

## Memorandum

*Serious drought.  
Help Save Water!*

**To:** DEPUTY DISTRICT DIRECTORS, Construction  
DEPUTY DIVISION CHIEF, Structure Construction  
CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS  
SENIOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERS  
RESIDENT ENGINEERS

**Date:** December 7, 2015

**File:** Division of Construction  
CPD 15-5

**From:** RACHEL FALSETTI, Chief  
Division of Construction



**Subject: WATER CONSERVATION—IMPLEMENTATION OF CALTRANS' 2015 DROUGHT ACTION PLAN COMMITMENTS**

The Governor signed a third executive order on April 1, 2015 proclaiming that a continued state of emergency exists throughout California due to the ongoing drought. The executive order directs all urban water users to reduce consumption by 25 percent compared to amounts used in 2013. Caltrans has set a goal of 50 percent reduction in water consumption.

To support Caltrans' water conservation efforts, the Division of Construction worked with other functional units to develop and implement additional and revised specifications for water conservation. All new contracts require that water availability letters from water suppliers be provided as supplemental project information at the time of project advertisement to ensure water is available for construction activities. Based on statewide regulations adopted in May 2015 by the State Water Resources Control Board, there are now mandatory local water restrictions throughout the state. With these restrictions, most Caltrans construction contracts being advertised will require the use of recycled or non-potable water, and for projects with earthwork, the use of dust control binders or dust suppressants for dust control in place of using only water. This directive includes actions that must be taken for ongoing projects to ensure water conservation measures are being implemented.

### For All Highway Construction

To comply with the executive order, the following actions are required for all highway construction projects to meet Caltrans' action plan commitments:

- Comply with the requirements outlined in Construction Procedure Directive 14-1, "Water Conservation," to conserve water resources and use water wisely during construction activities.
- Use non-potable water when specified in the project special provisions.
- Use dust palliatives to reduce water usage when a contract includes a bid item for dust palliative.
- Ensure that all existing irrigation facilities impacted by roadway or other construction activities are repaired and system functionality tested and restored prior to acceptance of the project.
- For projects where highway planting is already in the plant establishment period ensure:
  - Irrigation is monitored for excess watering or run-off.

- Water is immediately shut off to broken supply lines, valves, or sprinkler assemblies. Repair damaged irrigation systems within 24 hours after a malfunction or damage is known.
- Plants are watered in compliance with local water agency requirements and the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance when Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA) calculations have been provided as project supplemental information for new and rehabilitated landscapes.
- Plants are watered at night unless daytime watering is authorized due to watering cycle timing or for irrigation functional testing.

*For all Projects That Include Planting*

To comply with the executive order, action must be taken now for all projects that include planting to meet Caltrans' action plan commitment of a continued moratorium on new landscaping projects at state facilities, and on state highways and roads. For projects with planting, work with the project manager and district functional units to determine the appropriate action to be taken to comply with the action plan's commitments.

For planting required by environmental laws, regulations, or permit agreements (that is, ESA, 1602, 401, or 404), the following actions are required:

- The district must conduct discussions with the regulatory agency regarding planting to determine if planting must continue on schedule, planting can be delayed until November 15, 2016 or later, or planting should be deleted now and planted on a future project when the drought is declared over.
- Obtain written documentation from the permitting agency describing the action going forward regarding highway planting because of drought conditions.
- For projects where the regulatory agency does not support deleting or delaying planting, submit a written request for approval to proceed with planting to Katrina Pierce, Chief of the Division of Environmental Analysis. The request must have concurrence by the district director and documentation from the permitting agency. Contact Katrina Pierce at [katrina.pierce@dot.ca.gov](mailto:katrina.pierce@dot.ca.gov) or (916) 653-7136.

*For All Projects in the Construction Phase*

Planting work for all projects in the construction phase must be evaluated to determine if planting work may continue, be deleted, or be delayed from the contract work based on the following:

- Planting work may continue on the current schedule and no changes to the contract are required if any of the following applies:
  - Recycled or non-potable water is the source for irrigation.
  - The planting work is in progress.
  - The planting material has been delivered to the project site.
  - The materials on hand include plants.
  - The plant establishment period is in progress.

- Planting is required by water quality permit agreements, coastal zone development permits or mitigation, and the permitting agency will not allow delay.
- Delete all planting except planting that is required by environmental laws, regulations, or permit agreements, and the regulatory agency does not support deleting planting from the current project. Deleting planting work is preferred over delaying planting since the duration of the drought is unknown.
- Delay planting work until November 15, 2016, or later, when planting is required by environmental laws, regulations, or permit agreements, and the regulatory agency does not support deleting the planting from the current project. If costs of \$100,000 or more are associated with the planting delay, contact Keith Robinson, Principal Landscape Architect, and the headquarters construction field coordinator assigned to your district to discuss. Contact Keith Robinson at [keith.robinson@dot.ca.gov](mailto:keith.robinson@dot.ca.gov) or 916-654-6200.

When delaying planting work, the resident engineer must take the following actions:

- Consider stormwater impacts and provide additional temporary erosion control best management practices to protect the project site until highway planting will take place.
- Write a change order to specify the planting start date, any temporary erosion control best management practices, and contract extension related costs.
- Provide information to the project manager about a new date for target project construction contract acceptance based on the delay to project planting.

When deleting planting work, the resident engineer must take the following actions:

- Install permanent irrigation systems and delete all *Standard Specifications*, Section 20, "Landscape," planting bid items associated with the permanent irrigation systems, (that is, sod, grass plugs, cuttings, ground cover, shrubs, and trees in all container sizes indicated by plant group type A-S, and so on).
- Place appropriate erosion control in areas where highway planting has been deleted to protect water quality and prevent erosion. Compost or mulch should be used as erosion control where possible. Work with the district landscape architect and district construction stormwater coordinator to select appropriate erosion control methods.
- Place permanent erosion control contract items, such as mulch. Write a change order deleting the planting work and plant establishment work.
- In highway planting areas, place permanent erosion control contract items, such as mulch, and include in the change order placement of temporary erosion control best management practices where permanent erosion control is not shown.
- Provide information to the project manager on the extent of the work deleted so that a future replacement project can be programmed to complete the planting work.

Sample change order memoranda, sample change orders, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) blanket prior approvals for delaying and deleting highway planting are attached to this directive. This directive serves as delegation of authority from the Division of Construction and

approval from the FHWA for this change order, except when any of the following apply to the change order:

1. The language is altered.
2. The total absolute value exceeds \$200,000.
3. Contract time is extended by more than 300 days.

For additional information or assistance, please contact Chuck Suszko, Division of Construction, at [chuck.suszko@dot.ca.gov](mailto:chuck.suszko@dot.ca.gov) or (916) 798-6029.

- Attachments:
1. Sample Change Order Memorandum—Delay Highway Planting
  2. Sample Change Order—Delay Highway Planting
  3. Sample Change Order Memorandum—Delete Highway Planting
  4. Sample Change Order—Delete Highway Planting
  5. FHWA Form CA-358 (c), “Record of Blanket Prior Approval for Major Contract Change Order”—Delay Highway Planting
  6. FHWA Form CA-358 (c), “Record of Blanket Prior Approval for Major Contract Change Order”—Delete Highway Planting