

Water Shortage Contingency Plan



SCOTTS VALLEY
WATER DISTRICT

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Prepared by



Table of Contents

SECTION 1	INTRODUCTION	1
SECTION 2	WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY ANALYSIS	2
SECTION 3	ANNUAL WATER SUPPLY AND DEMAND ASSESSMENT	2
	3.1 KEY DATA INPUTS	2
	3.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA	3
	3.3 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES.....	7
SECTION 4	STANDARD WATER SHORTAGE LEVELS	8
SECTION 5	SHORTAGE RESPONSE ACTION	8
	5.1 DEMAND REDUCTION.....	9
	5.2 SUPPLY AUGMENTATION	12
	5.3 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN	12
	5.4 SEISMIC RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PLAN	12
	5.5 SHORTAGE RESPONSE ACTION EFFECTIVENESS	12
SECTION 6	COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS	13
SECTION 7	COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT	13
SECTION 8	LEGAL AUTHORITIES	14
SECTION 9	FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF WSCP	14
SECTION 10	MONITORING AND REPORTING	14
SECTION 11	WSCP REFINEMENT PROCEDURES	15
SECTION 12	SPECIALIZED WATER FEATURE DISTRINCTION	15
SECTION 13	PLAN ADOPTION, SUBMITTAL, AND AVAILABILITY	15

List of Tables

Table 1: Key Data Inputs for the Annual Assessment	3
Table 2: Rainfall Trigger Levels.....	4
Table 3: District Baseline Pumping (AFY)	5
Table 4: SMGB Groundwater Condition Triggers.....	6
Table 5: District Water Shortage Contingency Plan Levels	8
Table 6: Cross-Reference for Standard vs Supplier Shortage Levels (DWR 8-1).....	8
Table 7: Estimated Savings by Shortage Stage	9
Table 8: Demand Reduction Actions (DWR 8-3)	10
Table 9: Add-On Monthly Drought Rates.....	14

APPENDICES

Appendix A WSCP Adoption Resolution

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

The Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) outlines procedures and protocols that will be implemented by Scotts Valley Water District (District) in the event of foreseeable or unforeseeable water supply shortages. A water shortage occurs when the water supply is reduced to a level that cannot support demand at any given time due to a range of conditions including extended drought, production capacity limitations, catastrophic supply interruptions, or other unforeseen shortages. The WSCP is intended to protect the integrity of water supply for domestic, public health, essential care, welfare and safety.

This is the first update to the WSCP since it was adopted in 2021. This WSCP is compliant with the California Water Code (CWC) and incorporated guidance from the State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR) UWMP Guidebook (California Department of Water Resources, 2025).

The WSCP includes the following sections:

Water Supply Reliability Analysis	Summarizes the water supply reliability analysis and identifies any key issues that may trigger a shortage condition.
Annual Assessment Procedures	Establishes annual procedures for assessing foreseeable water supply shortage.
Standard Shortage Levels	Establishes water shortage levels to clearly identify and prepare for shortages.
Shortage Response Actions	Describes the response actions that may be implemented or considered for each stage to reduce gaps between supply and demand.
Communication Protocols	Describes communication protocols to ensure customers, the public, and local government agencies are informed of shortage conditions and requirements.
Compliance and Enforcement	Defines compliance and enforcement actions available to administer demand reductions.
Legal Authority	Lists the legal documents that grant the authority to declare a water shortage and implement and enforce response actions.
Financial Consequences of WSCP	Describes the anticipated financial impact of water shortage stages and identifies mitigation strategies to offset financial burdens.
Monitoring and Reporting	Summarizes the monitoring and reporting techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of shortage response actions and overall WSCP implementation.
WSCP Refinement Procedures	Describes factors that may trigger updates to the WSCP and outlines how to complete an update.
Special Water Features Distinctions	Defines considerations and definitions for water use for decorative features versus pools and spas.
Plan Adoption, Submittal, and Availability	Describes the process for the WSCP adoption, submittal, and availability after each revision.

SECTION 2 WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

This section provides a summary of the water supply reliability analysis as presented in the 2020 and 2025 Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) in accordance with CWC Section 10635.

The District relies primarily on groundwater from the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (SMGB). Groundwater is a shared resource that is overseen by the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA) and has adopted a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in 2022.

