

New guidelines approved for emergency drought relief funding

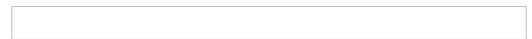
By Veronica
Rocha

Communities suffering from years of extremely dry conditions could receive their share of \$19 million in funding to pay for bottled water supplies and drought-related projects under a new set of guidelines.

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The State Water Resources Control Board on Tuesday approved guidelines for funding that will help community water systems, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments and public agencies address drinking water emergencies.

[USDA allocates \\$21 million to help farmers, ranchers battle drought](#)



“As we enter a fourth year of severe drought, more communities are likely to face difficulties with their water supplies and delivering safe drinking water,” said Darrin Polhemus, deputy director of the water board’s Division of Financial Assistance.

The guidelines ensure communities and groups with the greatest need of drinking water receive funding. The communities probably lack access to water supplies or suffer from contaminated water and need financial assistance to maintain drinking water.

In some instances, the funding could be used to pay for bottled water, treatment systems, hauling water supplies and repairing damaged wells, board spokesman Andrew DiLuccia said.

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Depending on the project or need, the funding will be expedited to some communities, DiLuccia said.

The drought may worsen contamination of drinking water and leave communities without access to safe water supplies, according to the board.

The funding is part of a \$1-billion emergency drought package signed March 27 by Gov. Jerry Brown.

The board will work with regional water quality control boards, the Division of Drinking Water, Department of Water Resources and Office of Emergency Services to identify communities in need of emergency drinking water.

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