



Media Release

State Water Board restarts water and wastewater arrearage program

Eligibility period for water debt relief now extended through 2022

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board has formally opened the process for water and wastewater systems to apply for its [Extended Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program](#), a continuation of last year’s program that paid systems directly to cover debt from residential and commercial customers who experienced financial hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The extended arrearages program expands the eligibility period by nearly 18 months covering eligible unpaid customer water bill debt accrued between March 4, 2020, and December 31, 2022. The application period runs through Dec. 31, 2023, and fund disbursement should begin in February 2024.

“We know that the financial impacts of the pandemic were felt the most acutely by low-income families and communities,” said E. Joaquin Esquivel, chair of the State Water Board. “While the state’s overall economic recovery has been strong, we encourage water systems to apply for the extended arrearages program so we can work together to help these communities and all Californians who are still burdened with water bill debt from that time.”

Governor Newsom signed a budget trailer bill in July 2023 to extend the board’s prior arrearages program, which initially received \$985 million in federal funding allocated by the State Legislature in 2021. That program disbursed over \$385 million to water and wastewater systems for residential and commercial arrearages before concluding last year. The extended program will disburse the remaining \$600 million allocated by the Legislature.

More information is available at the State Water Board’s [California Extended Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program](#) page.



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.