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City of Rio Dell Newsletter

## Drought Level 2 Now in Effect

City of Rio Dell, 675 Wildwood Avenue, Rio Dell, CA. 95562

City Hall: (707) 764-3532

**City Council Meetings:** The City Council meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The City encourages residents to attend the meetings.

**City Council Members:** Mayor Jack Thompson, Gordon Johnson, Melissa Marks, Frank Wilson and Julie Woodall.

**Planning Commission Meetings:** The Planning Commission meets the fourth Thursday of each month. The Commission meets at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

**Planning Commission Members:** Two Vacant Positions, Nick Angeloff, Billy Joe Long and Alice Millington.

## **Update on the Drought and Curtailment Issue.....Drought Level 2 Now in Effect**

The Drought situation for the City of Rio Dell has been a rapidly evolving one. By the time our last newsletter arrived in your mailboxes over the weekend, the situation had already fundamentally changed at the State level.



The City of Rio Dell for the month of July had been under a curtailment notice from the State of California, meaning that the city's water rights had been suspended in favor of senior water rights holders, mostly upstream. This curtailment limited city residents to the use of 50 gallons per day per person, and prohibited the outdoor use of city supplied water. For the time being, this is no longer the case.

On Monday, August 4, 2014 the city received a letter from the State Water Resources Control Board rescinding its decision to curtail the City of Rio Dell's water rights. This decision was based off the fact that the city is one of the last users of water from the Eel river as a whole (an argument the city posed right after receiving the curtailment notice) and therefore there would be no senior water rights holders who could be damaged. Furthermore, analysis at UC Davis concurred with this position and took account for flows from the South Fork of the Eel River. This rescission of the curtailment notice took effect immediately and resulted in the automatic lifting the 50 gallons per person per day limitation imposed upon by the State.

Despite the change in the State's position, drought stage 3 was still in effect. Stage 3 prohibited the outdoor use of water, and residents relied upon donated water from wells and springs in the surrounding area.

As of the evening of August 5, 2014 the City Council opted to amend the drought level, bringing it down to level 2. Drought level 2 is consistent with water restrictions called for statewide by the Governor and the State Water Resources Control Board. It allows water customers to use water outside for two days out of the week. Strict prohibitions remain in force for outside irrigation that creates runoff or is otherwise recklessly wasteful.

It is expected that Drought Level 2 will remain in place at least through August. Drought conditions are serious, and it is still possible for the State Water Resources Control Board to curtail the city's water rights once again.

Below is a description of the City's Drought Level 2 restrictions:

**Stage 2 — Mandatory Conservation Measures.** Mandatory implementation of conservation measures.

**Customers shall comply with the following water conservation measures:**

- Refrain from landscape watering between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00p.m.;
- Restrict outdoor water usage to an 'Odd Even' water conservation plan. Under this plan Odd numbered homes and businesses will be asked to restrict outside water usage to Wednesday and Friday. Even numbered homes and businesses will be asked to water outdoors only on Tuesday and Thursday;

- Refrain from allowing water to run off any lawns, landscape, or garden into adjoining streets, gutters, sidewalks, parking lot or alley;
- Refrain from hosing or washing sidewalks, walkways, driveways, parking lots or other hard surfaced areas;
- Refrain from washing cars, boats, trailers, or other vehicles except by hose with a shut off nozzle and bucket;
- Equip any hose with a quick acting shut-off nozzle;
- Promptly repair all leaks in plumbing fixtures, water lines, and sprinkler systems;
- Equip ornamental fountains, ponds or lakes with a water recycling system;
- Equip commercial car washes with a water recycling system;
- Refrain from filling or refilling a swimming pool, spa or hot tub;
- Restaurants provide on each table a notice of water emergency and refrain from serving drinking water except upon specific request by a customer;
- Hotels and motels provide in each room a notice of water emergency.

Customers will be notified via news media and other methods of this stage of water shortage emergency and implementation of mandatory conservation measures.

Industrial water users will be specifically notified via telephone and City staff will make every attempt to keep them informed of the status of the water emergency so they can prepare for a possible shutdown of production.

Warnings will be issued for water waste, over-watering and water leaks. Citations will be issued and Fines and Penalties imposed in accordance with City Ordinances.

### **2014 Curtailment Crisis Timeline**

**July 2, 2014** – City of Rio Dell receives correspondence from the State Water Resources Control Board. The letter is titled “Notice of unavailability of water and immediate curtailment for those with post-1914 water rights diverting water in the North Fork Eel River, Mainstem Eel River, and the Van Duzen Tributary.” The curtailment notice effectively halted all post-1914 water diversions from the Eel River, Rio Dell’s being such a diversion.

