

CONSENT

Bill No: AB 1873
Author: Bennett (D)
Amended: 5/27/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/9/26

AYES: Becker, Seyarto, Allen, Cabaldon, Grove, Laird, Reyes

SENATE EMERGENCY MGT. COMMITTEE: 9-0, 6/16/26

AYES: Stern, Seyarto, Allen, Blakespear, Grayson, Grove, McNerney, Pérez, Rubio

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0, 5/4/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: County of Ventura: fire suppression: backup energy source

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill revises existing requirements, set to take effect July 1, 2030, for Ventura County water suppliers to extend the time for mobile or mutual aid backup energy sources to come online from 60 minutes to 90 minutes after a loss of power, requires water suppliers to notify the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services if that backup power is not available within 90 minutes, sets a July 1, 2027, deadline to develop an emergency preparedness plan, and adds a new assessment item to the existing post-fire reporting requirements.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Commencing July 1, 2030, requires a water supplier, as specified, to have access to sufficient backup energy sources to operate critical fire suppression infrastructure needed to apply water for at least 24 hours for the purpose of fire

suppression in high or very high fire hazard severity zones (HFHSZ or VHFHSZ, respectively) in Ventura County, as specified, or have access to alternative sources of water supplied by a different water supplier or agency, as specified. (Water Code (WAT) §7080(a)(1))

- 2) Authorizes a water supplier to use mobile backup energy sources or procure an energy source via an established mutual aid agreement provided that the backup energy source can provide power within 12 hours of the National Weather Service alerting the region of a red flag warning and provide power for at least 24 hours after a loss of power and within 60 minutes of a loss of power. (WAT §7080(a)(2))
- 3) Requires a water supplier to establish an emergency preparedness plan for response to red flag warnings, extreme weather events, and other major power outages or emergencies that pose a potential threat to providing water service in coordination with the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services (VC OES) and the Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD). (WAT §7080(d)(1)(A))
- 4) Requires a water supplier, if the National Weather Service alerts the region of a red flag warning, to initiate action under the above-described emergency preparedness plan. (WAT §7080(d)(2)).
- 5) Requires the VCFD, in cooperation with the water supplier, to make a report if any fire damages and makes uninhabitable more than 10 residential dwellings within the service area of the water supplier. The report is required to include:
 - a) Whether water tanks were filled at an appropriate level for fire suppression, as outlined in the emergency preparedness plan.
 - b) Whether disruption of water delivery due to lack of electricity was timely and appropriately mitigated by the water supplier.
 - c) Whether critical fire suppression infrastructure and backup energy sources met certain fire safety standards developed by the VCFD.

This bill:

- 1) Extends the time for mobile or mutual aid backup energy sources to come online from 60 minutes to 90 minutes after a loss of power, or as soon as practically possible after deenergization. Requires the water supply to notify VC OES as soon as practically possible, but no later than 3 business days after a loss of power, if the backup energy source does not provide power within 90 minutes of a loss of power.

- 2) Requires the emergency preparedness plan to be established by July 1, 2027.
- 3) Adds a new assessment item to the post-fire reporting requirements that would require VCFD to include whether a water supplier that used mobile backup energy source or mutual aid agreement for a backup energy source notified the VC OES due to a loss of power and the amount of time critical infrastructure for that water supplier experienced a loss of power.

[Note: For additional information on this bill, see the Senate Natural Resources and Water and Senate Emergency Management Committees' bill analyses.]

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/4/26)

California Professional Firefighters
City of Thousand Oaks
County of Ventura

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/4/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author, "Ventura County has experienced its three most destructive fires in the last 8 years - Thomas (2017), Woosley (2018), and Mountain (2024). Last year, I authored AB 367 to ensure that Ventura County will be able to use its resources to their maximum effectiveness. As that bill moved through the process I committed to working with cities in my district to address potential implementation concerns. This bill, AB 1873, reflects the collaborative discussion we had with our local water suppliers about their implementation issues. It makes sensible changes that preserve the integrity of last year's bill while creating more efficient paths towards effective implementation."

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0, 5/4/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo,

Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Ward,
Wicks, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Bennett, Caloza, Chen, Flora, Wallis, Wilson

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