting all your irrigation lines to find and fix problems early.

To check for leaks, make sure all water is off, then write down your meter's read. Wait 1 hour, making sure that NO water is used, then read the meter again. If the read has changed, water is going somewhere!

Please be aware that leaks in irrigation lines are not always identifiable this way because irrigation valves generally shut when the line is not in use. To identify an irrigation leak, first walk your property and look for any wet spots; then turn on the irrigation and walk the property again, looking for bubblers, fast growing puddles, broken sprinkler heads, etc. You may need to dig test holes in suspicious areas.

If DOWC identifies a leak, we will notify the customer immediately in writing via a door hanger. The customer then has five (5) business days to make the necessary repairs.

(continues on next page)

Other:

21. Where does the money from the fines and drought surcharge go?

The fines and surcharges collected go into a drought tracking account called the *Statewide Lost Revenue Recovery Memorandum Account (SLRRMA)*. This account tracks the revenue from the fines and surcharges. The SLRRMA is subject to CPUC audit annually. If the losses and expenses exceed the revenues and savings, then a surcharge may be added. If the revenues and savings exceed the losses and expenses, then a refund (in the form of a surcredit) may apply.

22. Where can I get the most up-to-date information regarding the drought in Paradise Pines?

The most current information is always available online at www.delorowater.com/drought.html

23. How can I contact DOWC?

Phone: DOWC may be reached by phone Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 8am to 4:30pm by calling 1-800-DEL-ORO-H2O or (530) 717-2502. These numbers are also shown on your bill and on DOWC's website. After regular business hours, messages can be left and staff will respond the next business day. For after hours emergencies, you may speak to DOWC's emergency operator, who will dispatch a field representative if required

E-mail: DOWC can be reached by email at: CommunityRelations@delorowater.com or by filling out the contact form online at <http://www.delorowater.com/deloro/customer-service/contact-us-form.html>

Mail: Correspondence may be mailed to: Del Oro Water Co., Drawer 5172, Chico, CA 95927-5172