

SB 552

California Senate Bill • 2021-2022 Regular Session

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Passed Senate

Passed Assembly

Became Law

Feb 18, 2021

Jun 01, 2021

Sep 08, 2021

Sep 23, 2021

Drought planning: small water suppliers: nontransient noncommunity water systems.

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BILL SUBJECTS

Drought Planning: Small Water Suppliers: Nontransient Noncommunity Water Systems.

ABSTRACT

Existing law declares that small water suppliers and rural communities are often not covered by established water shortage requirements, and that the state should provide guidance to improve drought planning for small water suppliers and rural communities. Existing law required the Department of Water Resources, in consultation with the State Water Resources Control Board and other relevant state and local agencies and stakeholders, to use available data to identify, no later than January 1, 2020, small water suppliers and rural communities that may be at risk of drought and water shortage vulnerability. To implement this directive, the department formed a stakeholder advisory group, the County Drought Advisory Group. Existing law required the department, in consultation with the state board, to propose to the Governor and the Legislature, by January 1, 2020, recommendations and guidance relating to the development and implementation of countywide drought and water shortage contingency plans to address the planning needs of small water suppliers and rural communities, as provided.

This bill would require small water suppliers, as defined, serving 1,000 to 2,999 service connections, inclusive, and nontransient noncommunity water systems that are schools, no later than July 1, 2023, to develop and maintain an abridged Water Shortage Contingency Plan that includes specified drought-planning elements. The bill would require a small water supplier serving fewer than 1,000 service connections to add drought planning elements to its emergency notification or response plan and submit the plan to the state board. The bill would require these water systems to report annually specified water supply condition information to the state board through the state board's Electronic Annual Reporting System or other reporting tool, as directed by the state board. The bill would require small water suppliers and nontransient noncommunity water systems that are schools to implement, subject to funding availability, specified drought resiliency measures, including, among others, having at least one backup source of water supply and metering each service connection. The bill would exempt from these provisions small water suppliers, or small water suppliers integrated into larger water systems, that voluntarily choose to instead comply with specified existing law relating to urban water management plans.

This bill would require a county to establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county's jurisdiction, as provided. The bill would authorize a county, in lieu of establishing a standing task force, to establish an alternative process that facilitates drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county's jurisdiction, as provided. The bill would provide that a county that establishes a drought task force on or before January 1, 2022, shall be deemed in compliance with these requirements as long as the task force continues to exist. The bill would require a county to develop a plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risk and proposed interim and long-term solutions, as provided. Because the bill would impose additional duties on counties, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

This bill would require the department to take specified actions to support implementation of the recommendations from the County Drought Advisory Group. The bill would require the department to establish a standing interagency drought and water shortage task force to, among other things, facilitate proactive planning and coordination, both for predrought planning and postdrought emergency response, which shall consist of various representatives, including representatives from local governments. Because the bill would impose additional duties on local governments, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.