



CALIFORNIA
WATER EFFICIENCY
PARTNERSHIP

A chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency

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The Advocacy Current



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Welcome to *The Advocacy Current*

Dani Morgutia, Senior Program Manager

As we move into the second half of 2026, CalWEP continues to advocate for policies that are grounded in the expertise of water use efficiency professionals doing this work every day, while supporting water use efficiency, regulatory modernization, and long-term water resilience. During the second quarter, CalWEP expanded its engagement at the state and regulatory levels through participation in California Public Utilities Commission proceedings, support for statewide water policy initiatives, legislative engagement on emerging data center proposals, and continued collaboration with partners including ACWA, AWE, and the State Water Resources Control Board.

Quarter at a Glance:

- Became an official party in the California American Water and Suburban Water Systems rate cases.
- Submitted a support letter to the California Energy Commission regarding proposed irrigation controller efficiency standards.
- Signed on in support of ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future
- Helped launch a new technical assistance pilot with the California Data Collaborative and the State Water Resources Control Board.
- Continued engagement on multiple data center-related legislative proposals.
- Executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing the Initiative to Streamline Water Data Reporting in California.
- Monitored and engaged with US Senators on the Water Conservation Rebate Tax Parity Act.

Regulatory and Policy Spotlight:

Why CalWEP Became an Official Party in two CPUC Rate Cases

This quarter, CalWEP expanded its advocacy efforts by becoming an official party in both the California American Water and Suburban Water Systems rate cases before the California Public Utilities Commission.

These proceedings will help determine how conservation programs, demand management investments, and long-term water efficiency planning are evaluated within investor-owned water utility operations. CalWEP's participation ensures that water efficiency remains part of the conversation as these important decisions move forward.

Read the full article:

[Why CalWEP Became an Official Party in Cal-Am's Rate Case: You Don't Throw Away Your Umbrella in the Rain](#)

Decoupling 101

One of the topics emerging from these proceedings is utility decoupling. Decoupling is a regulatory mechanism that allows water utilities to recover approved revenues independent of water sales volume. In simple terms, it helps remove the financial disincentive associated with successful conservation programs.

As California continues to pursue long-term water efficiency goals, decoupling remains an important tool that aligns utility financial stability with responsible water management and customer conservation efforts.

CalWEP Supports CEC Irrigation Controller Efficiency Standards

In April, CalWEP submitted a support letter to the California Energy Commission regarding proposed irrigation controller efficiency standards.

The proposed standards represent an opportunity to improve outdoor water use efficiency through smarter irrigation technology while maintaining flexibility for manufacturers and water agencies.

By supporting practical, performance-based standards, CalWEP continues to advocate for policies that help customers use water more efficiently while advancing statewide conservation goals.

Read the full article:

[CalWEP Submits Support Letter to the California Energy Commission on Proposed Irrigation Controller Efficiency Standards](#)

CalWEP Signs On to ACWA's Vision For Our Water Future

This quarter, CalWEP formally joined water agencies across California in supporting [ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future initiative](#).

Developed through an extensive statewide engagement effort, the Vision outlines priorities intended to inform California's next Governor beginning in 2027. The initiative focuses on four major themes:

- Elevating water as a statewide priority
- Protecting affordability
- Delivering critical infrastructure
- Modernizing water management



For CalWEP, the initiative closely aligns with many priorities important to our members, including improved data systems, streamlined reporting frameworks, regulatory modernization, conservation program investment, and long-term water resilience. We submitted a formal support letter recognizing water use efficiency as a foundational component of California's future water strategy.

State Water Board Technical Assistance Program



At the State Water Board's June 2nd meeting, CalWEP Executive Director Tia Fleming presented the common challenges that CalWEP is hearing from its 270+ member agencies and showcased CalWEP's growing ecosystem of compliance tools and resources. Three weeks later, CalWEP was again featured at the launch of *Getting to Efficiency*, the State Water Board's new technical assistance webinar series developed in partnership with the California Data Collaborative. The series kicks off a broader effort for the State Water Resources Control Board to help water suppliers navigate the technical and data reporting requirements of *Making Conservation a California Way of Life* and includes the launch of a new hands-on data and reporting pilot led by the California Data Collaborative.