The reliability analysis considered the following year-types: normal year, single-dry year, and five-consecutive-year drought. Pumping in the groundwater basin is currently within the sustainable yield and groundwater conditions are monitored annually. The drought risk assessment considers the District's current water supply facilities and the basin management information from the GSP. The District expects to meet projected annual demands under modeled water year types; however, water shortages may still occur due to groundwater conditions, operational constraints, or regulatory requirements.

While the District has adequate groundwater supply to meet its annual and monthly customer demands, the District's water production facilities (wells, filters, storage tanks) are sized to meet peak demand, such as maximum daily, and peak hour, and fire flow. Water supply reliability considers both the groundwater supply to meet total demand and the infrastructure capacity to meet peak instantaneous demands. A water supply shortage level could be triggered from groundwater supply indicators from the GSP, or on operational factors to maintain an adequate operating buffer. Conditions such as catastrophic events, prolonged drought, or unforeseen impacts to groundwater and supply infrastructure, could require the activation of the WSCP.

SECTION 3 ANNUAL WATER SUPPLY AND DEMAND ASSESSMENT

In accordance with CWC Section 10632 (a)(2), this section provides the procedures to conduct an annual water supply and demand assessment (Annual Assessment). The Annual Assessment will be performed in April of each year to determine if water shortages are anticipated as defined in this WSCP. The Annual Assessment must be submitted to DWR by July 1 of each year.

3.1 Key Data Inputs

The WSCP addresses several types of water supply shortages that could potentially impact the District and its customers:

- Long-term supply shortages due to prolonged drought, contamination, destruction of critical water supply facilities, etc.
- Short-term water supply shortages due to natural or man-made catastrophic emergencies or production capacity limitations.
- Supply shortages due to compliance with Sustainable Management Criteria for the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (SMGB) as defined in the SMGB Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and summarized in this WSCP.

Key data inputs and their sources for the Annual Assessments are summarized in **Table 1** and described in detail in Section 3.2 – Evaluation Criteria.

Evaluation criteria that can be used to determine and declare severity of supply shortages may include any, or combinations, of the following:

- **Rainfall.** Reflects reduction to supply due to decreased groundwater recharge and surface water flows.
- **SMGB Sustainable Management Criteria.** Reflects status of groundwater conditions such as groundwater levels, groundwater quality, depletion of interconnected surface water, or reduction of groundwater in storage.
- **Production Capacity.** Reflects limited production and distribution capacity due to a variety of factors potentially including, but not limited to man-made or natural catastrophic events
- **State Mandates.** Reflects State orders and mandatory compliance with water use efficiency Standards.

Supply shortages affect all users of the SMGB and surrounding region, not just the District’s customers. A water shortage emergency may be declared when it is demonstrated that regional water supply conditions or local capacity impacts threaten the ability to provide water for public health, safety, and welfare of the community. Furthermore, compliance with State mandates for water use efficiency can be declared during drought or in preparation for future droughts, such as in response to the Governor’s drought declarations in the 2012-2016 drought with a subsequent Executive Order B-37-16 and related legislation for Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

Short-term and long-term supply shortages may be caused by constrained production capacity or natural or man-made catastrophic emergencies and include, but are not limited to, the following events: power outages, winter storms, wildfires, earthquakes, structural failures, contamination, and malevolent acts. These types of emergencies may limit the District’s immediate ability to provide adequate water service to meet the requirements for human consumption, sanitation, and fire protection. Impacts of such emergencies vary in duration; thus, shortage response actions and prohibitions may differ for short-term and long-term shortages.

Table 1: Key Data Inputs for the Annual Assessment

Key Data Input	Source
Rainfall	Monthly rainfall data from a weather station at District’s El Pueblo Yard.
Groundwater Conditions	Exceed groundwater levels or extraction minimum thresholds defined by the 2022 GSP and any subsequent GSP amendment.
Production Shortfall	District’s production data and input from the Operations Manager.
Anticipated Demands	Prior usage trends, changes in population, estimated water reductions from current shortage stages (if any), and input from Operations Manager and Finance Managers.

3.2 Evaluation Criteria

Staff use the key data inputs, evaluation criteria, and Annual Assessment procedures to evaluate supply reliability at the time of the Annual Assessment and into the upcoming summer and fall. Various trigger conditions, which summarize specific evaluation criteria for each shortage stage that can be used to determine a water shortage stage are described in the following sections. Triggers are based on current conditions, and the District evaluates these triggers and may modify as needed.

