

# MWELO

# Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

What's Behind the Regulation

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DWR

# Purpose of MWELO

- A model for local agencies to follow in order to enforce minimum building standards in landscape design and construction.
- Comes from AB 325 (1990) and AB 1881 (2006) Water Conservation in Landscaping Act
- Achieve the goals with sustainable landscaping and the watershed approach



# History of MWELO

- Droughts of late 70's and 89-91
- 1990 Water Conservation In Landscaping Act
  - Stakeholder group formed of cities, counties, NGO, water suppliers and the landscape industry
  - MWELO into effect in 1993
  - some cities adopted, many ignored it or exempted themselves
  - Charter cities (Sacramento) were exempt



# MWELO redux (2006-2010)

- Another drought cycle happened and wet El Nino's
- 2004 legislature asked the CA Water Conservation Council to form a large task force to study the MWELO
- 200+ members in groups debated issues
- 2006 Legislature updated Water Conservation Act
- 2010 new MWELO in effect
- Cities are no longer exempt

# MWELO 2015

- During a very severe drought
- Governor issues Executive Order for DWR to update MWELO
- Reduction in water budget
  - Allows enough water to establish plants with local water restrictions in place
  - Minimalizes high water use, cool season turf grasses
- Cal Green Building code refers to MWELO as the authority on landscape building code



# Issues with landscapes and landscape ordinances

- Stormwater capture
  - Done wrong or not at all
  - Over-engineered
- Grading
  - Compaction
- Push back on Flow Sensors, Master Valves
- Low Volume irrigation
- Range used in plant factors

# Issues

- Invasive plants
- Irrigation efficiency
- Turf irrigation
  - Warm season vs. cool season
- **Existing Landscapes**
- Local agency
  - No inspections
  - No checking





# issues

- Install other than approved design
- Auditing
- Hardscape and artificial turf and its role in the water budget (none at present)
- SLA water budgets
- Pools, and splash pads in the water budget
- Trees
  - Irrigation valves
  - Canopy hydrozone



# The Future is Now

- AB 2515 passed fall 2016
- DWR must update the MWLEO in synch with Cal Green (building code) cycle every three years
- DWR must re-write MWLEO by mid- 2018
- Landscape Stakeholder group is formed to work on issues- to make next update the best version
- New stakeholders are welcome
  - Give me your card or email me



# Biology needs Biological Solutions

Air

Water

Soil

**Life**





# The watershed approach

- Rain is a resource
- Living soils
- Right plants, right place
  - Natives and other climate adapted
  - Mediterranean climate
  - Deserts
  - Montane
  - Coastal sage
  - Chaparral