CalWEP's participation and ongoing support of this technical assistance work, reflects our growing role as a key resource for agencies working to get to compliance!

CalWEP Co-Leads Newly Launched Water Data Streamlining Initiative



Initiative to **Streamline Water Data Reporting in CA**

As part of CalWEP's commitment to advancing practical water policy solutions, CalWEP is jointly leading the **Initiative to Streamline Water Data Reporting in California (ISWDR CA)** in partnership with the California Water Data Consortium, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), and the California Data Collaborative (CaDC). Together, these organizations are working with water suppliers, state agencies, and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to reduce redundant reporting, improve data consistency, and modernize California's water data reporting framework.

Interested in learning more and supporting this important work?

LEARN: The initiative is actively seeking additional participating agencies and organizations. To learn more, get involved, or join the mailing list, visit StreamlineWaterDataCA.org.

SHARE: We're also asking agencies to help quantify the real-world burden of state water reporting. Your input will help inform recommendations to streamline reporting requirements and reduce unnecessary administrative workload. Please take a few minutes to complete the Water Reporting Burden Survey: [Take the Survey](#).

SAVE THE DATE: ISWDR CA Launch Webinar September 3, 2026 at 10 am

To introduce the Initiative and discuss opportunities to participate, ISWDR CA will be hosting an informational webinar featuring a special welcome from State Water Board Chair, Joaquin Esquivel!

Questions?

Email Melissa Matlock, Ph.D
CalWEP Deputy Director
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2026 Legislative Review



CalWEP takes positions selectively, weighing in only on bills with direct implications for water use efficiency, rate-setting, or long-term supply reliability.

Beyond the bills we've taken a position on, CalWEP tracks a broader slate of legislation that could affect member agencies, flagging developments and surfacing concerns as they evolve.

Questions? Email Dani Morgutia, CalWEP Senior Program Manager Dani@calwep.org

Active Support List

AB 2180 (Ward)

CalWEP Position: Support

AB 2180 would clarify how local agencies may demonstrate compliance with Proposition 218 proportionality requirements when establishing water rates. The bill helps reduce legal uncertainty surrounding conservation-oriented and tiered rate structures while providing agencies with greater confidence in cost-of-service methodologies.

AB 35 (Alvarez)

CalWEP Position: Support

AB 35 would accelerate implementation of Proposition 4 climate and resilience funding by streamlining administrative requirements and allowing climate, water, and resilience investments to move forward more quickly.

CalWEP's 2026 Watch List

AB 1577 (Bauer-Kahan)

AB 2619 would require data centers to provide detailed projected and actual water use information to local water suppliers while incorporating data center demand into Urban Water Management Plans and Water Shortage Contingency Plans.

AB 2469 (Papan)

AB 2469 would establish new water supply assessment requirements for data centers and create a separate commercial, industrial, and institutional water-use classification for large consumptive users. CalWEP continues discussions with stakeholders regarding potential implementation concerns and unintended consequences.

SB 1139 (Laird)

SB 1139 would expand enforcement authority related to California's nonfunctional turf irrigation prohibition within the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District.