3.2.1 Rainfall

The SMGB aquifers and surface water sources are vulnerable to drought due to the reliance on rainfall for recharge and flows. Rainfall varies based on the hydrologic conditions of a given year. During the Annual Assessment, rainfall totals can be compared to the rainfall trigger levels identified in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Rainfall Trigger Levels

Stage ¹	Rainfall Trigger ²
1	Cumulative rainfall over 2 years < 80% of average and/or Single year rainfall < 75% of average
2	Cumulative rainfall over 2 years < 70% of average and/or Single year rainfall < 60% of average
3	Cumulative rainfall over 3 years < 50% of average and/or Single year rainfall < 50% of average
4	Same or worse than Stage 3
5	Same or worse than Stage 3

1. The District may adjust stages up or down based on annual review and other WSCP evaluation criteria.
2. Single year rainfall < 50% of average corresponds to a water shortage of 50%.

3.2.2 Groundwater Conditions

The adopted SMGB GSP has the goal of avoiding undesirable groundwater conditions in the SMGB and achieving groundwater sustainability by January 2042. Reducing groundwater demand by implementing recycled water and water use efficiency programs has stabilized historic long-term declines in groundwater levels in the Scotts Valley area. To prevent continued chronic lowering of groundwater levels, the GSP identifies groundwater level Minimum Thresholds and associated exceedance levels that cause Undesirable Results. Measurable Objectives reflecting SMGWA’s goals for groundwater level improvements are also included in the suite of sustainable management criteria.

It is important to note that the SMGWA has until January 2042 to reach its sustainability goal. Therefore, groundwater conditions that exceed the criteria of Undesirable Results are not formally considered Undesirable Results by DWR until after January 2042. It is expected that sustainable management criteria will be revised over the 20-year implementation period of the GSP as monitoring and further studies improve understanding of the SMGB. The criteria to determine water shortage stages will rely on groundwater level Minimum Threshold and Undesirable Results as defined in the 2022 GSP.

Groundwater conditions, as described below, may be considered in conjunction with other criteria to determine water shortage stages.

Minimum Thresholds and Undesirable Results from GSP

- Minimum Thresholds for Representative Monitoring Points (RMPs) are the average of the five lowest groundwater elevations historically measured at the RMPs.
- Santa Margarita aquifer groundwater levels are influenced by rainfall that directly recharges it. Although levels in drought years may fall below RMP Minimum Thresholds, the highly permeable aquifer rebounds levels quickly in above-average rainfall years. There are no SVWD extraction wells in the Santa Margarita aquifer and therefore the Santa Margarita RMPs identified within SVWD’s boundaries in the GSP are not evaluated as groundwater conditions triggers.
- The deeper confined aquifers (Lompico and Butano) are more susceptible to prolonged low groundwater levels because of their limited surface exposure to recharge. This characteristic

makes them sensitive to increased pumping in dry years and warrants limiting their pumping to approximately the sustainable yield for that aquifer. Since groundwater levels in the Lompico aquifer are lowered, it is the target of recharge projects to improve groundwater levels and to increase water supply reliability by using the aquifer for water storage. When recharge projects of around 700 AFY are implemented in the Scotts Valley area, groundwater modeling has indicated that Lompico aquifer groundwater levels will increase at least 20 feet above 2022 levels.

- Based on the characteristics described above, the GSP defines Undesirable Results occurring when groundwater levels fall below Minimum Thresholds in two or more consecutive non-drought years. If the lowered levels are caused by emergency operational issues or extended drought those levels are not considered Undesirable Results.

Groundwater Level Trends

- Groundwater level trends will be compiled and considered with the SMGWA hydrogeologist to determine if conditions trigger water shortage conditions based on the following:
 - Hydrographs of groundwater levels to determine trends for both extraction and monitoring wells, and
 - Comparison of groundwater levels against Minimum Thresholds for RMPs.

Five-Year District Pumping Average

- Drought and possible other water shortage conditions impact the purveyors that rely on the SMGB. Reduced recharge in times of extended droughts presents a concern for supply reliability. Since groundwater is shared by all pumpers in the SMGB, pumping within the sustainable yield is the collective responsibility of all SMGB pumpers. The GSP does not apportion the sustainable yield by purveyor as this is more like an adjudication of groundwater use, which is not the intent of the GSP. For purposes of the WSCP, the assessment of groundwater conditions includes comparing average pumping by aquifer over the last five-years to the projected long-term average annual pumping (Baseline Pumping) under groundwater model simulated baseline conditions shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3: District Baseline Pumping (AFY)

Santa Margarita Aquifer	Lompico Aquifer	Butano Aquifer	Total
0	950	350	1,300

1. Baseline Pumping is based on groundwater model simulations developed for the SMGB GSP.

Groundwater Condition Triggers

During the Annual Assessment, the District may consider any of, or combinations of, the groundwater triggers identified in **Table 4**. Groundwater triggers are intended to inform WSCP decisions and do not supersede the SMGWA’s formal GSP compliance determinations.

