



LONG BEACH WATER DEPARTMENT
The Standard in Water Conservation &
Environmental Stewardship

MEDIA RELEASE

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Long Beach Continues Hitting Historical 10-year Lows for Water Use

**October '08 another 10-year low; Despite above average
temperatures and below average rainfall**

LONG BEACH, CA - Today, the [Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners](#) has announced that Long Beach water demand for October 2008 has set a new record 10-year low. Long Beach water use this October was 9.5 percent below the historical 10-year average ('98-'07) water use. October '08 water use was 9 percent below October '07.

Early last month, the Board [announced](#) that the City had set a new record 10-year low for Fiscal Year 2008, which ended September 30th. That announcement meant that the City had consumed less water in Fiscal Year '08, than in any other year over the past decade. In fact, the City consumed less water in Fiscal Year '08 than it did during the height of the 1987-1992 drought, with mandatory rationing and a population 15 percent smaller than today. The Long Beach Water Department is in its second year of [extraordinary, mandatory water conservation](#) due to an imminent water supply shortage in southern California. October '08 is the 10th record setting month for low water use since the Board of Water Commissioners' [declaration of imminent water supply shortage](#) in September 2007.

"Waste not, want not," says [John Allen](#), President of the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners. "Again, every gallon we don't use is a gallon we leave in storage. This is an idea that should have been embraced months ago by every community in southern California. We have been using our storage to water our landscapes, and that storage is at historic low levels as we head into what may very well be another dry year."

The [collective storage level](#) of Lake Shasta, Lake Oroville and San Luis Reservoir, the feeders to the State Water Project, are the lowest they've been since 1977. This is a primary reason for the State Department of Water Resources' recent announcement that water deliveries from northern California to the Central Valley, and on to southern California, may be [85 percent below what is being requested](#) for these regions next year.

"We have got to move quickly as a region to take a firm stand on this," adds [Kevin L. Wattier](#), General Manager of the Long Beach Water Department. "Even if we have average rainfall this year, the reality is that we no longer have enough water to meet demand here in southern California, even in normal hydrologic years. Every city in southern California needs to implement mandatory prohibitions on certain outdoor uses of water, and make those prohibitions permanent."

Long Beach Water Conservation Effectiveness Indicators

- October 2008 is 9.5% below historical 10-year average
- October 2008 is 8.9% below October 2007
- October 2007 demand was 5,650 acre-feet; October 2008 demand was 5,400 acre feet
- Precipitation for October '07 was .56 inches; Precipitation for October '08 was .08 inches (Normal is .40 inches)
- Temperature for October '07 was 68.3 degrees; Temperature for October '08 was 70.2 degrees (Normal is 68.6)

On September 13, 2007, the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners issued a Declaration of Imminent Water Supply Shortage and activated the City's Emergency Water Supply Shortage Plan. As a result, the Board of Water Commissioners issued mandatory prohibitions on certain outdoor uses of water. "The Board took the action it did, over a year ago now, to forestall and lessen the impact of an expected water supply shortage," according to Board president, John Allen. The Board's Declaration was necessitated by the profound impact of permanent reductions to imported water deliveries into southern California; the dramatic reductions in water storage levels in key reservoirs in northern California; and climate realities.

The [Long Beach Water Department](#) is an urban southern California retail water supply agency and the standard in water conservation and environmental stewardship.

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