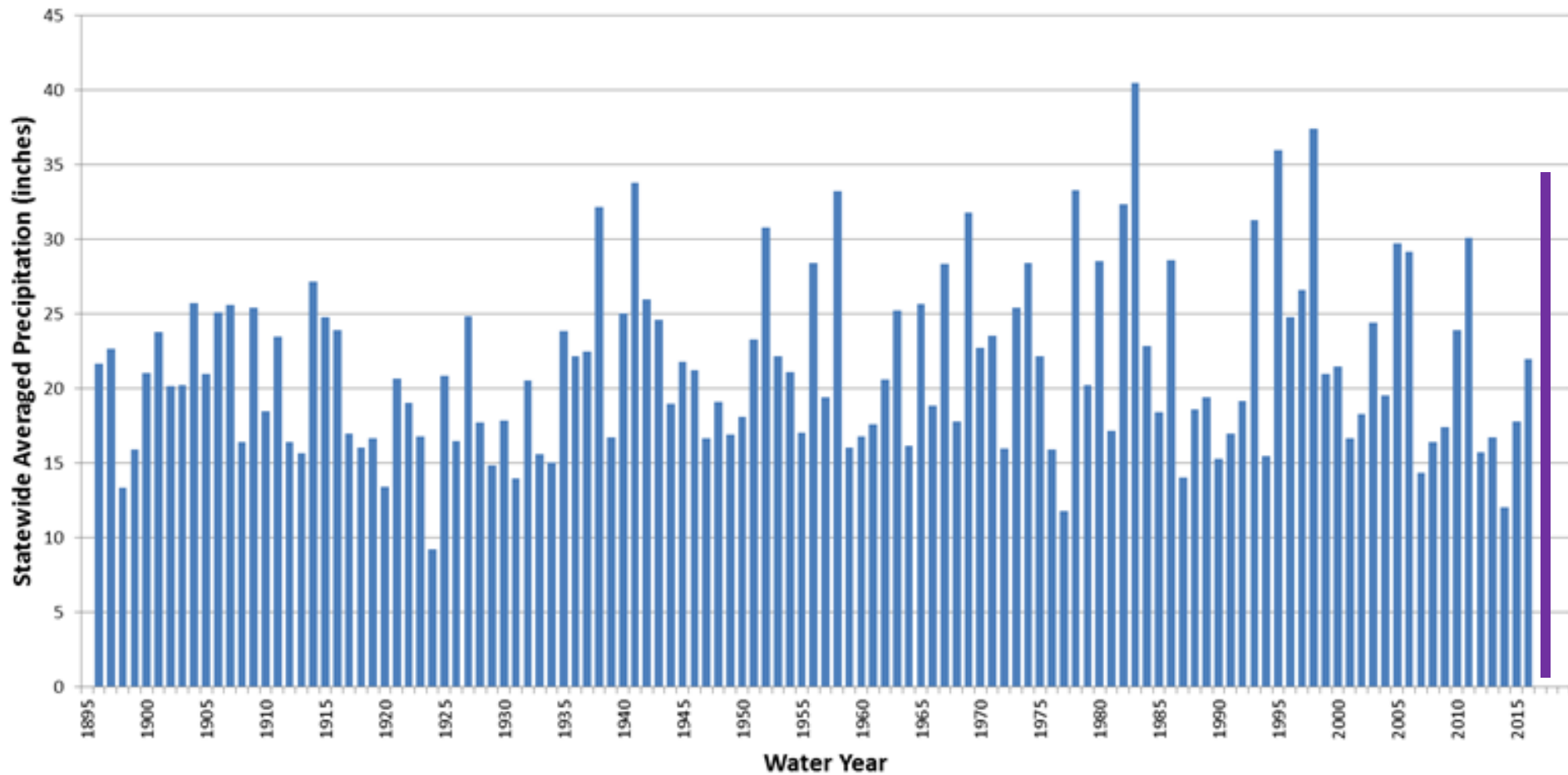


# Permanent restrictions to prevent water waste

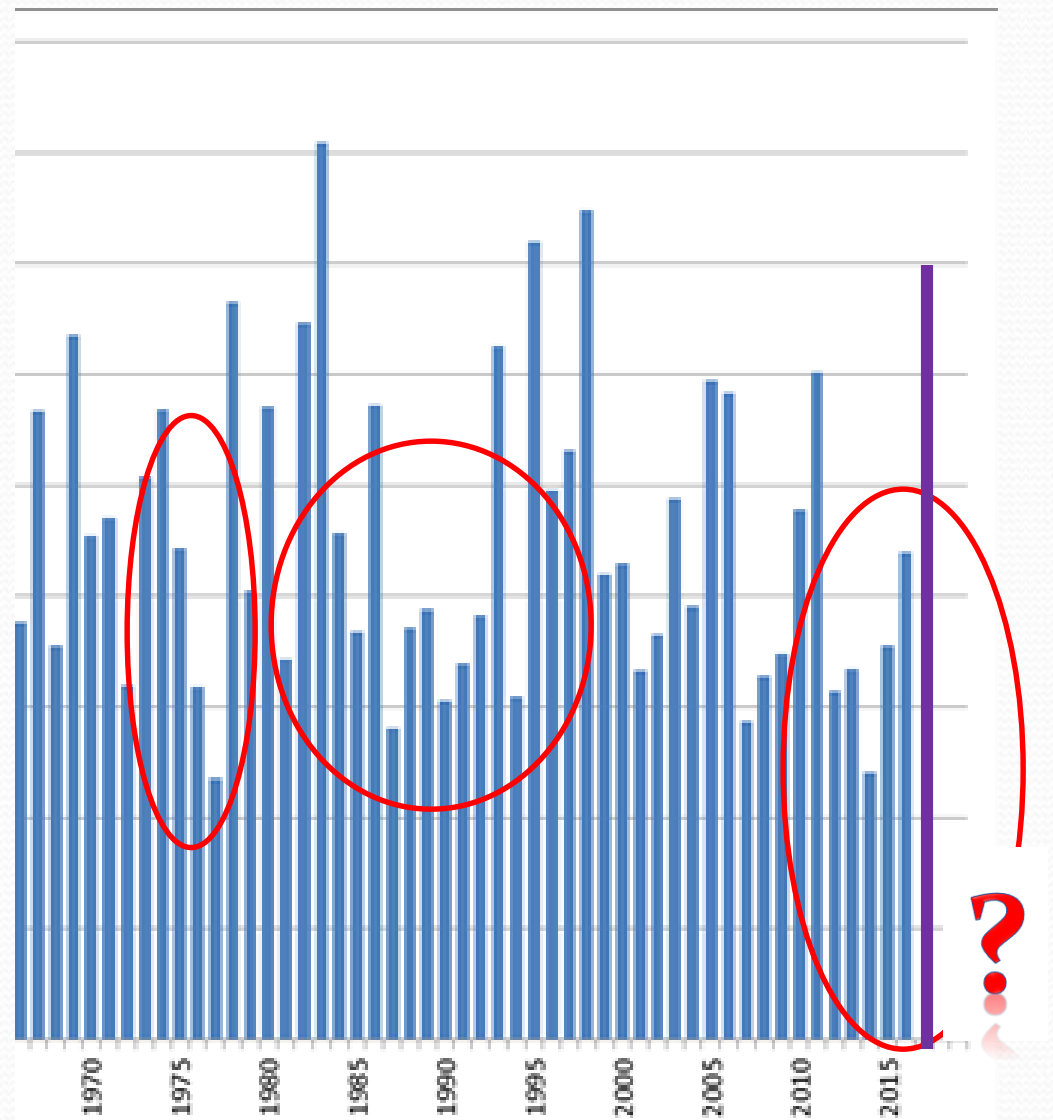
- Using potable water to wash sidewalks and driveways;
- Allowing runoff when irrigating with potable water;
- Using hoses with no shutoff nozzles to wash cars;
- Using potable water in decorative water features that do not recirculate the water;
- Irrigating outdoors during and within 48 hours following measureable rainfall;
- Irrigation with potable water of ornamental turf on public street medians; and
- Irrigation with potable water outside of newly constructed homes and buildings that is inconsistent with regulations or other requirements established by the California Building Standards Commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development.