Table 4: SMGB Groundwater Condition Triggers

Stage	Groundwater Condition Trigger
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only rainfall trigger applies
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) RMP in any of the Monterey, Lompico & Butano aquifers are within 10 feet of Minimum Threshold • Last 5-year District pumping average exceeds District Baseline Pumping by 10% for either aquifer
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) RMP in any of the Monterey, Lompico & Butano aquifers have Minimum Threshold exceedance • Overall groundwater level trend over 5 years is declining in 25% of RMPs • Last 5-year District pumping average exceeds District Baseline Pumping by 20% for either aquifer
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) RMP in any of the Monterey, Lompico & Butano aquifers have Minimum Threshold exceedances • Overall groundwater level trend over 5 years is declining in 50% of RMPs • Last 5-year District pumping average exceeds District Baseline Pumping by 30% for either aquifer.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five (5) RMP in any of the Monterey, Lompico & Butano aquifers have Minimum Threshold exceedances • Overall groundwater level trend over 5 years is declining in 75% of RMPs • Last 5-year District pumping average exceeds District Baseline Pumping by 40% for either aquifer.

1. The District may adjust stages up or down based on annual review and other WSCP evaluation criteria.

3.2.3 Production Capacity (Infrastructure Considerations)

Infrastructure capabilities and overall production are analyzed to determine if a possible outage or deficiency may occur or continue in the coming year due to a variety of factors potentially including, but not limited to, man-made or natural catastrophic events. Man-made events may include routine maintenance or replacements of major water supply facilities (wells, filters, storage tanks). Natural events such as seismic, hurricanes, landslides, wildfires, etc., may also cause outages of major water supply facilities. If the District determines there are limitations to production capacity, a shortage stage declaration and subsequent demand reductions may be required. Triggers may include:

- Loss of key well or treatment facility
- Storage deficit (tank offline)
- Inability to meet peak daily flows or fire flow
- Planned outages (tank replacement, critical supply upgrades, etc.)

3.2.4 State Mandates

The District has historically been required by the State to reduce demand regardless of supply reliability. Compliance with State mandates for water use efficiency can be declared during drought or in preparation for future droughts. Such mandates occurred in response to the Governor’s drought declarations in the 2012-2016 drought with a subsequent Executive Order B-37-16 and related legislation for Making Conservation a California Way of Life. The District may consider State mandates and mandatory compliance with water use efficiency standards in determining water shortage stages.

3.3 Annual Assessment Procedures

District staff will perform the Annual Assessment in April of each year following these procedures.

- **The team conducting the Annual Assessment consists of staff performing the following roles:**
 - District staff: gathers key inputs and historical data, analyzes potential supply and demand gaps; provides insight on demand trends and future production capacity.
 - District hydrogeologist consultant(s): provides groundwater condition information.
 - District Board/Committee: Staff presents information and any anticipated water shortages to the District's Board and/or committee and receives their feedback.
- **Each spring, evaluate rainfall for the first part of the water year plus the four prior water years**
 - Determine if there is a rainfall trigger per Table 2.
- **Obtain and review the SMGB Annual Report from the previous water year and consult with District's hydrogeologist(s) to determine if annual conditions trigger water shortage conditions:**
 - Hydrographs of groundwater levels to determine trends for both extraction and monitoring wells,
 - Compare groundwater levels against Minimum Thresholds for RMPs, and
 - Total well pumping data aggregated by aquifer and District.
- **Determine the type of water shortage and corresponding stage.**
- **Develop a recommendation to present to the District Board.**
- **District's Board makes a final determination on which water shortage stage to declare and implement.**
- **Develop and implement appropriate communication protocols and response actions.**
- **Submit Annual Assessment to DWR by July 1**

SECTION 4 STANDARD WATER SHORTAGE LEVELS

The District utilizes five water shortage stages to identify and respond to water shortages. The District encourages water use efficiency efforts year-round, regardless of a shortage stage. The shortage levels for the District WSCP stages are provided in **Table 5**.

