



RANCHO MISSION VIEJO

May 4, 2015

Honorable Felicia Marcus, Chair
C/O Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via e-mail
commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

Subject: Comment Letter – Emergency Conservation Regulations

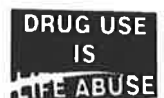
Dear Ms. Marcus

Rancho Mission Viejo, LLC (RMV), the recipient of the “U.S. Community of the Year” for 2014, by the National Association of Home Builders, appreciates the State Water Resources Control Board’s (SWRCB) iterative approach to development of the draft regulations and the opportunity to provide further comments on the Board’s framework for implementing the new regulations.

Our specific concerns about the framework primarily center on clarification to ensure that the framework will provide for reaching the Governor’s mandated 25 % reduction in urban water use, while maintaining local economic growth potential.

Governor Brown did not discourage growth but recognized the need for housing and the benefits to the economy in his order. As a company that resumed development in 2013 after the economic recession that began in 2008, we have collaborated with our local water district, Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD) for preparation of Water Supply Assessments and Written Verifications as mandated by State regulations, for sustainable development. The allocation plan does not recognize that we are providing for efficient water use. Provisions in the Conservation Regulations should include an allocation that recognizes efficient indoor use and drought tolerant landscaping for those new units constructed since 2013. Please see Exhibit A for our proposed revision to the draft regulations. Otherwise it restricts companies like ours from continuing to build homes, meeting the needs of home buyers, including those looking for affordable housing, which are sorely needed.

In addition, both existing and new development are subject to the Orange County Fire Authority Vegetation Management Guidelines (Guideline C-05, which are predicated on California Fire Code Title 24, Part 9, Chapter 49). These guidelines contain four fuel modification zones, two of which require irrigation. Due to human safety and the protection of public and private property, an allocation for water use should be provided for in the Emergency Regulations. Please see Exhibit B for our proposed revisions to the draft regulations.



RMV has taken several steps to reduce water needs for new homes, dramatically different than home constructed 10 years ago. In this regard, we serve as a role model for water conservation while pioneering new approaches for additional conservation, to meet the 25% reduction. We also provide opportunities to contribute to regional infrastructure that enable water conservation on a broader scale, benefiting areas within and outside of the SMWD service area.

With 14,000 dwelling units and 5.2 million square feet entitled in 23,000 acres entitled by RMV, we are supportive of all efforts for reductions in urban water use during the drought and into what is clearly the “new normal” for California. We hope our suggestions will result in better measurements of water use so that we can collectively reach the Governor’s target reduction.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions,

Sincerely,
Rancho Mission Viejo, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Broming', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard M. Broming
Senior Vice President, Planning & Entitlement
rbroming@ranchomv.com

Cc: Dan Ferons - SMWD
Jeff R. Thompson, Dan Kelly, Jeff Brinton – RMV

Proposed Amendments to April 29, 2015 “Proposed Text of Emergency Regulation”

Sec. 865. Mandatory Actions by Water Suppliers.

(f) Each urban water supplier serving homes and buildings (facilities) constructed since June 30, 2013 may subtract the amount of water supplied to those homes and buildings from its potable water production total, provided the supplier can demonstrate that such facilities meet or exceed the R-GPCD conservation standard identified for that water supplier pursuant to this section.

Proposed Amendments to April 29, 2015 “Proposed Text of Emergency Regulation”

Sec. 865. Mandatory Actions by Water Suppliers.

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Distributor of a public water supply” has the same meaning as under section 350 of the Water Code.

(2) “R-GPCD” means residential gallons per capita per day.

(3) “Total potable water production” means all potable water that enters into a water supplier’s distribution system, excluding:

(a) Water placed into storage and not withdrawn for use during the reporting period; or;

(b) Water exported outside the supplier’s service area;

(c) Water needed to comply with California Fire Code Title 24, Part 9, Chapter 49 and specific vegetation management guidelines promulgated by county fire authorities.