# CA Annual average rainfall 1895-2016



# Since 1965

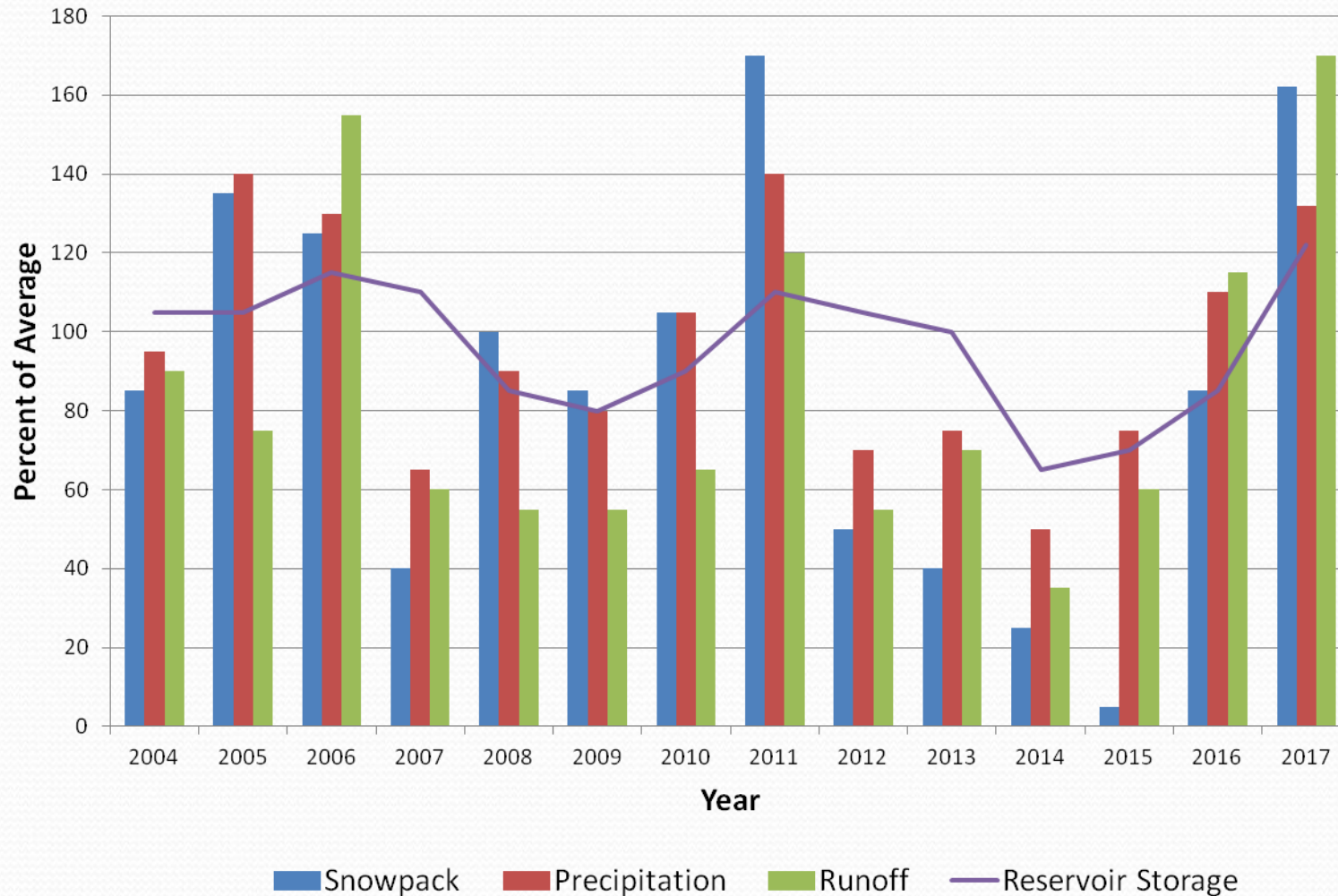




# Department of Water Resources California

## Cooperative Snow Surveys

### April 1 Statewide Conditions



# What's Happening Now

- AB2515 Update MWELO in synch with Cal Green
- Effective Date 1/1/2020
- Need to update by 2018
- Public process
- Stakeholder group





# Draft Timeline

- Dec 18, 2017 full group meeting San Diego
- January 2018 workgroups give final recommendations
- Feb-June re-write regulation
- Public hearings, comments, Water Commission approval
- Final approval by 7/1/19
- Effective date 1/1/2020

# LSAG-Landscape Stakeholder Advisory Group

- Open to anyone
- Informal
- Met in January in Pomona, Sacramento in April, Fresno in Sept.
- Next meeting Dec. 18 San Diego
- Webinar –always
- Sign up to join





# Current Workgroups

- Education
- Landscape Plans
- Water Budget and Technical Standards
- Planning (city and county processes)
- Codes and Standards (written code, applicability)
- Existing landscapes
- Trees and Urban Forestry



# After the update is over...

- LSAG will continue to deal with landscape topics
  - Education
  - Guidance documents on MWELO
  - Training
  - Technical assistance
  - Guidance to state and local agencies and the public

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