Table 5: District Water Shortage Contingency Plan Levels

Stage	Shortage Level	Description
1	0-10%	Mild Water Shortage
2	10%-20%	Moderate Water Shortage
3	20%-30%	Severe Water Shortage
4	30%-50%	Critical Water Shortage
5	Greater than 50%	Catastrophic Water Shortage

The CWC outlines six standard water shortage levels that correspond to a gap in supply compared to normal year availability. The six standard water shortage levels correspond to progressively increasing estimated shortage conditions (up to 10-, 20-, 30-, 40-, 50-percent, and greater than 50-percent shortage compared to the normal reliability condition) and align with the shortage response actions that a water supplier would implement to meet the severity of the impending shortages.

The CWC allows suppliers with an existing water shortage contingency plan that uses different water shortage levels to comply with the six standard levels by developing and including a cross-reference relating its existing shortage categories to the six standard water shortage levels. The District uses a five-shortage stage approach for this WSCP. A cross reference to the six standard stages is shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Cross-Reference for Standard vs Supplier Shortage Levels (DWR 8-1)

DWR Standard Shortage Levels	Percent Shortage Range	Supplier Shortage Levels	Percent Shortage Range
1	Up to 10%	1	0-10%
2	Up to 20%	2	10%-20%
3	Up to 30%	3	20%-30%
4	Up to 40%	4	30%-50%
5	Up to 50%	4	30%-50%
6	>50%	5	>50%

SECTION 5 SHORTAGE RESPONSE ACTION

CWC Section 10632(a)(4) requires water suppliers to implement water shortage response actions that align with the water shortage levels and to estimate the water reductions from the action. Actions include demand reduction, supply augmentation, operational changes, and mandatory prohibitions. Actions are selected based on the declared shortage level, current operating conditions, and the state of infrastructure. The actions presented below are intended as a menu of options and are not required to be implemented at each stage. Actions are scalable based on the stages (e.g., actions identified in Stages 1 or 2 may be implemented in Stages 3 or 4 at increasing implementation, etc.).

5.1 Demand Reduction

The optional demand reduction actions and their estimated water savings potential are shown in **Table 7** and **Table 8**. Actions may include, but are not limited to conservation and rebate programs, public information campaigns, leak detection and repair, and prohibitions on potable water use for certain applications (except for health and safety reasons). Although it is difficult to estimate the volume of savings for each action, the District expects to meet its required demand reductions at each shortage stage through a combination of response actions, outreach and communication efforts. The estimated water savings potential summarized in **Table 7** is based on published industry references. **Table 8** includes various possible actions and estimated savings to be submitted in the standard DWR tables as part of the UWMP.

Demand reduction percentages are applied relative to normal-year demand conditions. While variable projected demands will be considered in the Annual Assessment, **Table 7** conservatively assesses the District’s ability to reduce demand (as a percentage) of the normal year’s production.

Table 7: Estimated Savings by Shortage Stage

Stage	Required Savings ¹	Estimated Savings from Quantifiable Actions ²	Estimated Savings from Unquantifiable Actions ³
1	10%	5%	5%
2	20%	5%	15%
3	30%	15%	15%
4 & up	50%	15%	35%

1. Required savings may be met through a combination of quantifiable and unquantifiable actions. The District will only implement measures to the extent necessary to mitigate a water shortage, although estimates may indicate greater savings is obtainable. It is anticipated that some of the required savings will be met through quantifiable shortage response actions and the remaining amount savings will be met through other actions, including communication and outreach efforts.
2. Quantifiable savings are estimated based on various published sources and are provided as a guide. The degree of implementation of actions can vary in each stage and can result in a wide range of savings. For a list of all specific shortage response actions and their potential savings, refer to Table 8.
3. The remaining savings not achieved by quantifiable actions are anticipated to be achieved through unquantifiable communication and outreach efforts.

