

On May 31, 2018, two long-term water-use efficiency/conservation bills (SB 606 and AB 1668) were signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown that are intended to help the state better prepare for droughts and climate change.

One of the biggest components of the bills is the creation of water-use objectives for water agencies (not individual households or businesses).

Local water agencies will be responsible for calculating their water-use objective and determining whether their systemwide, aggregate water use meets that objective. If necessary, they will also have flexibility in how best to help customers use water more efficiently, such as conservation rebates and educational programs.

Starting in 2027, the State Water Board could issue fines to local water agencies that have not meet their water-use objectives. These fines would be levied on agencies, not individuals.

The bills also establish new planning and submittal requirements for Agricultural Water Management and Urban Water Management plans.

ACWA and its members worked tirelessly to help shape these bills into a framework that is a step in the right direction while maintaining local control over water management decisions. Overall, ACWA believes these bills will build on the state's ongoing efforts to "make water conservation a California way of life."

Water agencies must calculate their system-wide, water-use objectives by November 2023 based on the following components:



Water efficiency standards for indoor water use

This will be based on a provisional standard of 55 gallons of water a day per person served by the water agency.



Outdoor water use

This standard is still being determined, but will account for local climate and irrigable acres.



Commercial, industrial and institutional landscape irrigation



Water loss (system leaks)



Unique local circumstances (ie: livestock water use)



Credit for recycled water use

Make water conservation a California way of life.