



Winter Rains Prove Water Shortage is More than Just Drought

LAGUNA NIGUEL, Calif. (February 22, 2010) – The difference between a drought and a statewide water shortage may seem like only semantics to many people, but as recent rainstorms have proven, California remains in a water crisis in wet and dry years alike – no matter how you put it.

The term "drought" refers only to weather conditions, defined by scientists as a prolonged period of below-average precipitation. The recent rains have helped MNWD's two primary sources of water, the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Upper Colorado River Basin, which have suffered from several years of drought. Key reservoirs are slowly beginning to refill from all-time lows, but still remain at a fraction of their full capacities. Closer to home, the rains have been a welcome relief following three years of below-normal rainfall, but unfortunately, MNWD doesn't receive any of our water supply from local sources.

So despite the rain, our water problems persist, because separate from the drought, California is also in the midst of a statewide water shortage. Even if Mother Nature bestows the state enough water to meet everyone's needs, court rulings, environmental regulations and an outdated delivery system limit the movement of that water from where it falls to where it's needed.

Conservation Remains Important

California will remain in a persistent water emergency until complex solutions can be reached that meet the co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply while improving the ecosystem of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta – the hub of our state's water delivery system.

These solutions will continue to be the subject of much debate. But in the meantime, MNWD customers must be as efficient as possible - rain or shine - to protect our region's water resources.

About MNWD

The Moulton Niguel Water District was formed in 1960 and has grown to serve the water and wastewater needs of more than 167,000 people living in Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills, Mission Viejo and Dana Point. For more information, please visit www.MNWD.com.

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