Table 8: Demand Reduction Actions (DWR 8-3)

Shortage Level	Demand Reduction Actions	Estimated Savings (%)	Additional Explanation	Penalty or Charge
All	Other water feature or swimming pool restriction		All decorative water features must re-circulate water, or users must secure a waiver from the supplier	(1)
All	Other		Washing or hosing down vehicles is prohibited except by use of a hand-held container, hose with an automatic shut off device, or at a commercial car wash	(1)
All	Other - Prohibit use of potable water for washing hard surfaces		Washing hard or paved surfaces is prohibited except to alleviate safety or sanitary hazards using a hand-held container, hose with an automatic shut off device, or a low-volume high pressure cleaning machine that recycles used water	(1)
All	Landscape - Restrict or prohibit runoff from landscape irrigation		Watering vegetated areas in a manner that causes excessive water flow or runoff onto an adjoining sidewalk, driveway, street, alley, gutter, or ditch is prohibited	(1)
All	Landscape - Other landscape restriction or prohibition		Irrigating ornamental turf on public street medians is prohibited	(1)
All	Landscape - Other landscape restriction or prohibition		No landscape watering shall occur within 48 hours after measurable precipitation	(1)
All	Expand Public Information Campaign		Increase public awareness of existing District rebate programs such as for turf replacement and plumbing fixtures	(1)
1	Other - Require automatic shut of hoses	0.1	Use a shutoff nozzle on hoses	(1)
1	CII - Lodging establishment must offer opt out of linen service		Lodging establishments must offer opt out of linen service	(1)
1	CII - Other CII restriction or prohibition		Display by restaurants and hotels of water conservation signs	(1)
1	Other - Prohibit use of potable water for construction and dust control		If recycled water is available, require recycled water use for construction water use and dust control. If recycled water is not available, consult with water supplier on ways to reduce water use and/or use bulk water	(1)
1	Other - Customers must repair leaks, breaks, and malfunctions in a timely manner	3	Fix leaks or faulty sprinklers promptly/within the amount of time determined by the water supplier	(1)
1	Increase Water Waste Patrols		Increase water waste education, investigation, and enforcement	(1)

Shortage Level	Demand Reduction Actions	Estimated Savings (%)	Additional Explanation	Penalty or Charge
2	CII - Restaurants may only serve water upon request	0.1	Restaurants may only serve water upon request	(1)
2	Pools and Spas - Require covers for pools and spas	0.1	Require covers for pools and spas	(1)
2	Landscape - Limit landscape irrigation to specific times	0.5	Watering or irrigation with a device that is not continuously attended to is limited to fifteen (15) minutes per day per valve. Low flow drip type systems, water efficient stream rotor systems, and sensor/weather-controlled systems are exempt	(1)
2	Landscape - Limit landscape irrigation to specific days	1	Irrigation for turf watering using potable water shall be limited to a specified number of days per week determined by the supplier depending on the shortage severity. Plant containers, trees, shrubs, and vegetable gardens may be watered additional days using only drip irrigation or hand watering as determined by the supplier depending on the shortage severity	(1)
2	Implement or Modify Drought Rate Structure or Surcharge		Drought Rates and Surcharges may be utilized by supplier	Yes
3	Other water feature or swimming pool restriction	0.1	Existing pools shall not be emptied and refilled using potable water unless required for public health and safety purposes	(1)
3	Landscape - Other landscape restriction or prohibition	4	With the exception of landscapes watered with non-potable water, limit the installation of new landscaping to drought tolerant trees, shrubs, and groundcover. Prohibit installation of new turf or hydroseed. Customers may apply for a waiver to irrigate during an establishment period for the installation of new turf or hydroseed	(1)
3	CII - Commercial kitchens required to use pre-rinse spray valves	5	Food preparation establishments must use water efficient kitchen spray valves	(1)
4	Other		The supplier may set or adjust water allocations in all categories to meet the available water supply	(1)

1. Refer to District Water Waste Policy P500-15-1 for penalties and charges associated water prohibitions.

5.2 Supply Augmentation

Presently, the District relies exclusively only on groundwater as its source of potable water supply. The District plans to address water shortages through extensive communication and outreach efforts and demand reduction actions (**Table 8**). There are no measurable supply augmentation actions at this time. The District will be implementing conjunctive use of surface water through partnership with other local water agencies and the Regional Intertie Project with the City of Santa Cruz. The timing and availability of this supply will depend on project completion and operational agreements.

5.3 Emergency Response Plan

The District utilizes the City of Scotts Valley Emergency Operation Plan, which is compliant with the State's policies on Emergency Response and Planning, the Standardized Emergency Management System Operational Area response, National Incident Management System, and defines the primary and support roles of City personnel and departments in post incident damage assessment and After-Action reporting requirements. These processes address the District's response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, human-caused emergencies, technological, and catastrophic events, which cause widespread damage, loss, or destruction. The plan provides operational concepts relating to the various emergency situations, identifies components of the Emergency Management Organization, and describes the overall responsibilities of the organization for protecting life and property, and assuring the overall well-being of the population. The plan also identifies the sources of outside support that might be provided. The plan details the District's response, personnel, and assistance, which will be provided during a disaster and emergency.