**July 8, 2014** - The Rio Dell City Council held a special meeting to prepare the city’s response to the State curtailment notice, which included the implementation of the Stage 3-Serious Water Shortage Contingency Plan effective immediately. Stage 3 is the second highest drought restriction, followed by stage 4 only in matters of system contamination or failure.

**July 9, 2014** – City distributes flyers and door-hangers house-by-house to inform residents and encourage voluntary compliance with state mandates.

**July 10, 2014** – Water use drops by approximately 37.5%

**July 15, 2014** – City Council considers emergency water use penalty schedule for excessive use. The Council formally adopts the Serious Water Shortage Contingency plan through Resolution No. 1234-2014.

**July 22, 2014** – City Council considers emergency water use penalty schedule for excessive use. The City Council also suspends project to liquidate city properties with former well sites and directs staff to reexamine the wells for potential drought related use.

**July 28, 2014** – City Council opts to table the excessive use penalty structure in light of the public's overwhelming voluntary compliance with water use restrictions. The Council directs staff to continue to monitor water use and be prepared to revisit the penalty structure should overall water use levels exceed the State mandated ceiling. It should be noted that the Stage 3 contingency plan remains in effect, including penalties ranging from \$250.00 to \$500.00 up to service termination for outdoor water use including lawn & garden watering or car washing.

**August 4, 2014** – City of Rio Dell receives letter from the State Water Resources Control Board rescinding the curtailment notice first delivered to the city on July 2, 2014. This notice effectively ends the 50 gallons per person per day limit on water use. City issues press release to notify residents of this change.

**August 5, 2014** – Rio Dell City Council places an urgency item on the agenda for its regularly scheduled meeting. The urgency item proposes to lower the city's drought stage level from 3 to 2, thereby making it consistent with statewide directives. The urgency item passes 5-0.

### **Help Save California's Water Now**

California, it's time to adopt a new habit. One of our most important resources is in trouble, and we need to do everything we can to protect it today and into the future.

Our state is facing severe water challenges, and many communities and ecosystems are suffering as a result. Environmental problems, the pressures of a growing population and the effects of climate change are making it extremely difficult to keep water flowing reliably to our economy, our environment, our farms and our communities.

State and local water managers are working on long-term solutions, including investments in our water infrastructure. But in the meantime, California needs every drop of water it can get, which is why we all need to do more to conserve water. Doing everything we can to save water today will go a long way toward helping our water supply situation while we move ahead with the necessary long-term fixes.

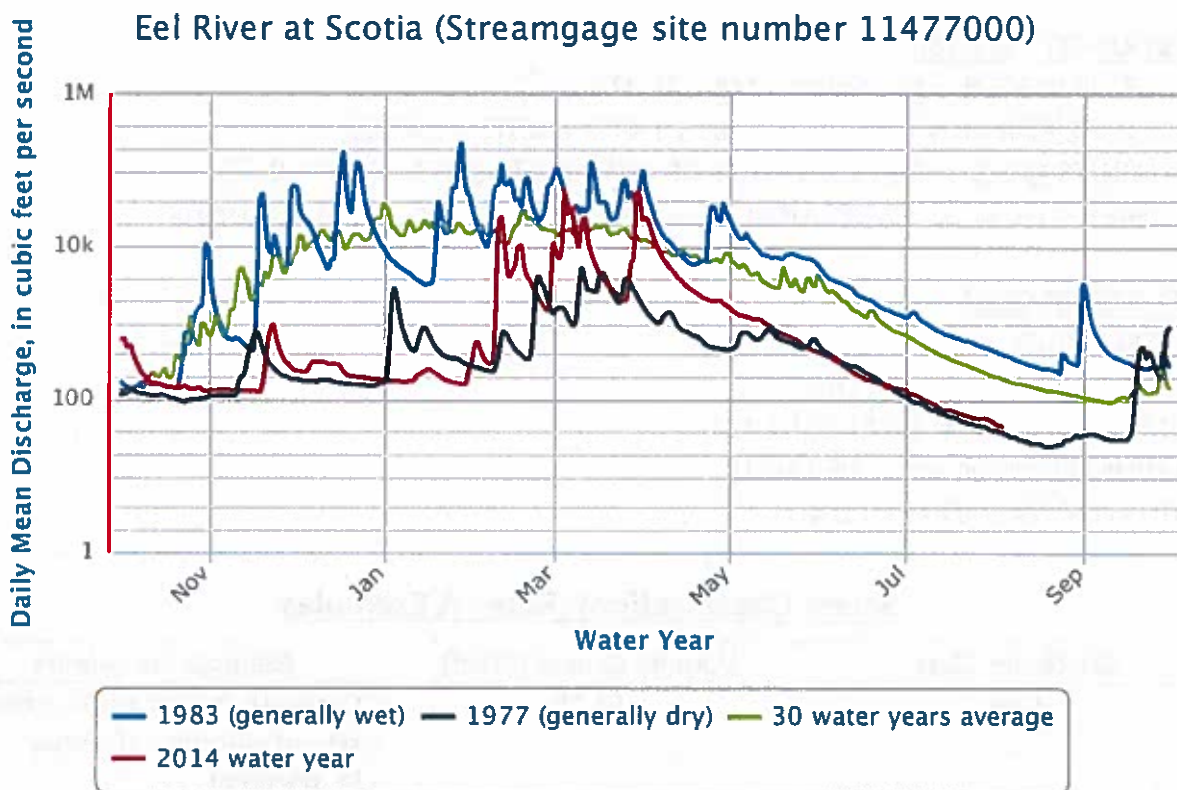
The good news is that it's not difficult to save water in our daily lives. Just as Californians have embraced compact-fluorescent light bulbs and recycling, we can adopt habits to reduce our water use inside and outside our homes on a daily basis. As we have seen with energy conservation, small changes in our daily habits can make a big difference for California.

