

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, March 21, 2022 9:20 AM  
**To:** Official Records - City Clerk  
**Subject:** FW: City Council 3-21-2022 Agenda Item 14: Water Rates  
**Attachments:** State's water savings dry up - Californians' usage increased in January, alarming officials amid a historic drought (LA Times 3-16-2022).pdf

Regards,

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**From:** Ken Kules  
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**Subject:** City Council 3-21-2022 Agenda Item 14: Water Rates

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I commented at the 3-14-2022 City Council meeting on this same topic and was unable to complete my comments due to the unreasonably-limited amount of time provided.. This is a transcript of those comments:

"PWP told the Municipal Services Committee that the proposed ordinance language re-defining the Capital Improvement Change is a clarification when in truth it's establishing a new policy that's contrary to the existing ordinance requirement that the Commodity Rates be used to recover water supply costs.

"Councilmembers frequently want to know how Pasadena's water rates compare with other similar water utilities. What you should know is that the policy for the vast majority of public water agencies throughout the state - including Los Angeles, Burbank & Glendale - is to include all costs for water supply in their Commodity Rates and the PWP proposal would make this city an outlier.

"I chuckled when I read the assertion on page 7 of the Agenda Report that the action supports City Council policy goals to 'increase conservation.' As I explained in my written comments, this policy

change will actually reduce the conservation signal in the Commodity Rates.

"I have to disagree with Ms. Thomas' response to Councilmember Kennedy's question regarding Budget Based Pricing impact on the rates. The Budget based Pricing structure only works for increasing block volumetric charges and that would affect the Commodity Charge only since the CIC is a fixed volumetric rate and the D&C is a fixed rate.

"I wish I could tell you that there are technical reasons or legal constraints driving whether or not you should adopt the proposed ordinance change, but there aren't. PWP will collect the necessary revenues to offset costs as permitted by Prop 218 regardless of your decision and there's no threat to bond ratings. What you simply have before you is a discretionary and binary choice to either weaken or strengthen Pasadena's conservation ethic as a matter of City Council policy."

I intend to complete my oral comments at the 3-21-2022 meeting and ask that you give them full consideration. Until then, I urge you to read the attached news article as well as the following report:

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/17/us/noaa-drought-spring-outlook-climate/index.html>

## State's water savings dry up

Californians' usage increased in January, alarming officials amid a historic drought.

By HAYLEY SMITH

California will end winter in a perilous position as record-shattering dryness converges with lagging water conservation efforts in nearly every part of the state, officials said Tuesday.

After months of cutting back, new data from the State Water Resources Control Board show that rather than conserving water, Californians increased urban water use 2.6% in January, compared with the same month in 2020 — the baseline year against which current savings are measured.

The cumulative savings from July — when Gov. Gavin Newsom called on Californians to voluntarily cut water use by 15% — to the end of January were just 6.4%, less than half the target. Officials said more must be done to prevent worst-case drought scenarios, including increased restrictions and mandatory water cuts.

"These numbers are a good wake-up call that we need to buckle up and get going," conservation supervisor Charlotte Ely told reporters Tuesday morning.

The numbers bring to mind California's punishing 2012-2016 drought, when then-Gov. Jerry Brown ordered a mandatory 25% reduction in urban water use. Californians came close to meeting that goal, and many of their water-saving habits remain.

But conditions today are more extreme than even in those dire times. January and February, typically the heart of California's wet season, were the driest ever recorded, with only about three-quarters of an inch of precipitation, said state climatologist Michael Anderson. The next driest, 2013, saw about twice that amount.

Despite the dwindling numbers, some experts said the state's water managers haven't done enough to prepare for and respond to the current conditions.

"I think mandatory cuts are not only warranted — I [See Water, A1]

## Europeans' visit boosts Ukraine



As shelling kills more civilians, three NATO leaders offer their support in the capital.

