



Long Beach Water Department
The Standard in Water Conservation &
Environmental Stewardship

MEDIA RELEASE

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Long Beach Continues Setting New Records for Low Water Use Two Years After Implementing Citywide Water Conservation Program

Water consumption in Fiscal Year '09 is nearly 17 percent below average – a new record for Long Beach; eleven of the twelve months in FY '09 (including a very warm September 2009) produced record-setting lows

LONG BEACH, CA – The Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners has announced that Long Beach water consumption for Fiscal Year 2009 has set a new 10-year record low, breaking last year's record-setting mark by more than 8 percent. The announcement means that citywide water use during the past 12 months was lower than any other year going back to 1965. Water demand in September 2009, which came in at over 16 percent below average, was also a new record 10-year low, which means that 11 of the 12 months in FY 09 were new records for low water use. In fact, going back to two years ago when the Board of Water Commissioners issued their declaration of an imminent water supply shortage for the City of Long Beach, 20 out of 24 months have produced new record 10-year lows.

Paul Blanco, President of the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners, continues to be amazed by the great response from Long Beach residents who have been asked to heed the call to conserve more water. "Long Beach citizens should be very proud of their successful efforts to permanently reduce the amount of water they use on a daily basis," said President Blanco. "Long Beach has raised the bar for urban water conservation and our task now will be to make sure that we sustain this success, and hopefully even improve upon it," added Blanco.

Long Beach Conservation Effectiveness – By the Numbers

1. Long Beach has set **record 10-year lows** for water demand in **11 of the last 12 months** and in **20 of the last 24 months**.
2. Water demand for FY 2009 was at the **lowest level dating back to 1965**
3. Water demand for FY 2009 was **16.7 percent** below the 10-year average
4. Water demand for FY 2009 was **8.2 percent** below water demand for FY 2008, and **16.8 percent** below water demand for FY 2007.



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5. September 2009 demand is **16.2 percent** below the 10-year average for September, which is a new 10-year record low. Also notable is the fact that the average temperature in September 2009 was 2.5 degrees hotter than September 2008.
6. Long Beach used approximately **5,100 acre-feet** less water in FY 2009 than the city used in FY 2008 and approximately **11,500 acre-feet** less than in FY 2007 (**1 acre-foot = 325,851 gallons**).
7. Long Beach used approximately **11,400 acre-feet** less water in FY 2009 than the 10-year average (**this is enough water to provide for the majority of the water needs for a city roughly the size of Santa Monica**).

Kevin Wattier, General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department, reported that with all the records being set over the past two years for low water consumption, future new records may be harder to come by. "We've been going at this for two years now and water use in Long Beach is approaching 17 percent below our 10-year average, with new records being set month after month," said Wattier. "Are there wasteful uses of water still taking place in the city? Absolutely...however, more and more of these inefficient practices are being eliminated each day, and with the great support of our customers, we feel optimistic that we will continue to identify ongoing wasteful practices and make sure that they are addressed and corrected," continued Wattier.

The California Department of Water Resources issued a press release this week, mentioning that California is entering what could be the fourth straight year of drought and imploring the public to continue conserving water. "After three years of dry weather, we are preparing for the likelihood that we are entering a fourth year of drought in 2010," said California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Director Lester Snow. "Regardless of the weather outcome, it is critical that Californians continue to conserve as much water as we can to help stretch our water supply."

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) also weighed in on the need to continue sustaining conservation efforts. "Local water agencies have done a stellar job of reducing water use," said Timothy Quinn, ACWA's executive director. "But our state is dealing with long-term water problems. As state leaders work together on a comprehensive solution, Californians need to turn off their taps as much as possible to avoid experiencing major water shortages in the future."

The federal government is also starting to get involved. A meeting was held in Washington, DC earlier this week, where both federal and state representatives came together to talk about California's water issues. At the meeting, Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar encouraged Governor Schwarzenegger to call a special session of the legislature to address the water crisis. As of today, the special session has not been called.

Long Beach Water is an urban, Southern California retail water supply agency, and the standard in water conservation and environmental stewardship.

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