



NEWS RELEASE

P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • (213) 217-6485 • www.mwdh2o.com

Contacts: Rebecca Kimitich, (202) 821-5253, mobile; rkimitich@mwdh2o.com
 Maritza Fairfield, (909) 816-7722, mobile; mfairfield@mwdh2o.com

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METROPOLITAN STATEMENT ON COLORADO RIVER SHORTAGE DECLARATION

Adel Hagekhalil, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, issues the following statement on today's announcement by the Bureau of Reclamation declaring an official shortage condition next year due to the lowering (below 1,075 feet) level of Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam:

“The Colorado River is sending us a clear message: conserve, reuse and recycle. The river has been a lifeline for Southern California for more than 80 years. This shortage announcement moves the river into a new era and reinforces the need for Southern Californians to use less water to preserve this critical supply. We have delayed this moment on the Colorado River thanks to our partnerships, conservation programs and investments in local supplies and storage – taking advantage of wet winters when they come. Similar efforts on a larger scale will be required going forward to bring river supplies and demands into balance.

“While California will not be required to contribute supplies to Lake Mead next year under the Drought Contingency Plan, this is a wake-up call that we need to strengthen our response to continued drought conditions. A further lowering of the reservoir could trigger a required contribution from Metropolitan in the near future. We are already at the table with our partners on the river exploring longer-term solutions to shared risks and vulnerabilities. The next chapter in the history of this river must be one of collaboration and historic action to stabilize a supply that is so vital to seven states and two countries.

“Through one water practices, integration, innovation, and inclusion, we can be ready for the future. But it will take each and every one of us. We are all one.”

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative that, along with its 26 cities and retail suppliers, provide water for 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.