By NABIN BULO,  
JAWOED KALBEM  
AND TRACY WILKINSON

KYIV, Ukraine — As Russian forces pressed their deadly assault Tuesday on Ukraine's capital, the besieged country received new gestures of important international support: the arrival in Kyiv of leaders of three European nations and a planned trip to Brussels next week by President Biden for an emergency summit at NATO headquarters.

The White House announced that Biden will attend an emergency session of NATO next week as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pushed his call for urgent military aid in a virtual speech to the Canadian Parliament, a message he is expected to repeat Wednesday to the U.S. Congress.

Biden's presence at the NATO summit is intended to showcase U.S. commitment to stopping Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine and reassure European allies that Washington is a reliable partner, a once-cherished notion that was damaged during the Trump administration's favoring of an "America first" policy that often seemed to abandon traditional multilateral cooperation.

It follows high-profile trips by Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken to Poland and other Eastern European countries that are experiencing the brunt of a massive exodus of refugees from Ukraine. Polish media speculated that Biden would also travel to Poland, but the White House did not confirm that.

The prime ministers of Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, which all belong to NATO as well as the European Union, traveled by train Tuesday into the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, where they met with Zelenskyy, who posted a video of the encounter on social media.

It was the first high-level visit by officials from either alliance since Russia's invasion. [See Ukraine, A4]



PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD

FIREFIGHTERS, top, battle a blaze after an apartment building was shelled in Kyiv, Ukraine. Above, police assist a woman after she was rescued. Four people were killed in the attack in Kyiv's Sviatozhynskiy district.

## Ukrainian Jews escaping to Israel

Thousands have been resettled in a rescue operation led by the Jewish community.

By LILIA MILLER

The bombing of Ukraine had already begun, but Ilya and Yulia Tregubov could not quite bring themselves to leave.

The couple, both 40, lived

in Dnipro, a picturesque city in central Ukraine, with their 14-year-old daughter. Ayns Ilya was a psychiatrist at a Jewish medical center and Yulia managed business centers.

They enjoyed a tranquil life strolling the city's riverbank or simply watching Netflix together. They vacationed in a summer home just outside Dnipro, where they'd pick fruit from apricot, apple and cherry trees. As the war intensified,

the Tregubovs turned down offers to help them evacuate.

"We thought one more day and it will be stopped. All this horror will be stopped," Ilya said.

But then Russia began bombing civilian areas in Kharkiv and Kyiv. Ilya, whose grandmother was a medic with the Soviet army that liberated Auschwitz, thought about the Jews who did not flee during the Holocaust.

"We know that those who

did not escape, who decided to stay in their cities, they are not alive — and I thought that this is the time," he said.

More than 3 million people have fled Ukraine since the war started. The Tregubovs are among thousands of Jews who have moved to Israel in a rescue operation launched by the Israeli government and the greater Jewish community.

Under the Law of Return, which gives foreign-born

### Journalist slams war on Russia TV

An editor crashes a live broadcast with a sign reading, "They are lying to you here." WORLD, A3



L.A. COMPOST volunteers add food scraps, much of it collected from farmers markets, to a pile at the organization's regional hub in Griffith Park.

COLUMN ONE

## Dirty hands, clean consciences

Composting is creating a new generation of environmentalists

By JAMES RAINEY

Teresa Leong had known for years that her kitchen scraps weren't really trash. But at first, she wasn't sure what to do with them.

Sometimes she'd just toss a bell pepper into the bushes, figuring it would decompose and feed the greenery. But

that wasn't a comprehensive solution. Then she tried washing unused veggies down the drain, knowing they'd be converted to reusable gas at the city's sewage treatment plant. But massive downloads of greens, even ground up in a blender, clogged the drain in her Studio City apartment.

Another round of "aggressive Googling" led

## Anger erupts as fire official who looked drunk is cleared

Minority and female firefighter groups say it shows white men get special treatment.

By PAUL PRINOLE

Last spring, a high-ranking official in the Los Angeles Fire Department alleged that its top administrative commander, Chief Deputy Fred Mathis, appeared to be intoxicated while he was overseeing the agency's operations center during the Palmsades fire.

