PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

February 2, 2024

Natalie Wales
Director of Regulatory Policy & Compliance
California Water Service Company
1720 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95112-4598

Dear Ms. Wales,

The Water Division of the California Public Utilities Commission has approved California Water Service Company's Advice Letter No. 2507, filed on January 12, 2024, regarding Post-Disaster Report on Emergency Customer Protections re January 2023 Storms in the Salinas Valley Region.

Enclosed is a copy of the advice letter with an effective date of January 12, 2024 for the utility's files.

Please contact Mahdi Jahami at MJ4@cpuc.ca.gov or 916-743-5080, if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Enclosures

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DIVISION OF WATER AND AUDITS

Advice Letter Cover Sheet

Utility Name:	California Water Service Company	**Date Mailed to Service List:**	1/12/2024
District:	Salinas Valley Region		
CPUC Utility #:	U-60-W	**Protest Deadline (20th Day):**	02/01/2024
Advice Letter #:	2507	**Review Deadline (30th Day):**	02/11/2024
Tier:	☒1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐ Compliance	**Requested Effective Date:**	1/12/2024
Authorization:	D.19-07-015		
Description:	Post-Disaster Report on Emergency Customer Protections re January 2023 Storms in the Salinas Valley Region	**Rate Impact:**	none

The protest or response deadline for this advice letter is 20 days from the date that this advice letter was mailed to the service list. Please see the "Response or Protest" section in the advice letter for more information.

Utility Contact: Albree Jewell
Phone: 916-205-4539
Email: ajewell@calwater.com

Utility Contact: Natalie Wales
Phone: 408-367-8566
Email: Nwales@calwater.com

DWA Contact: Tariff Unit
Phone: (415) 703-1133
Email: Water.Division@cpuc.ca.gov

DWA USE ONLY

DATE	STAFF	COMMENTS

[ ] APPROVED [ ] WITHDRAWN [ ] REJECTED

Signature: _____ **Comments:** _____

Date: _____

CALIFORNIA WATER SERVICE COMPANY
1720 NORTH FIRST STREET
SAN JOSE, CA 95112 • (408) 367-8200

FILED
JAN 12 2024
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
WATER DIVISION

January 12, 2024

Advice Letter No. 2507

To the California Public Utilities Commission:

California Water Service Company ("Cal Water") respectfully submits this Tier 1 advice letter in compliance with Ordering Paragraph 11 of D.19-07-015, *Decision Adopting an Emergency Disaster Relief Program for Electric, Natural Gas, Water and Sewer Utility Customers* with regard to the conclusion of its emergency customer protections due to the impact on Cal Water's customers during the January severe winter storms within our Salinas Valley Region. ***Please note that this advice letter will only be distributed electronically.***

Summary

This Tier 1 advice letter confirms Cal Water's compliance with the emergency customer protections triggered by the Governor of California's Proclamation of a State of Emergency.[1] Parts of Cal Water's Salinas Valley Region ratemaking area was impacted by this emergency.

Background

D.19-07-015 requires water and sewer companies to file a Tier 1 advice letter 12 months after a state of emergency was proclaimed for an event affecting the water or sewer company. This Tier 1 advice letter is intended to notify the California Public Utilities Commission the conclusion of its emergency customer protections.

In D.19-07-015, the Commission provided as follows in Ordering Paragraph 11:

> 11. All Class-A Water utilities … shall file a Tier 1 Advice Letter at the default, 12-month conclusion of customer protection period (running from the date that customer protections related to the specific disaster became effective), or as reasonably determined by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, detailing the mandated protections offered to the customer affected by the disaster, the start and end periods customers received the emergency customer protections, the outreach efforts conducted, the customer impacts, and the associated cost.

The Commission also adopted the following Conclusion of Law relevant to Ordering Paragraph 11:

> 10. It is reasonable to require the […] water, and sewer utilities, as identified in Conclusion of Law 2, to conclude the administration of the

[1] https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/1.4.23-SOE.pdf?emrc=e53f34

mandated customer protections no sooner than twelve (12) months from the date of the emergency proclamation or as appropriately determined by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and to affirmatively communicate with customers throughout the duration of the protection period about the timeline of protections

In an email on October 28, 2020,[2] Staff issued additional guidance as to what information it required in the advice letters filed at the conclusion of the customer protection period.

1) The mandated protections offered to the customers affected by the disaster
2) The start and end periods customers received the emergency customer protections
   - Start date = when the proclamation was declared
   - End date = the date the provider stopped offering the consumer protections
3) The outreach efforts the company undertook to inform their customers about the availability of the mandated protections.
4) The customer impacts
   - Number of customers impacted by the declared disaster event
5) Basic metrics that can be measured or estimated, including number of consumers that received each of the available protections over the course of the year.
   - For example, the number of customers that received extended payment dates for their bills

Discussion

On January 4, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom signed an Emergency Proclamation relating to the statewide severe winter storms related to a series of atmospheric river systems striking the State of California.[3] On January 10, 2023, roughly 166 customers in part of Cal Water's Salinas Valley Region were placed under mandatory evacuation orders as a result of the storms. They were allowed to return to their homes on January 15, 2023. Cal Water has been performing various outreach activities related to the event. On January 18, 2023, the storms moved away from Cal Water's systems.

In accordance with D.19-07-015, Cal Water confirms that it implemented the required customer protections in the Salinas Valley Region in response to the severe winter storms. These included working cooperatively with customers to establish reasonable payment options, waiving any reconnection fees for impacted customers, freeze certification reviews for low-income ratepayer assistance program participants affected, expediting start/end service requests, and providing bill credits for customers who had to evacuate.

