



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tracy Leach (661) 703-5639

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For Immediate Release

Kern County Water Agency Update on Western Hills Water District

At its meeting on June 26, 2025, the Kern County Water Agency's Board of Directors took action to unconditionally extend the deadline relating to water supplied by the Agency to Western Hills Water District from June 30, 2025 to September 30, 2025. The Agency had previously granted a conditional extension through December 31, 2025 pending the outcome of the Proposition 218 rate hearing but determined the shorter unconditional extension was warranted in light of the short time between the June 28 rate hearing and the June 30 deadline. If Western Hills' proposed rate increases are approved without a majority protest at the June 28 rate hearing, then the December 31 deadline will remain in effect.

The Agency and Western Hills will be meeting in the coming days to discuss the situation. While understanding the challenges and impact of terminating the water supply to Western Hills, the Agency must carry out its fiduciary responsibility in protecting the economic interests of its constituents. Western Hills has failed to make its required payments for many years, despite multiple notices from the Agency, leaving the Agency with a substantial debt.

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The Kern County Water Agency (Agency) was created in 1961 by a special act of the State Legislature and serves as the local contracting entity for the State Water Project. The Agency, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2011, participates in a wide scope of management activities, including water quality, flood control and groundwater operations to preserve and enhance Kern County's water supply—the main ingredient for the well-being of an economy.