The official reported that Mathis admitted to her that he had been drinking, ac-

ording to LAFD records.

Now, The Times has learned that a private law firm hired by the city to investigate the May 18 episode found that Mathis was likely intoxicated at the department's headquarters at City Hall East.

But the investigation cleared Mathis through a rationale that has outraged department insiders: The law firm concluded Mathis "was technically off duty while he was likely intoxicated as he had put himself out sick" that day, according to a summary of the findings the department provided The Times. The newspaper reported in July that an entry was made in Mathis'

timekeeping record four days after the incident to show he was on sick leave the day he was reported to be drunk on duty.

Mathis told The Times in an email that he did nothing wrong and was treated unfairly by the department.

The heads of three organizations for Black, Latino and female firefighters say the Mathis case is just the latest example of the department granting special treatment to senior officers, especially if they are men or white, as Mathis is. And the leaders of the groups say that treatment is often accompanied by a cover-up, sometimes with the help of [See Cleared, A8]

### A fourth dose of COVID vaccine?

Pfizer seeks U.S. authorization for an additional booster shot for people age 65 and older. NATON, A4

### Daylight saving time bill advances

Senate sends House the bipartisan Sunshine Protection Act to end twice-yearly changing of clocks. NATON, A7

Weather  
Sunny and warm.  
L.A. Basin: 76/57, 88



# State's urban water savings are falling short

[Water, from A1] think they're long overdue," said hydrologist Peter C. Gleick, co-founder of the Pacific Institute. "The reservoirs are lower than they were at this time last year, and last year we were in the second year of the drought."

During a board meeting Tuesday, Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth said California needs to receive about four more inches of precipitation before month's end or it will end up being the driest January-February-March stretch on record — an increasingly likely scenario.

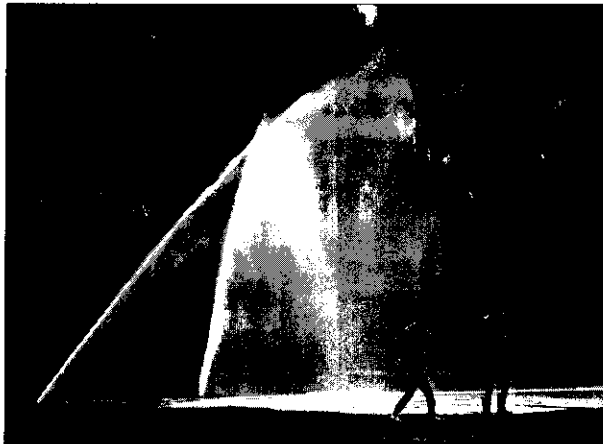
"It's really turned into a very difficult year," Nemeth said, adding that although the state typically relies on a slow accretion of reservoir inflows through summer, "it's entirely possible that our inflows will have already peaked."

As a result, the department is planning to announce a reduction in the promised 15% water supply allocation that came on the heels of December's storms, Nemeth said, although she did not specify by how much.

Officials are also planning to submit a temporary petition that would establish deviations from typical water rights and usage from April through June, and are in the process of evaluating additional emergency species actions, among other steps.

"It's all hands on deck for this particular situation this year," Nemeth said. Already, snowpack and reservoirs have dwindled far below average for the date. On Tuesday, Lake Shasta, the state's largest reservoir, was only about half of its historic average, officials said. Statewide snowpack was 37% of normal.

Some areas of California are conserving more water than others, the data show.



PEOPLE WALK through sprinklers on a rainy day at the Balboa Sports Center in Encino in January. Californians missed targets for water savings in 2021 and 2022, cutting usage by 6.4%, when a 15% cut was called for.

The San Francisco Bay Area reduced water use by 11% from July to the end of August, while the South Coast region, which includes Los Angeles, reduced 5.1%, compared with the baseline period.

