

M A R C H 2 0 1 7

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## WHAT A WINTER! SOME FACTS FROM TMWA'S SENIOR HYDROLOGIST

Though anyone could look out the window these days and think it's obvious that the drought is over, there is much more to making that determination than you might think. "From a scientific perspective, there are many variables we use to determine that a drought cycle has ended," said Bill Hauck, TMWA's senior hydrologist. "Some of those key factors are the amount of precipitation, soil moisture content, water content of the snowpack, current reservoir storage and streamflow runoff projections." The data is overwhelmingly clear that the area's record-breaking drought is finally over. As evidence, Hauck cited the following key indicators:

- Precipitation for the water year is well in excess of 200% of normal.
- Water content of the snowpack is 200% of normal and 160% of the typical peak amount.
- Lake Tahoe and other reservoirs have already made impressive gains in storage this winter.
- The projected streamflow runoff forecast is in excess of 200% of normal.
- Lake Tahoe and every other storage reservoir on the Truckee system are projected to fill this year.

"This has been the biggest winter in many, many years and is actually in the running for the being one of the wettest years in recorded history in terms of snowpack and streamflow runoff," Hauck states. The precipitation gage at Tahoe City, Calif. is 300% of average right now for this time of year. "This means big things for our water supply, as it has become apparent that Lake Tahoe is very likely to experience the most significant recovery in recorded history in terms of gains in elevation in a single year. This is exactly what our region needed. With a full Lake Tahoe, we can expect normal Truckee River flows for the next several years," Hauck added.

## TMWA'S FREE WORKSHOP SERIES RETURNS THIS SPRING

TMWA offers a series of free workshops to help residents prepare their irrigation systems and yards for spring and summer. Workshop topics include landscape planning and design, tree care, and drip and sprinkler system maintenance. Visit [www.tmwa.com/events](http://www.tmwa.com/events) for workshop dates. Registration is required; please call 834-8005. All workshops are free and held at TMWA offices.



## THE VALUE OF YOUR WATER

TMWA provides some of the best quality water in the nation. More than 1,000 laboratory tests are performed each month to make sure our customers receive high-quality water.

## TMWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS VOTE TO NOT SUPPORT FLUORIDATION BILL

At its February meeting, the TMWA Board of Directors voted unanimously to not support Assembly Bill 193 (AB193), introduced at the Nevada State Legislature by Assemblywoman Amber Joiner and Assemblyman Michael Sprinkle. Current law requires an affirmative vote of the public in order to implement fluoridation in a public water supply (with the exception of Clark County, whose voters approved fluoridation in 2000). The bill would change that law and would require TMWA to fluoridate its water supply without a public vote. TMWA is the only public water supplier impacted by the bill.

The Board listed the following reasons for their opposition to AB193:

1. Pre-emption of local control.
2. Circumvention of the previous countywide vote against fluoridation.
3. The high cost of fluoridation, which would be passed on to TMWA customers.

### EXPLANATIONS REGARDING ABOVE REASONS:

1. The bill deprives voters of the right to decide whether to fluoridate their local water supply. TMWA Board members felt that the decision to fluoridate the local water supply should remain in local control and be based on voter approval, as the current law requires.
2. It directly contradicts the will of Washoe County voters. In 2002, a countywide vote was taken in Washoe County where 58 percent voted against fluoridation. The Board felt that the present bill, as introduced, circumvents that vote and that any fluoride decisions should require a vote of the public.
3. Since the bill provides no funding from the state, all costs to implement fluoridation would have to be passed on to the TMWA customers. It would be an unfunded mandate. A preliminary cost estimate for fluoridation in the TMWA system—provided by a 3rd party engineering firm—is \$66.5 million for infrastructure retrofits and \$3 million annually for operations and maintenance. In order to comply with the bill, TMWA would have to raise all TMWA customer rates 8.83 percent. Board members had significant concerns imposing such a high cost on TMWA customers without providing them the right to decide through a public vote on whether they are willing to pay those costs. The bill, as introduced, would also require that all water sources in the TMWA service area be fluoridated. This would include TMWA's 83 production wells.

The Board was neutral on fluoridation as a community health concept, their primary concern being the decision should ultimately be made by the local community, as current law requires. If you have questions or concerns regarding this bill, please contact your state legislators.

### WHERE TO CALL

GENERAL INQUIRIES: . . . . . 834-8080  
EMERGENCY REPAIR: . . . . . 834-8090  
WATER CONSERVATION: . . . . . 834-8005  
WATER QUALITY: . . . . . 834-8118  
WATER RIGHTS: . . . . . 834-8029  
OMBUDSMAN: . . . . . 848-0813



Truckee Meadows Water Authority is a not-for-profit, community-owned water utility, overseen by elected officials and citizen appointees from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. TMWA employs a highly skilled team who ensure the treatment, delivery and availability of high-quality drinking water around the clock for more than 385,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

### HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

#### STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 4 at 3 p.m.

#### IRRIGATION SYSTEM START-UP WORKSHOP

Wednesday, April 5 at 5:30 p.m.

#### LANDSCAPE PLANNING & DESIGN WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 8 at 9 a.m.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, April 19 at 10 a.m.

Locations and details on all workshops and meetings are found here:

[tmwa.com/news/events-calendar](http://tmwa.com/news/events-calendar)