5.4 Seismic Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan

Disasters, such as earthquakes, can and will occur without notice. The District resides near potentially active faults. Seismic risks and mitigation plans are published in Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP). The County of Santa Cruz LHMP (County LHMP) was last updated in 2025 and includes section dedicated to the Scotts Valley Water District (Section 5). The County LHMP identifies seismic risks and mitigation actions, such as storage tank hardening, that the District could implement to alleviate seismic risks and increase reliability. Actions include upgrades of water infrastructure, emergency and critical structures and continued preparedness coordination with other local agencies (County of Santa Cruz, 2025).

In addition, the District maintains a Risk and Resiliency Assessment (RRA) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) that are updated in accordance with America's Water Infrastructure Act and J-100 standards. The RRA and ERP analyze all critical facilities for a seismic event and address mitigation strategies.

5.5 Shortage Response Action Effectiveness

Under normal water supply conditions, water production data is recorded daily. From this information, month to month and year to year statistics are calculated. This data allows the District to determine the effectiveness of the implemented actions. If reduction goals are not being met, the District can make the necessary decisions for corrective action to be taken. Since the District maintains daily production records, more frequent reporting could be provided to assess effectiveness during drought or other water shortage. In addition, the District has implemented Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), which provides additional data and opportunities to effectively monitor and coordinate with customers in near real-time.

During water shortage conditions, savings are measured in comparison to what is considered to be normal year demand (i.e., current customer base with approximately average rainfall), or in reference to a specific base year as may be dictated by Statewide requirements. It is assumed that a given required shortage addressed in each level can be met by quantifiable measures and the remainder of shortage can be addressed by unquantifiable measures. It is expected that response actions effectiveness is also a result of successful communication and outreach efforts.

SECTION 6 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

In accordance with CWC Section 10632(a)(5), this sections describes the communication protocols and procedures to inform customers, the public, and state and local officials of any current or predicted water shortages. When a shortage level is enacted or changed, a notice is published in the local newspaper and on the District website. Based on the severity of the shortage condition, the District may also advertise on the local radio, publish special publications, or send mail notifications to its customers. In the case of an emergency, the District coordinates with the City of Scotts Valley and County of Santa Cruz for the possible proclamation of a local emergency. The District also assigns a Public Information Officer who is responsible for monitoring and controlling the release of information about the event and serves as a point of contact for news media and other appropriate agencies and organizations. This WSCP relies on existing communication plans to provide guidance for efficient communication of declaration of a shortage level, inform restrictions, and provide updates during a water shortage emergency. The District prioritizes effective communication, especially in times of a water shortage emergency. The District routinely communicates to customers about details on when a stage is announced. Communication actions include bill inserts, electronic blasts, newsletters, website and social media postings, customer portal notifications, and other additional methods. The District continues to provide reminders about shortage levels and encourage water use efficiency at all times.

SECTION 7 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

This section is in accordance with CWC Section 10632(a)(6) and describes the compliance and enforcement provisions.

The District has established a Water Waste Policy P500-15-1 (Policy) which outlines the following consequences for violations:

- Initial Notification: Verbal or written explanation of the violation will be communicated to the customer, along with required remediation, and the requirement to respond by the next business day.
- Second Notification: If no response has been received by the next business day, SVWD shall issue a Second Notification in writing.
- Final Notification: If a) no response to the Second Notification has been received, b) satisfactory arrangements have not been made for correction or c) timely verification of correction has not occurred, the customer's potable water service may be disconnected and/or a fine of \$100 (or other amount set by State regulations) may be charged for each calendar day in which the violation occurs. All fines must be paid prior to re-connection of service.

The District's Policy provides the power to perform all acts necessary to ensure water resources are put to beneficial use and that waste or unreasonable use of water is prevented.

SECTION 8 LEGAL AUTHORITIES

The District’s Board has the legal authority to declare a water shortage stage, associated curtailment target, and set emergency water rates. As noted above, Water Waste Policy P500-15-1, Think Twice Program establishes the rules and regulations for efficient water use and minimizing water waste. In addition, the WSCP was developed and updated in conjunction with the District’s UWMP. Resolutions adopting the WSCP, and resolutions enacting selected components of the WSCP, further provide the District with the authority to implement water efficiency efforts.