Officials were reluctant to speculate on the reason for that disparity, but Ely said there could be "a little bit more awareness up north because we're closer to the immediate problem." The drought conditions that started around the North Coast last year also spread into the Central Valley, including much of the state's agricultural hub, which suf-

fered an estimated \$1.2-billion hit as a result of drought-related restrictions.

Southern counties, including Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura, were among the last to be added to Newsom's statewide drought emergency declaration last year.

The largest urban water supplier in Southern California, Metropolitan Water District, declared its own drought emergency in November. Given the unusual dryness of January, MWD's Chief Operating Officer De-

OSCAR MOLINA/Los Angeles Times

ven Upadhyay said he wasn't surprised that conservation efforts backslid that month. However, he said better messaging is needed to reach people who don't always think in percentages.

"I want to be clear: This is not a drill," he said. "This is the real deal. It is a drought emergency."

Yet awareness is only part of the problem, officials acknowledged, as disaster fatigue is making it more difficult to drive home the severity of the drought and necessity of conservation.

"This is a slower disaster," said James Niebauer, director of research, planning and performance with the State Water Resources Control Board. "Climate change and drought are slower-moving problems than the war in Europe or even the pandemic, and so it is a little harder to get people to focus on slower, longer time scales. Drought is kind

of a reminder that while climate change is a longer-term process, there will be acute impacts."

Indeed, rules outlawing water wasting adopted by the board in January helped spread some awareness, officials said, but the lackluster conservation numbers that month also indicate that fines and voluntary measures may no longer be enough.

The water board will be issuing a "dry year warning letter" to all water rights holders and claimants in the state in the coming days advising them to plan accordingly for another year of drought, Deputy Director Erik Ekchahi said.

Individuals are also urged to do their part by shoring up leaks, reducing outdoor irrigation and replacing turf among other conservation practices.

"California has just experienced the driest January and February on record, and our precipitation levels remain critically low," Newsom's office said in a statement following Tuesday's update. "Climate change has fundamentally altered the state's hydrologic cycle, intensifying extreme weather and leading to longer, dryer periods. We all must do more to adjust and adapt."

The statement also noted local water suppliers' role in ensuring regional water goals are met. But while urban water conservation can make a difference, cities and towns only represent about 20% of the state's human water use each year. Much of the rest goes to agriculture, which is tracked separately.

Gleick, of the Pacific Institute, said that while the agricultural sector warrants some criticism, it is already seeing shortages in water deliveries, and many farmers are growing more food with less water.

"Agriculture is already also suffering and taking cuts, and yes, there's more they could do to use water more efficiently, but it's not as though they're being 'ingored,'" he said, adding that there also remains "enormous potential in urban water use to do what we want without water."

Across California, it is increasingly apparent that many changes will be long-term reflections of a new way of life. Last month, researchers found that the American West just experienced its driest 22-year-period in at least 1,200 years.

And though some water supplies were replenished after the previous dry years, Anderson, the climatologist, said a case could be made for expecting the current period "one long drought."

"We're beginning to see a progression that you would expect with climate change, where something starts as an extreme and then becomes episodic," Anderson said. "I think we're in that episodic element here, where we're starting to see it a couple of times a decade — and this is, then, the third record-setting drought in the last 15 years."

## MARKET ROUNDUP

### Stocks rise as oil prices fall again

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Technology companies led stocks broadly higher on Wall Street on Tuesday, as oil prices slid sharply for the second day and inflation worries ebbed. The market rally came a day after the Federal Reserve's highly anticipated interest rate policy update.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 2.1%, ending a three-day losing streak, after a report showed inflation's rapid acceleration paused at the wholesale level last month. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 1%, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq composite added 2.9%.

The wider action was in oil and Asian stock markets, where lightened anti-COVID measures in China are raising worries about demand for energy and about disruptions to manufacturing and global trade. Oil prices tumbled, taking some pressure off the world's high inflation. Stocks in Hong Kong sank more than 5% for a second straight day after the imposition of a lockdown, which was ordered into a shutdown.

