



NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Newsom, Bay Area Water Agencies Unveil New Regional “Water Saving Hero” Water Conservation Campaign

Unprecedented Campaign Will Blanket Bay Area as Latest Water Consumption Data Shows Continued Need to Conserve Following Record Dry Winter, Ongoing Water Supply Concerns

San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom today joined leaders from Bay Area water agencies to unveil an unprecedented regional public education campaign aimed at reminding residents and businesses to curb water use this summer and fall. The new “Water Saving Hero” campaign features ordinary people adopting simple water conservation practices in their everyday lives, and will soon blanket billboards, transit stations, buses, trains, newspapers and the radio throughout the region. The effort also features a new website www.WaterSavingHero.com, where Bay Area residents can link directly to their local water agency’s conservation tips and cash rebate information. The effort comes after Northern California experienced one of the driest winters on record and amidst ongoing water supply concerns related to the Delta and other water sources.

“Following one of the driest winters on record, Bay Area residents have taken real steps to save water but we have to keep it up,” said Mayor Newsom. “This new regional campaign urges us all to adopt simple habits and become a ‘Water Saving Hero’ in our everyday lives.”

The million-dollar “Water Saving Hero” campaign is a partnership among Bay Area water agencies and organizations, including the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), Contra Costa Water District (CCWD), Zone 7 Water Agency, Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) and others.

“A regional campaign is so important because if we all save a little, together we will save a lot,” said SFPUC General Manager Susan Leal. “This campaign is about reminding Bay Area residents that we’ve had a very dry year and there’s something else each of us can do to curb water use at home or at work.”

Newsom joined Leal and BAWSCA General Manager Art Jensen in announcing the latest water consumption data for the SFPUC service area, which comprises 2.4 million customers in San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties. In April, the SFPUC and BAWSCA requested that customers throughout the region take steps to voluntarily cut back on water consumption this year, with a systemwide goal of reducing water use by at least 10% over 2004, the last appropriate dry year comparison. The latest data shows that customers have indeed

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reduced consumption over the same April – July 2004 period in all parts of the SFPUC service area, with a systemwide reduction of nearly 14%. Peninsula customers reduced consumption over the same 2004 period by 20%, South Bay/East Bay customers by 14%, and San Francisco customers by 8%. However, recent weeks’ consumption patterns show water use on the rise as temperatures climb, and the gap between 2007 and 2004 use narrowing.

“The good news is that there are already a lot of ‘Water Saving Heroes’ and customers throughout our service area are conserving. That’s going to make a difference in terms of avoiding rationing or mandatory cutbacks this year,” said Art Jensen, General Manager of BAWSCA, representing the 28 wholesale customers of the SFPUC in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties. “But we need to maintain and expand our efforts. We’re in the hot summer and water use is climbing. The ‘Water Saving Hero’ campaign is hitting when we need it the most.”

Compounding problems caused by a dry winter and meager Sierra snowpack, some Bay Area water agencies are also struggling with an unexpected reduction in water deliveries they normally receive from the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta, which is currently in crisis.

“A network of aging and eroding levees, subsiding land, climate change, pollution, mountain regulatory uncertainties and a struggling ecosystem are adding to the problems which ultimately put our water supply in jeopardy,” said Stan Williams, CEO of the SCVWD, which receives about half its water supply from the Delta. “Since the State temporarily shut down the Delta pumps last month, we’ve had to rely more heavily on our reserves. If people cut back their water use by ten percent or more, that will help us better prepare for the future, especially if 2008 is also dry.”

The campaign ads and billboards will run at least through the fall of 2007. The campaign aims to make Bay Area residents think about short and long-term steps they can take to reduce water use in their home or business. Among the water-saving tips for homes and businesses featured in the “Water Saving Hero” campaign are:

- Watering yards or gardens in the early morning or at night to reduce evaporation in the mid-day sun.
- Fixing toilet or plumbing leaks, which can waste thousands of gallons of water and cause water bills to skyrocket.
- Taking shorter showers and turning off the water when shaving or brushing one’s teeth.
- Doing only full loads of laundry or running the dishwasher only when it’s full.
- Sweeping instead of hosing off the sidewalk.

“With climate change upon us, we know these drier winters will be more common in the future,” said Newsom. “We can all make these water-saving habits a way of life without sacrificing our quality of life.”

To learn more about the “Water Saving Hero” campaign, view the ads or link directly to your local water agency’s conservation tips and cash rebates, visit www.WaterSavingHero.com.