In 2009, the California Department of Water Resources joined with the Association of California Water Agencies—450 public water agencies throughout the state—to form a statewide conservation and education program called "Save Our Water". This effort is aimed at helping Californians learn about our water challenges and ways to save water inside and outside our homes.

For example, did you know that the typical Californian uses much more water outdoors than indoors? Watering the lawn, washing cars and cleaning off the driveway and patio use much more water than you might think. Simple changes to our behavior, such as watering only when your landscape needs it or using a broom instead of the hose on the driveway, can add up to big water savings for the state.

So join in this statewide effort to save California's water. Plant water-wise landscaping, install a SMART irrigation controller, and take shorter showers. These are just a few of the easy ways we can all help to "save our water."

For more information about how to conserve water or about the "Save Our Water" public education program, please visit [www.saveourH2O.org](http://www.saveourH2O.org) or join the effort on Facebook and Twitter.



# Water & Sewer Billing Information

The City Council recently adopted a new sewer rate structure which will be reflected in your August billing. The Water Meters are read by the end of each month. Utility bills are sent out and due at the beginning of each month and are delinquent if not paid by the 26<sup>th</sup> of the month, at which time a 10% late fee is charged. After 10 calendar days or the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month, a second late notice is sent out. If the previous balance (stated on your billing statement) has not been paid within 7 calendar days of the second late notice, then service is discontinued. Once the service has been discontinued, the full amount plus an additional reconnection fee is required before water service is restored. The first reconnection fee is \$40; the second reconnection fee is \$60 and all subsequent reconnection fees are \$100.

## COST OF CITY WATER

1 UNIT OF WATER = 100 CUBIC=748 GALLONS

BASE RATE FOR 1 UNIT = \$27.03 (OUT OF CITY LIMITS = \$40.57)

2-10 UNITS @ \$2.44 PER UNIT (OUT OF CITY LIMITS @ \$3.67 PER UNIT)

11 UNITS & UP @ \$3.67 PER UNIT (OUT OF CITY LIMITS @ \$5.90 PER UNIT)

## CITY SEWER COST

FIXED CHARGE \$47.01

LOW FLOW @ \$3.29 PER UNIT

DOMESTIC FLOW @ \$4.11 PER UNIT

MEDIUM FLOW @ \$6.17 PER UNIT

HIGH FLOW @ \$7.19 PER UNIT

## Sewer Classifications, Rates & Examples

Customer Class	Volume Charge (\$/ccf)	Example Customers
Low	\$3.29	Car wash, office, retail store, school without cafeteria, laundromat
Domestic	\$4.11	Single family residential, multifamily residential, hotel, motel, mobilehome park, churches, auto shop, gas station, school with cafeteria
Medium	\$6.17	Beauty shop, medical and dental offices
High	\$7.19	Restaurant, market with food prep, bakery

*If you have any questions please call City Hall at 764-3532 and ask for Hilda*