

South Mesa Water Company rolls out 3-point drought plan For Yucaipa/Calimesa area

South Mesa Water Company is rolling out a three-point drought plan for the areas of Yucaipa and Calimesa it serves.

“The plan has been approved by the Board of Directors as it has adopted various initiatives since the last drought ended in 2016,” said South Mesa Board President George Jorritsma.

“This is significant in light of the latest U.S. Drought Monitor update which shows nearly all of California is in some stage of drought as the state braces for dry and hot summer. At this time last year, only 41.5 percent of California was in one of the drought categories,” said Jorritsma.

According to South Mesa General Manager David Armstrong: “Our plan builds upon the great work our residents have done in meeting former Gov. Jerry Brown’s drought mandate during the period of 2010-2016, reducing demands by over 20%. This

allows us to face the new drought by preserving the water savings our residents have already achieved, delaying the need to call for immediate rationing during this drought episode.”

Armstrong continued: “At the same time we are building infrastructure to bank the water savings, increasing our supply reserves in the groundwater basin that sits beneath the area of Yucaipa and Calimesa that we serve. We have been successful in applying for a state grant that will help us also build a connection to the California State Aqueduct that delivers surplus water from Northern California through the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. When there are surplus water supplies available, we will save that water under the ground together with the water saved by our residents.”

“The third part of our plan is to cooperate with neighboring water suppliers with whom we share the groundwater basin, also called an aquifer. The conservation being achieved by South Mesa’s residents, combined with the storage made possible by their savings and surplus water we may purchase in the years ahead, means that we can operate without the over-drafting of the groundwater basin. This leaves enough water for other suppliers that draw water from the same sources as South Mesa,” said Armstrong.

“With the new Groundwater Sustainability Plan adopted by area water suppliers, I hope that the years of over-pumping water from the ground are behind us. All area suppliers together can help each other out by conserving and storing water,” Armstrong concluded.