SECTION 9 FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF WSCP

Significantly reduced demands in response to water shortage conditions often trigger revenue shortfalls. To mitigate the financial impact, the District may implement add-on drought rates during a Stage 2 or Stage 3 water shortage, as provided in **Table 9**.

Table 9: Add-On Monthly Drought Rates

Residential Tiered Rates (per 100 gal)	Stage 2	Stage 3 and Higher
0 to 3,000	\$0.00	\$0.00
3,001 to 6,000	\$0.57	\$0.92
6,001 to 7,000	\$0.57	\$0.92
Over 7,000	\$0.57	\$0.92

<https://www.svwd.org/Rates>

The District could also use reserves to minimize the need for additional rate increases while also implementing expense reduction measures in an attempt to match the revenue gap. A full analysis of the water rates based on the financial conditions at the time water reduction would occur and would be presented to the District’s Boards for approval.

SECTION 10 MONITORING AND REPORTING

In accordance with CWC Section 10632(a)(9), this section describes the reporting requirements and monitoring procedures to implement the WSCP and track and evaluate the response actions effectiveness.

The District intends to monitor supply and project demand on an annual basis in April of each year and, if triggers identified in this WSCP are met, then the District will consider activation of the WSCP. Monitoring demands is essential to ensure the WSCP response actions are adequately meeting reductions and decreasing the supply/demand gap. This helps to analyze the effectiveness of the WSCP or identify the need to activate additional response actions.

The water savings from implementation of the WSCP are determined based on monthly consumption data which will be compared to the consumption data from prior months, the same period of the prior year, and/ or the allocation. First, the cumulative consumption for the various sectors (e.g., residential, commercial, etc.) will be evaluated to reach the target demand reduction level. Then if needed, individual accounts will be monitored. Weather and other possible influences may be accounted for in the evaluation.

SECTION 11 WSCP REFINEMENT PROCEDURES

The WSCP is best prepared and implemented as an adaptive management plan. The District uses results obtained from the monitoring and reporting program to evaluate any needs for revisions. The WSCP is used to provide guidance to the Board, staff, and the public by identifying response actions to allow for efficient management of any water shortage with predictability and accountability.

To maintain a useful and efficient standard of practice in water shortage conditions, the requirements, criteria, and response actions need to be continually evaluated and improved upon to ensure that its shortage risk tolerance is adequate, and the shortage response actions are effective and up to date based on lessons learned from implementing the WSCP. Potential changes to the WSCP that would warrant an update include, but are not limited to, any changes to shortage level triggers, changes to the shortage level structure, and/or changes to the response actions. Any prospective changes to the WSCP would need to be presented at a public hearing, staff would obtain any comments and adopt the updated WSCP. The steps to formally amend the WSCP are discussed below.

Potential refinements will be documented and integrated in the next WSCP update. If new response actions are identified by staff or public, these could be advertised as voluntary actions until these are formally adopted as mandatory.

SECTION 12 SPECIALIZED WATER FEATURE DISTINCTION

The CWC Section 10623 (b) requires that suppliers analyze and define water features that are artificially supplied with water, including ponds, lakes, waterfalls, and fountains, separately from swimming pools and spas, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 115921 of the Health and Safety Code. Non-pool or non-spa water features may use or be able to use recycled water, whereas pools and spas must use potable water for health and safety considerations, so limitations to pools and spas may require different considerations compared to non-pool or non-spa water features.

SECTION 13 PLAN ADOPTION, SUBMITTAL, AND AVAILABILITY

Future revisions to the WSCP will follow these revised adoption procedures, which adhere to the requirements of the CWC Section 10642:

Step 1: Prepare an internal administrative draft WSCP reviewed by District staff.

Step 2: Publish the draft WSCP for public review at least 14 days in advance of a public hearing meeting.

Step 3: Publish two notices of the public hearing in a local newspaper at least once a week for two consecutive weeks, with at least 5 days between publications. The notices include:

- Time and place of hearing
- Location of the draft WSCP

Step 3: Hold a public hearing before adopting the WSCP to allow public input.

Step 4: The Board may formally adopt the WSCP if no substantive changes are required. The adoption resolution will be included as an Appendix.

Step 5: Within 30 days of adoption, the WSCP will be posted on the District's website and submitted to DWR via the WUE Data Portal.

Appendix A

Board Resolution for Adoption of the WSCP

(to be included after Board adoption)