"It ever so slight, at least

### Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Change	Daily %	YTD %
Dow Industrials	33,544.34	+599.10	+1.82	-7.69
S&P 500	4,262.45	+89.34	+2.14	-10.57
Nasdaq composite	12,948.62	+367.40	+2.92	-17.23
S&P 400	2,585.33	+38.28	+1.50	-9.03
Russell 2000	1,968.97	+27.25	+1.40	-12.31
EuroStoxx 50	3,518.01	-1.62	-0.05	-7.87
Nikkei (Japan)	25,345.48	+28.63	+0.11	-21.97
Hong Kong (Hong Kong)	18,415.08	-1,116.58	-5.72	-21.30

Associated Press

there's still building optimism regarding Ukraine, combined with optimism regarding inflation, oil in particular, and optimism that the Fed will not be more hawkish than is already built into the market," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CTRF.

The S&P 500 rose 89.34 points to 4,262.45. The Dow advanced 599.10 points to 33,544.34, and the Nasdaq rose 367.40 points to 12,948.62. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks rose 27.25 points, or 1.4%, to 1,968.97.

Data released Tuesday showed inflation was still very high at the wholesale level last month, but at least it wasn't accelerating. Producer prices were 10% higher

in February than a year earlier, the same rate as in January. On a month-to-month basis, prices rose 0.8% in February from January, versus forecasts for 0.9%. That's a slowdown from January's 1.2% month-over-month inflation.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.15% from 2.14% late Monday. The two-year yield fell to 1.68% from 1.7%.

A barrel of U.S. crude dropped 6.4% to \$96.44. It had briefly topped \$100 last week. Brent crude, the international standard, fell 6.5% to \$99.01 a barrel.

In other developments, the London Metal Exchange said trading in nickel will resume Wednesday, just over a week after it was suspended.

Los Angeles Times

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Deposit & Loan Guide

Community Bank	NA	NA	0.30	0.40	0.70	0.85	0.75	1.10	1.30	909-450-2050
Community Bank	NA	NA	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	www.communitybank.com
Community Bank	NA	NA	30 mo.	CD Special	\$10K	Minimum to open	Member FDIC			

Community Bank	NA	NA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	213-352-1200
Community Bank	NA	NA	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	909-434-7500
Community Bank	NA	NA	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	www.communitybank.com

Community Bank	NA	NA	0.05	0.30	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.25	0.30	0.50	0.70
Community Bank	NA	NA	100	50,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Community Bank	NA	NA	Special 13 Month	0.08% APY	1,000 Min						

Savings Update

### 10 tips for avoiding impulse buys

Sakira Kar

We've all been there. We walk in the house with a new purchase that's a few hours' worth of use and we're thinking, "Oh, we got something extra to add to our cart and, before we know it, we've hit 'buy now'."

Impulse buys can often majorly harm on your financial health. It's tempting to buy more products that have long-lasting benefits, such as reducing your carbon footprint and boosting your health. But there are many factors for reducing your impulse buying. For instance, simply adding going to stores and sites you know will tempt you. To make the most of your purchases, from retail newsletters and unfollow tempting brands on social media.

Also aim to shop under the right circumstances. For instance, shop when you have a specific need and make a list to stick to. Avoid shopping for entertainment, and avoid the idea of "shopping therapy" to deal with your emotions.

Use Cash. Many studies in 2019 showed that the average amount spent on impulse purchases is \$100. This is a significant amount of money. To avoid this, use cash instead of credit. This way, you can see the physical loss of money when you make a purchase, which can help you resist the urge to buy things you don't need.

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# Conservation is failing. It's time for water cuts

The drought is getting worse.  
What is the governor waiting for?

**C**ALIFORNIA IS in year three of a worsening drought and the situation is growing dire. After a wet and snowy December, California experienced its driest January and February on record. More than 93% of the state is now suffering "severe" or "extreme" drought, compared with 66% last month, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. Sierra Nevada snowpack has dropped to 55% of normal for this time of year and reservoirs are depleted.

