

NEWS RELEASE

Mammoth Community Water District
P.O. Box 597, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
(760) 934-2596 Fax: (760) 934-2143

For Immediate Release: April 28, 2016

Contact: Betty Hylton ext. 274

Level 3 Water Restrictions Still in Effect for Mammoth Community Water District Customers:

Low Groundwater Levels Following Four Years of Drought Need Time to Recover

The snow this winter brought much relief to Mammoth Community Water District (MCWD) as surface water supplies are being replenished. However, the preceding four years of drought have left MCWD's groundwater wells at historically low levels. Groundwater resources are an essential part of the water supply mix used to meet the community's water demand, especially during the summer months. Until groundwater levels in the wells shows sufficient recovery, MCWD customers will remain under Level 3 Water Restrictions to ensure a reliable water supply this year. To meet demand, all MCWD customers are requested to continue their successful 30% conservation practices.

For the previous 16 months, MCWD relied almost entirely on groundwater supplies, causing groundwater well levels to drop. To date, MCWD has seen little to no recharge in its groundwater wells. By staying in Level 3 Water Restrictions and keeping water demand low, MCWD can maximize use of surface water and allow the groundwater pumps to rest. This hiatus from pumping will provide an opportunity for the wells to rest and recharge. How long before wells recover and how much recovery will occur this year remains to be seen according to MCWD Superintendent of Operations, Karl Schnadt.

"The April 1st water content of the snowpack at 9,400 feet was 93% of normal. Just below, at 8,300 feet, the water content measured 60% of normal. We just had four consecutive years of drought and this year the snow was only normal at the higher elevations. This is uncharted territory and we are uncertain how the aquifer will respond," said Schnadt.

Current information on Water Shortage Restrictions can be found on MCWD's website and Facebook page, Mammoth Community Water District.

About Mammoth Community Water District

MCWD provides water and wastewater utility service to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and surrounding areas. MCWD strives to provide reliable, affordable utility service to our customers and to conduct our operations in a manner reflecting our stewardship role. We encourage our customers to practice responsible use of our limited water resources, and to take advantage of the information and services available to support this goal.