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IEUA Board Moves to Ease Drought Regulations Due to Current Regional Supplies

INLAND EMPIRE, CA – The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) Board of Directors (Board) took important action at the April 5, 2023, IEUA Board Workshop to declare an end to the Water Shortage Emergency Condition and Emergency Water Conservation Framework. During the workshop, IEUA’s Board also unanimously agreed to return to normal water supply conditions for the Agency’s service area and discontinue any levels of action under its Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

“Recent winter rainstorms have given the State a much-needed, welcome break from severe drought conditions,” stated IEUA Board President Marco Tule. “While California will always be vulnerable to extreme and variable weather, we are pleased to see some reprieve to allow for eased regulations within the region.”

The creation of the Emergency Water Conservation Program (EWCP) framework was prompted by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California’s (MWD) declaration of a Water Shortage Emergency Condition in June 2022, which was terminated by MWD as of March 2023 due to increased State Water Project allocations by the Department of Water Resources.

“IEUA’s EWCP framework allowed for the allocation of set volumetric limits to its Customer Agencies based on average imported water purchase percentages, providing flexibility and support to meet the specific needs of each Customer Agency’s respective region,” stated IEUA Director and MWD Board Member Michael Camacho. “By establishing a coordinated effort to the State’s imported water challenges, IEUA was able to efficiently support the region’s efforts to achieve real water savings in the midst of California’s unprecedented drought.”

The Board’s decision was made in accordance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Order on March 24, 2023, which allows individual agencies the flexibility to go down to Level 0 in their drought contingency plans, signifying short-term relief from shortage conditions. The Governor’s Executive Order did not rescind the Drought Emergency, however, and certain water uses that are considered to be wasteful remain prohibited, such as using potable water to irrigate ornamental turf in commercial properties.

“IEUA is committed to investing in resources that alleviate the effects of drought and provide practical solutions to water supply issues,” continued Tule. “Overcoming persistent, cyclical drought requires a unified effort between water suppliers, water retailers, and residents. We applaud the flexibility and water-wise efforts of the region as we navigate California’s water supply challenges to ensure a safe, plentiful water supply is available for future generations.”

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The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA/Agency) is an innovative, forward-thinking Agency serving 242-square miles in western San Bernardino County. The Agency is committed to supporting the needs of its service area and safeguarding public health through its significant investments in developing a diversified water supply portfolio, developing reliable municipal/industrial wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services in a regionally planned and cost-effective manner. IEUA’s mission ensures long-term success for the region and its customer agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water

District, Ontario, San Antonio Water Company, Upland, and West Valley Water District.