

Affordable, Safe Drinking Water for Disadvantaged Communities



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California Communities without Safe, Affordable Drinking Water



Jim Wilson, New York Times

- Changing Water Quality Standards
- Insufficient Technical, Managerial Financial Capacity
- Pollution
- Drought

Human Right to Water AB 685 (Eng)



“It is hereby declared to be the established policy of the state that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.”

Affordable, Safe Drinking Water Strategy

1. Make more strategic use of existing funding resources
2. Improve technical, managerial, and financial capacity where possible, consolidating as a second option, and if neither of those work, contracting with a third party to manage the system with a commitment to transitioning the system to a sustainable condition
3. Ease the burden on local governments by limiting the proliferation of new, unsustainable systems



Strategic Use of Existing Funds

- Existing funding comes from many sources.
- Some of these funding streams can be used exclusively for infrastructure and a few can be used to cover the cost of O&M.
- There are opportunities to expand the use of some of these funding sources, particularly those that may be used to cover O&M, and there are opportunities to better leverage the infrastructure funds.



Efficient Management



The proposed process:

- 1) First, the State Water Board will work to bring a system into compliance through technical assistance.
- 2) If technical assistance fails the State Water Board will consider opportunities to consolidate the system, if appropriate.
- 3) If consolidation is infeasible or impossible the State Water Board will include the system in a group management contract committed to moving the systems toward a sustainable outcome within ten years.

Grouped Management

- Provide funding for capital infrastructure needed to provide adequate, safe water
- Set water rates at an affordable rate for basic needs
- Provide funding (maximum duration ten years), through the contracted resources, for O&M costs to cover the gap between ratepayer dollars and the costs of O&M in a manner that prevents fraud, waste, and abuse
- Work with communities served by the contracted entity to equip them to transition to a sustainable structure by the end of the ten-year funding period



Limit Proliferation of New, Unsustainable Systems

- Require hookup to existing public water systems if feasible
- Add a requirement that the State Water Board must concur in permits issued by Local Primacy Agencies for the creation of a new water system
- Reduce the threshold size of proposed residential development subject to Government Code 66473.7 from 500 to 15 dwelling units/service connections
- Bar approval of new communities that would rely on hauled water for a permanent water supply



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