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District ends local water shortage emergency; adopts new ongoing rules to prevent water waste

Corte Madera, CA – Marin Water’s Board of Directors updated the District’s ongoing water-use rules on Tuesday, adopting new long-term requirements for outdoor irrigation and swimming pools. Effective immediately, the Board also rescinded its water shortage emergency declaration and lifted the temporary restrictions triggered last year after falling to critically low water supplies. The Board’s actions recognize that the District’s reservoirs have recovered to average storage levels for this time of year while also balancing the need for continued water-efficient practices as climate-driven drought conditions persist across much of the state.

Removal of the District’s emergency water restrictions ends prohibitions on car washing at home, irrigating golf courses (for areas outside greens and tees), filling swimming pools, and allows new landscaping installations for new service lines. The newly adopted long-term rules allow outdoor irrigation using overhead spray systems up to two days per week. Drip irrigation is permitted up to three days a week and is the preferred and most efficient method for watering plants. In addition, swimming pools and spas must have covers to reduce evaporation. This rule was introduced during the water shortage emergency and now becomes a permanent and ongoing requirement for District customers. The District will also require sanitation agencies to reduce their potable water use for sewer cleaning when reasonably possible and when recycled water is available without the need for hauling by truck. For a full list of the District’s ongoing water rules, visit: marinwater.org/WaterRules.

“It’s a relief to move past the local water shortage emergency, but that doesn’t mean we can let our guard down,” said Larry Russell, President of the Board of Directors. “Drought conditions remain for the foreseeable future, so we’ve bolstered our normal year-round water rules to continue to eliminate water waste wherever possible across the communities we serve.”

Marin Water’s reservoirs are presently at 90% of total storage capacity thanks to record rainfall in October and December. Despite a replenished supply, the District is expanding its ongoing water rules to continue to reinforce water efficient practices among customers in alignment with [Gov. Gavin Newsom’s Executive Order in March](#). The rules also prepare Marin Water for anticipated emergency drought regulations from the State of California Water Resources Control Board.

In addition to updating ongoing water rules to improve long-term drought resiliency, the District also remains focused on long-term water supply planning efforts through its Strategic Water Supply Assessment that is currently underway. The assessment evaluates potential water supply projects that could provide the District with a reliable and resilient supplemental water supply now and for the future. For more information on this effort, visit: marinwater.org/WaterSupplyResiliency.

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