

California Drought Calls for Bold Energy Solutions

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Last week, California Governor Edmund (Jerry) Brown announced a \$1 billion emergency drought package and an executive order mandating a statewide 25 percent cut in potable water use through the end of next February. These measures seek to save water, increase enforcement to prevent wasteful use, and coordinate the state's drought response. In addition to impacting day to day water use, the drought has decreased California's hydroelectric capacity, shifting the state's energy landscape and increasing the risk of service disruption. According to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#), California's hydro production saw **a 60 percent decrease** from 2011 to 2014. Natural gas and solar are replacing relatively cheap hydroelectricity, resulting in utility price increases. A recent [report by the Pacific Institute](#) said electricity costs jumped \$1.4 billion from 2012 to 2014 as electricity suppliers switched to gas-fired generation and other sources.

Keeping these energy needs in mind, Governor Brown's announcements also called for new water energy technologies.

The [California Energy Commission](#), jointly with the [Department of Water Resources](#) and the [State Water Resources Control Board](#), are implementing a Water Energy Technology (WET) program to deploy innovative water management solutions for business, residents, industries, and agriculture. This program seeks to achieve water and energy savings, along with greenhouse gas reductions, by incentivizing the use and development of cutting-edge technologies. These include renewable energy-powered desalination, integrated onsite reuse systems, water-use monitoring software, irrigation system timing and precision technology, and on-farm precision technology.

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