

# Jerry Brown urges fines of up to \$10,000 for water waste in California drought

By David Siders  
dsiders@sacbee.com

Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday proposed granting new enforcement powers to local agencies in California's ongoing drought, including penalties of as much as \$10,000 for the most egregious violations of conservation orders.

Brown said he will also propose legislation to speed environmental permitting for local water supply projects, though not – significantly – for dams.

Neither proposal had taken bill form yet Tuesday, and specifics were unclear. The Democratic governor announced the measures after meeting with the mayors of 14 cities in Sacramento.

"We've done a lot," Brown told reporters at the Capitol. "We have a long way to go."

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Brown said fines of as much as \$10,000 would be reserved for the "worst offenders," a dramatic increase from the current \$500 daily maximum fine.

The governor's office said legislation proposed by Brown would let public agencies deputize staff to issue water-related citations, among other measures.

"You might think of this as just another installment in a long enterprise to live with a changing climate and with a drought of uncertain duration," Brown said.

Brown announced the legislation a day after Assembly Democrats killed a bill designed to streamline environmental review for the Sites Reservoir in the Sacramento Valley and Temperance Flat on the San Joaquin River near Fresno.

Brown said the legislation he is proposing would apply to projects that could be described as "something less than a reservoir."

Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearingin, who met with Brown, offered that the legislation could apply to treatment plants and water recycling facilities.

Representatives of the state's Democratic legislative leaders did not immediately respond to requests for comment Tuesday.

Asked about the timing of the legislation, Brown said, "We're in a drought ... It's an emergency, and we have to act expeditiously."

Call David Siders, Bee Capitol Bureau, (916) 321-1215. Follow him on Twitter [@davidsiders](#).