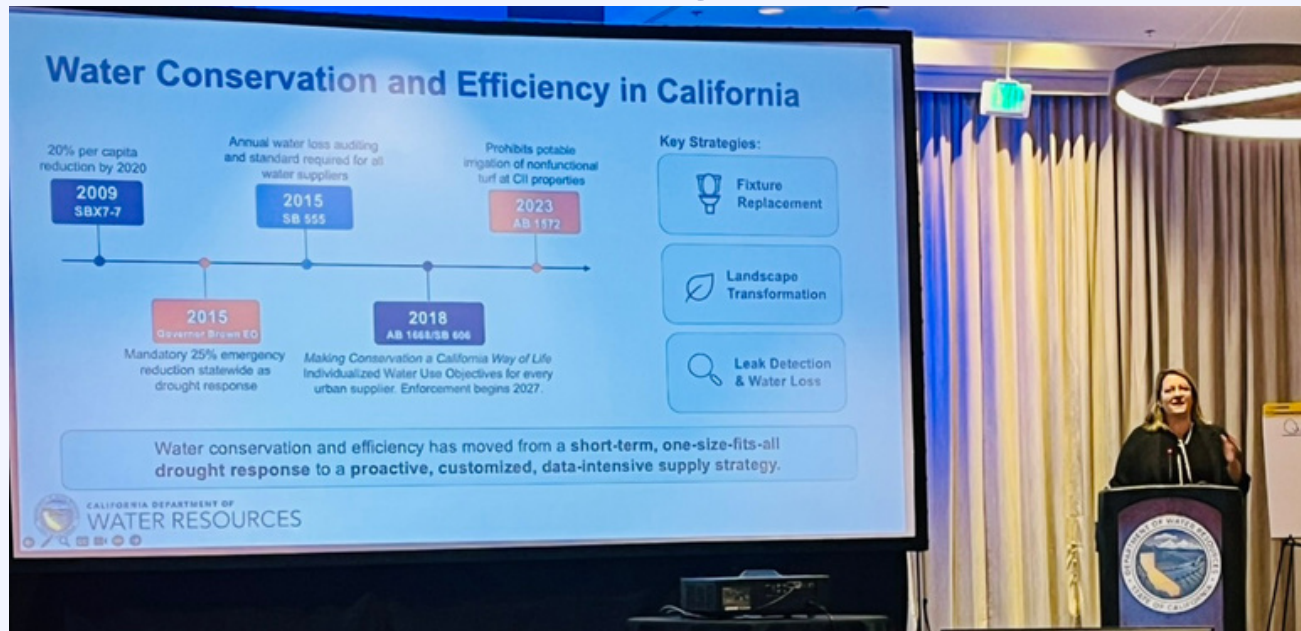
SB 1153 (Caballero/Rubio)

SB 1153 focuses on wildfire preparedness planning requirements for urban retail water suppliers while providing liability clarifications related to wildfire response and water system operations.

SB 1085 (Durazo)

SB 1085 would modify Water Supply Assessment requirements for certain housing developments and increase coordination requirements between local governments and public water systems during the development review process.

CA Water Plan Advisory Committee Update



In May, CalWEP Executive Director Tia Fleming joined the California Water Plan 2028 Advisory Committee, a 35-member body appointed by the Department of Water Resources to help shape California's first-ever statewide water supply target of 9 million acre-feet by 2040.

At the committee's inaugural meeting, Tia presented on the current state of urban water conservation in California, the regulatory framework driving agency implementation, and the tensions and opportunities that must be addressed for conservation to deliver on its potential as a supply strategy.

Senate Bill 72 explicitly names water conservation as one of the pathways to the 9 MAF target alongside storage, groundwater recharge, recycled water, and desalination. The work is just beginning. The committee meets quarterly through 2028, and the next critical milestone is August. CalWEP will keep our members informed as this process unfolds.

What's Ahead

As the Legislature approaches key policy deadlines and regulatory proceedings continue moving forward, CalWEP will remain actively engaged on issues affecting water use efficiency, conservation program implementation, affordability, and long-term water resilience.

Looking ahead, **CalWEP is partnering with a team from University of California, Irvine (UCI) to examine how California's regulatory landscape can proactively address the water implications of data center growth.** This research will specifically evaluate gaps, opportunities, and policy solutions within California's unique planning and regulatory framework. Stay tuned for updates next quarter!