

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The California Environmental Protection Agency works to restore, protect, and enhance environmental quality. The agency coordinates the state's environmental regulatory programs to provide fair and consistent enforcement of the law.

The Budget proposes total funding of \$3.7 billion (\$59.7 million General Fund and \$3.6 billion other funds) for all programs in this Agency.

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

Groundwater accounts for more than one-third of the water used by cities and farms and much more in dry years when other sources are reduced. Some of California's groundwater basins are sustainably managed, but many are not. Inconsistent and inadequate tools, resources, and authorities make managing groundwater difficult in California and impede the state's ability to address problems such as overdraft, seawater intrusion, land subsidence, and water quality degradation. The Administration is continuing discussions on groundwater legislation with the Legislature and stakeholders.

Significant Adjustments:

- Sustainable Groundwater Management—\$1.9 million General Fund and ten positions for the State Water Resources Control Board to act as a backstop when local or regional agencies are unable or unwilling to sustainably manage groundwater basins.

The Water Board will protect groundwater basins at risk of permanent damage until local or regional agencies are able to do so.

- Technical Assistance to Local Agencies—\$2.5 million General Fund in 2014-15 and \$5 million annually for four additional years for the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to support local groundwater efforts. The state’s role should be to provide guidance, tools, and resources to local and regional entities to assist them in management of groundwater basins.
- Groundwater Data Collection and Evaluation—\$2.9 million General Fund and 12 positions for the DWR to continue current groundwater monitoring efforts and develop an online well completion report submission system. The data and analyses will provide state, regional, and local water managers more efficient and timely access to hydrogeologic and well construction data that will improve groundwater management plans, identify and understand changes in groundwater supplies, and more effectively integrate groundwater use with surface water use. The expanded groundwater information will support state and local efforts to evaluate anticipated impacts of climate change, drought conditions, and water supply reliability.

REORGANIZATION OF THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM

Disadvantaged communities often struggle to provide an adequate supply of safe, affordable drinking water. Programs designed to protect water quality for drinking and other purposes are housed in multiple agencies, reducing their effectiveness.

The Budget transfers \$313.6 million (\$5 million General Fund) and 302.2 positions for the administration of the Drinking Water Program from the Department of Public Health to the State Water Resources Control Board. Transferring the Drinking Water Program will achieve the following objectives:

- Establish a single water quality agency to improve coordination and enhance accountability for water quality programs.
- Better provide comprehensive technical and financial assistance to help communities, especially small disadvantaged communities, address an array of challenges related to drinking water, wastewater, water recycling, pollution, desalination, and storm water.

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of drinking water, groundwater, water recycling, and water quality programs.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) protects and enhances public health and the environment through scientific evaluation of risks posed by hazardous substances. OEHHA's risk assessments provide state and local agencies with the scientific tools upon which to base risk management decisions.

PROPOSITION 65

The Budget includes \$1.1 million Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Fund and 4 positions to revise Proposition 65 regulations and develop a website that provides information to the public on exposure to listed chemicals. This effort will better inform the public about their exposures to chemicals that cause cancer or reproductive harm by revising existing regulations to take into consideration technological advances made over the last 25 years, and by developing a website that will contain detailed information regarding listed chemicals as well as exposure pathways, risks, and avoidance measures.

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