California Water Service is committed to providing quality, service, and value to our customers,

[2] Email from Kim Hua, Water Division, CPUC, to numerous utility representatives (October 28, 2020) with subject line "12 Month Post-Disaster AL Filing – CPUC Disaster Relief D.19-08-025".
[3] https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/1.4.23-SOE.pdf?emrc=e53f34

and part of this commitment includes supporting them when they have been impacted by natural disasters. Cal Water regularly communicates about emergency customer protections through bill onserts, and when customer protections are implemented, we communicate with the affected customers comprehensively via social media (broader outreach), Nextdoor (more targeted), emails, phone calls, and our website (ensuring accessibility for visually or otherwise-impaired customers) in both Spanish and English, the languages commonly spoken in our service areas.

For the January 2023 severe winter storms, we utilized Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter) (for broad outreach) and emails to inform customers affected by the disaster on steps we were taking to support them and handle their account. If we could not get ahold of them by those means, we called them directly. Cal Water was not made aware of any customer homes being destroyed due to the events. Cal Water provided a pro rata credit of $15 for the roughly 166 customers impacted by the mandatory evacuation triggered by these events that occurred between 1/10/2023 and 1/15/2023. Finally, Cal Water included a message on all active accounts that were impacted by these storms about the credit and other customer protections.

In terms of a basic metrics that can be measured or estimated for the Salinas Valley Region, Cal Water has roughly 33,100 customers. Approximately 166 customers were impacted by mandatory evacuation during this disaster. Between January 10, 2023 and January 09, 2024, 689 payment arrangements began in the Salinas Valley Region. Cal Water cannot identify the percentage of payment arrangements that were requested specifically as a result of the January winter storms, however.

Requested Effective Date

Pursuant to OP 11 of D.19-07-015, this is filed as a Tier 1 advice letter. Cal Water does not request a specific effective date since this is a compliance filing without changes to Cal Water's tariffs.

Notice

Customer Notice – Customer notice of Tier 1 advice letters is not required under General Order 96-B, General Rule 7.3.1.

Service Lists – In accordance with General Order 96-B, General Rule 4.3 and 7.2 and Water Industry Rule 4.1, a copy of this advice letter will be transmitted electronically on **January 12, 2024,** to competing and adjacent utilities and other utilities or interested parties having requested such notification. ***Please note that this advice letter will only be distributed electronically to the Water Division and the attached service lists.***

Response or Protest

Anyone may respond to or protest this advice letter. When submitting a response or protest, please include the utility name and advice letter number in the subject line. A response supports

the filing and may contain information that proves useful to the Commission in evaluating the advice letter. A protest objects to the advice letter in whole or in part and must set forth the specific grounds on which it is based. These grounds are:

(1) The utility did not properly serve or give notice of the advice letter;
(2) The relief requested in the advice letter would violate statute or Commission order, or is not authorized by statute or Commission order on which the utility relies;
(3) The analysis, calculations, or data in the advice letter contain material error or omissions;
(4) The relief requested in the advice letter is pending before the Commission in a formal proceeding; or
(5) The relief requested in the advice letter requires consideration in a formal hearing, or is otherwise inappropriate for the advice letter process; or
(6) The relief requested in the advice letter is unjust, unreasonable, or discriminatory (provided such a protest may not be made where it would require relitigating a prior order of the Commission.)

A protest shall provide citations or proofs where available to allow staff to properly consider the protest. A response or protest must be made in writing or by electronic mail and must be received by the Water Division within 20 days of the date this advice letter is filed. The address for mailing or delivering a protest is:

Tariff Unit, Water Division, 3rd floor
California Public Utilities Commission,
505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102
water.division@cpuc.ca.gov

On the same date the response or protest is submitted to the Water Division, the respondent or protestant shall send a copy by mail (or e-mail) to Cal Water at the following address:

Natalie Wales
California Water Service Company
1720 North First Street,
San Jose, California 95112
E-mail: cwsrates@calwater.com

Cities and counties requiring Board of Supervisors or Board of Commissioners approval to protest should inform the Water Division within the 20-day protest period so a late-filed protest can be entertained. The informing document should include an estimate of the date the proposed protest might be voted on. The advice letter process does not provide for any responses, protests or comments, except for the utility's reply, after the 20-day comment period.

Replies: The utility shall reply to each protest and may reply to any response. Each reply must be received by the Water Division within 5 business days after the end of the protest period and shall be served on the same day to the person who filed the protest or response. If you have not received a reply to your protest within 10 business days, contact California Water Service Company at (408) 367-8200, and ask for the Rates Department.

CALIFORNIA WATER SERVICE COMPANY

/s/

_____

Albree Jewell,
Rates Analyst

cc: Syreeta Gibbs (Public Advocates Office)
PublicAdvocatesWater@cpuc.ca.gov

King City District (Salinas Valley Region)

ADVICE LETTER FILING MAILING LIST
PER SECTION III (G) OF GENERAL ORDER NO. 96-A

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LITTLE BEAR WATER COMPANY
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beatriz@littlebearwater.com

ONLY FOR SERVICE AREA MAPS:

RUSS NICHOLS, FIRE CHIEF
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KATE MCKENNA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
LAFCO of Monterey County
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Salinas, CA 93902
mckennak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov

Salinas District (Salinas Valley Region)

ADVICE LETTER FILING MAILING LIST
PER SECTION III (G) OF GENERAL ORDER NO. 96-A

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TOM ADCOCK
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Gavilan Water Company
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