



# OPR Newsletter

October 2014

## SB743 Preliminary Discussion Draft

The comment period on OPR's Preliminary Discussion Draft of changes to the CEQA Guidelines implementing SB 743 has been extended to November 21, 2014. Additional supplemental materials, including a recording of the September 25, 2014, webinar have also been posted here:

[http://opr.ca.gov/s\\_sb743.php](http://opr.ca.gov/s_sb743.php)

## Solar Permitting Guidebook Update

The Governor recently signed into law Assembly Bill 2188 (Muratsuchi), which among other things requires local governments to adopt an expedited solar permitting process that substantially conforms with the process recommended in OPR's Solar Permitting Guidebook for certain solar installations. The full text of the bill can be found at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>.

Over the past months, OPR has been working with stakeholders to develop an update to the 2012 Solar Permitting Guidebook, which will be published later this year. This update will build on the original Guidebook to incorporate recent changes to Title 24 and other law, and will also expand its permitting toolkit to include recommendations for structural permitting, as well as solar thermal (solar hot water heating) systems.

For more information, please contact Jeff Mankey at [jeffrey.mankey@opr.ca.gov](mailto:jeffrey.mankey@opr.ca.gov).

## Civic Spark

The Governor's Initiative Americorps program, CivicSpark, is looking for projects from local governments and public agencies for the 2014-15 Service year. If you need support for your work on climate change, adaptation planning, or environmental initiatives consider adding a CivicSpark member to your team. Our teams are active in 9 regions of the state, and supported by experienced professionals at the Local Government Commission, in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. CivicSpark has a rolling application process, please feel free to contact us anytime to talk about your needs and how CivicSpark might support you. OPR CivicSpark Contact: Holly Roberson, [holly.roberson@opr.ca.gov](mailto:holly.roberson@opr.ca.gov) (916) 322-0476.

More information about CivicSpark is available here: <http://civicspark.lgc.org/>

## Groundwater

In January, 2014 Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. released the California Water Action Plan, a set of integrated actions planned over the next five years to put California on a path toward sustainable water management. On September 16, 2014 Governor Brown signed historic legislation to strengthen local management and monitoring of groundwater basins most critical to the state's water needs. The three bills, SB 1168 (Pavley) SB 1319 (Pavley) and AB 1739 (Dickinson) together make up the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. You can find more information about the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act at [www.groundwater.ca.gov](http://www.groundwater.ca.gov).

## California Drought

California is experiencing one of the worst droughts in modern history. Dozens of water systems are vulnerable to acute water shortages. Domestic wells and water supplies are drying up leaving homes without water; more than 1,000 dry wells have been reported to the State and there is reason to believe that there are more that go unreported. Wildfire risk remains high. Agricultural lands have been fallowed. Forests, fish, birds, and other wildlife are under growing stress. We don't know how long the drought will last.

California is acting to respond to the drought, but we are relying on local governments and local water systems to understand the drought-related problems they are experiencing, to know the risks they face, and to have a plan to maintain basic public health and safety. State programs may be available to assist. Remember Governor Brown called on all Californians to reduce water use by 20%. You can find more information and links to available assistance at [http://www.opr.ca.gov/s\\_droughtinfo.php](http://www.opr.ca.gov/s_droughtinfo.php).

## Drought Toolkits

The Home Depot (THD) donated 30,000 water conservation toolkits to disadvantaged households experiencing or vulnerable to water shortages due to the drought. Each kit contains 1 low-flow showerhead, 2 bathroom faucet aerators, 1 kitchen faucet aerator, 1 auto-shut off hose nozzle, 1 packet of toilet leak detection dye tablets, 1 5-gallon bucket, and written materials in English and Spanish with information about how households can use the donated supplies to stretch their water supply as far as possible. THD donated the kits to the California Conservation Corps (CCC) Foundation, and OPR is collaborating with the CCC, the CCC Foundation, local and county governments, NGOs, tribes, and OES and other state agencies engaged in drought response to coordinate distribution of the donated toolkits to the areas of greatest need throughout the state. All 30,000 toolkits have been allocated and will be distributed by the beginning of November. Visit OPR's drought webpage for more information. [http://www.opr.ca.gov/s\\_droughtinfo.php](http://www.opr.ca.gov/s_droughtinfo.php)

## AHSC Public Program Workshops

To sign up for one of the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Public Workshop, please [click here](#).

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