The California Department of Housing and Community Development Announces Emergency Adoption of Building Codes to Conserve Water

Sacramento - In view of the urgency to conserve California’s water resources, as deemed essential by Governor Brown’s Executive Order, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is establishing new building standards through an emergency adoption process.

These regulations are set forth in the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code and will ensure that newly constructed residential buildings, permitted on or after June 1, 2015, include water-efficient landscaping. Other existing methods of conserving potable water include the use of captured rainwater, recycled water, or graywater in landscape areas.

HCD is also proposing further reductions to fixture flow rates in the 2015 Triennial Code Adoption Cycle which will be effective January 1, 2017. This means that building standards will be updated to require lavatory faucets and urinals that use less water. The improved plumbing requirements will save millions of gallons of water each year for new residential buildings.

“HCD is working collaboratively with other state agencies and stakeholders in response to California’s ongoing drought emergency,” said Acting Director, Susan Lea Riggs. “We will continue to keep a sharp focus on these efforts as well as explore new strategies for reducing water usage and making sure California is better prepared for the next drought.”

HCD developed the emergency building standards in coordination with the California Building Standards Commission, Department of Water Resources, the Division of the State Architect, and other stakeholders in an effort to do everything possible to reduce the use of potable water in our state.

Governor Brown has called on all Californians to reduce their urban water use by 25 percent and prevent water waste – visit www.SaveOurWater.com to find out how everyone can do their part, and visit www.drought.ca.gov to learn more about how California is dealing with the effects of the drought.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development is dedicated to the preservation and expansion of safe and affordable housing so more Californians have a place to call home. Our team works to ensure an adequate supply of housing for Californians and promotes the growth of strong communities through its leadership, policy and program development. For more information, please visit www.hcd.ca.gov.

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