Gov. Gavin Newsom in July called for Californians to voluntarily reduce water use by 15% compared with 2020 levels, but the state has cut back by only about 6.5%. In January, urban water use increased by 2.6%, compared with the same month in 2020, heading in the wrong direction even as the drought deepens.

It should be clear by now that the governor's voluntary pleas are not working.

Water experts say California should have already moved to impose mandatory restrictions. But Newsom still hasn't ordered them.

What is he waiting for?

Forecasters are predicting drier-than-average conditions to persist across much of California for the next two weeks, making it increasingly likely that California will experience its driest January-February-March stretch on record. Even more meager snowpack numbers are expected at an upcoming April 1 snow survey that typically records the year's peak levels.

Imposing conservation mandates now, just as outdoor water use starts to ramp up for the spring and summer, would force water suppliers to enact restrictions on lawn watering or bolster incentives for efficient appliances and fixtures, and drought-friendly landscaping. It would also send a clear message to Californians who are understandably distracted by other crises and may be unaware of the severity of this drought. Though this dry spell is as bad, if not worse, than the 2012-16 drought, it has not garnered the same type of heavy media coverage (which, by the way, has been linked to reductions in residential water use).

"Unless we really put mandatory restrictions and get these utilities to actually deal with this in a more systematic way, I doubt we're going to see tons more conservation," said Newsha Ajami, a water expert and researcher at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Experience shows that the earlier government takes action to conserve water, the better, Ajami said, and that could prove fateful if this drought persists through next winter and spring, and communities start running out of water.

The dryness we are experiencing is California's new reality under climate change. Global warming has fundamentally changed the water cycle, as rising temperatures intensify climate extremes and amplify the state's boom-bust swings between having too much precipitation and not enough.

While this drought is another environmental crisis to deal with, it is also an opportunity to make lasting changes to reflect our altered climate. To rip out thirsty and

wasteful turf lawns and replace them with water-sipping native landscaping, change out inefficient appliances and capture stormwater to recharge aquifers.

Under legislation adopted in 2018, California regulators are working on long-term standards for making water conservation a way of life as climate change brings more persistent and frequent drought. But people need to be jolted into action now, especially to curtail outdoor watering that accounts for as much as half of urban use. Agriculture uses about 80% of all the water used in California, and more must also be done to reduce its usage while limiting groundwater pumping that depletes aquifers.

Alex Stack, a spokesperson for Newsom, would not say whether the governor would issue a mandatory water conservation order, but pointed to \$22.5 million in new state drought response funding announced earlier this month, including more than \$8 million for "targeted outreach efforts to educate Californians on water conservation measures and practices."

It's a little late to start gearing up the water-saving tips. And while better messaging is clearly needed, it's not enough.

Mandates are what helped get California through the punishing 2012-16 drought. It was at a dismal snow survey in April 2015 that then-Gov. Jerry Brown ordered California's first statewide mandatory water restrictions. His directive to cut urban water use by 25% put in motion a series of emergency regulations that, while at times controversial, were largely effective. Californians got



JAY L. CLENDENIN/Los Angeles Times

**A TRAFFIC** sign along Highway 1 in Fort Bragg in 2021 alerts drivers to the town's water emergency.

close to meeting Brown's 25% reduction order. And while the state's rules were lifted after the winter of 2017 brought massive storms, some of those water-saving habits stuck around.

California is better positioned to respond this time around because of what regulators have learned from that experience. They know what works, what they can be flexible on, and they have more data to help tailor their rules and make them as focused and effective as possible.

Last year, Newsom may have been reluctant to order unpopular curbs on water because he was facing a September recall election. Sticking with that hands-off approach this year may be coming out of a desire not to burden Californians with another government mandate after two years of COVID-19 restrictions and at a moment when inflation, high gas prices and war in Ukraine are more top of mind than the drought. That's understandable, but Newsom and California gain nothing by failing to act aggressively now to save water.

Conditions have clearly worsened in the five months since Newsom declared a drought emergency. It's time for him to take the next step and impose mandatory water restrictions.

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