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MEDIA STATEMENT

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As Snowpack Continues to Go Down...

It's Time for Residents to Tune Up Sprinklers

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) has released the following statement in response to snow survey results announced today by the California Department of Water Resources.

"Once again, it's 'one step forward and two steps back,'" said RWA Water Efficiency Program Manager Amy Talbot. "Despite a good start to the water year, persistent dry weather in January and February means that the Sierra snowpack continued to drop further below average for this time of year.

"And, now, we're running out of time for a comeback this year, because snowpack typically peaks in early April before it begins to melt with the rising spring temperatures.

"While weather patterns are certainly unpredictable and beyond our control, it's important to remember that we do have control over our water use."

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"The Regional Water Authority and local water providers urge residents to use water efficiently, especially outdoors where most water use--and water waste--occurs. In particular, as spring and the outdoor watering season approaches, we ask residents to tune up their sprinklers to make sure they run efficiently.

"Just like a water heater, furnace or other appliance in your home, sprinkler systems need an annual tune up to keep them working properly," Talbot said.

RWA offers the following five steps to a finely tuned sprinkler system:

- 1) Turn on your sprinkler system one watering zone (valve) at a time, and walk each zone.
- 2) Check for adequate water pressure. Pressure may be too high if you see "misting" (water that sprays into the air and drifts away) or if pop-up sprinklers don't rise all the way. Pressure may be too low if you see water dribbling (instead of spraying) from sprinklers.
- 3) Look for water-wasting problems such as:
 - Sprinklers that water the sidewalks, street, fence and any other area that shouldn't be watered.
 - "Geysers"--water shooting out of a broken sprinkler head.
 - Water running off the lawn or planting bed and onto the pavement.
 - Clogged spray nozzles with little or no water exiting sprinkler heads.
- 4) Repair problems:
 - Adjust misdirected and tilted sprinklers to water the lawn and not the sidewalk.
 - Repair or replace damaged sprinkler heads and nozzles.
 - Stop runoff by dividing your watering cycle into multiple shorter periods to allow for better absorption.

- Clear out clogs in spray nozzles.

5) Schedule your sprinkler timer according to the weather and your water provider's guidelines. After all, if you set your timer once and let it run all season, you'll both waste water and potentially hurt your plants.

"Taking the time to tune up your sprinklers now can have long-term benefits--not only to the health and beauty of your landscape but to the environment around us, including the beautiful rivers, creeks and streams that make this region unique," Talbot said.

Learn more about tuning up sprinklers at BeWaterSmart.info where visitors can:

- *See videos and check lists that demonstrate how to tune up sprinklers.*
- *Learn about free water provider services and rebates designed to keep sprinkler systems running efficiently*
- *Find a list of qualified Green Gardeners who specialize in efficient sprinkler system design and maintenance.*
- *Take a pledge to keep sprinklers running efficiently and earn great prizes.*

About the Regional Water Authority: *RWA is a joint powers authority representing 25 water providers and affiliates in the greater Sacramento area. Its primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.*

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