

Memorandum

Date: December 17, 2018

To: All DWR Employees

Joel Ledesma
Deputy Director
State Water Project

From: Department of Water Resources

Subject: State Water Project Dam Safety Policy


I am pleased to announce the release of an updated State Water Project (SWP) Dam Safety Policy. Safety is a core value of the Department and the SWP Dam Safety Policy documents the Department's commitment that Public Safety is the highest priority in the management and operation of the SWP.

Following the 2017 Oroville event, the Department embarked on multiple initiatives to strengthen the SWP Dam Safety Program including this update to the SWP Dam Safety Policy. The Policy recognizes the Department's dedication to the SWP Dam Safety Program and ensuring safety, minimizing risk, and protecting the environment in the operation and management of the SWP's infrastructure.

The successful operation of the SWP relies on commitment and engagement of employees from every Department Division and Office. The SWP Dam Safety Policy details the roles and responsibility of all Department employees, including specific responsibilities of the Department's Executive Team, Assistant Deputy Director SWP, SWP Chief Sam Safety Engineer, and Division and Office Chiefs. This policy has been memorialized as an update to Water Resources Engineering Memorandum (WREM) No. 16b, signed by Director Nemeth on November 2nd of this year. WREM 16b may be found here:

<https://current.water.ca.gov/pnp/Pages/WREM.aspx>

If you have any questions about the Policy or the SWP Dam Safety Program, please contact Ted Craddock, Assistant Deputy Director SWP or David Sarkisian, SWP Chief Dam Safety Engineer at Ted.Craddock@water.ca.gov or David.Sarkisian@water.ca.gov.



Joel Ledesma
Deputy Director

Attachment



State Water Project DAM SAFETY POLICY

The Department of Water Resources (Department) is committed to ensuring safety, minimizing risk, and protecting the environment in all of its endeavors. Public safety is the highest priority for the Department in its management and operation of the State Water Project (SWP), which includes its dams, and associated infrastructure. The Department maintains clear protocols among Department executives, employees, and SWP stakeholders for the identification, prioritization, management, and communication of any SWP dam safety risks.

SWP staff, managers, and business partners are responsible for implementing this policy and continually improving the SWP Dam Safety Program. SWP managers will maintain a culture that promotes the SWP dam safety principles. The Department's Directorate shall provide all necessary resources to implement this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities of SWP Dam Safety Program Leaders

The SWP Dam Safety Program relies on commitment and engagement from all levels of the Department.

All Department Employees:

1. Are empowered and expected to refer known or perceived dam safety issues to the Chief Dam Safety Engineer for evaluation.

The Assistant Deputy Director, State Water Project, is accountable for:

1. Establishing, communicating, and maintaining SWP policies pertaining to dam safety to emphasize the importance of public safety.
2. Ensuring that resources are properly aligned and sufficient to address public safety priorities for SWP dams and associated infrastructure, and successful execution of the SWP Dam Safety Program.
3. Communicating significant dam safety issues to the Deputy Director, State Water Project, and the Director.
4. Engaging the Chief Dam Safety Engineer, SWP Division Chiefs, Deputy Directors, and Director on program performance.
5. Ensuring communication of SWP Dam Safety Program activities to all stakeholders.

The Chief Dam Safety Engineer is responsible for:

1. Administering, monitoring, and continuously improving the SWP Dam Safety Program. This includes maintaining the SWP Owner's Dam Safety Program (ODSP) document which defines roles, responsibilities, and SWP Dam Safety Program elements.
2. Prioritizing dam safety projects and activities in alignment with asset and risk management policies for SWP facilities.
3. Communicating significant dam safety issues and risk reduction measures in a timely manner to the Assistant Deputy Director, State Water Project, and the Deputy Director, State Water Project.
4. Communicating program activities to dam safety regulators.

SWP Division Chiefs support the SWP Dam Safety Program by:

1. Aligning resources to address program priorities as recommended by the Chief Dam Safety Engineer and approved by the Assistant Deputy Director, State Water Project.
2. Developing and implementing effective procedures, instructions, and standards within Divisions to fulfill the program elements.
3. Developing and implementing best practices in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of SWP dams and their appurtenances.
4. Participating in the SWP Dam Safety Program Steering Committee.

SWP Dam Safety Program Elements

These program elements shall be documented within the SWP ODSP document:

- **Surveillance** - Early detection, inspections, instrumentation monitoring, and testing with robust data collection and analyses.
- **Dam Safety Assessments** - Evaluate facility performance and design, considering modern standards and analysis methodologies. Perform comprehensive facility reviews.
- **Reservoir Operations** - Operate reservoirs to ensure public safety and protect downstream communities.
- **Maintenance** - Meet or exceed industry standards for maintenance of SWP dams and appurtenances.
- **Design and Construction** - Employ conservative design and construction practices in accordance with regulatory requirements and modern industry standards.
- **Risk Management** - Prioritize dam safety issues and align decision making with risk management policy.
- **Emergency Preparedness** - Maintain and exercise Emergency Action Plans and Security Plans; partner with emergency management agencies and communities.
- **Independent Reviews** - Conduct facility reviews by external dam safety experts through Part 12D Independent Consultants, Director's Safety Review Boards, and Boards of Consultants.
- **Project Delivery** - Effectively manage projects, execute studies, obtain environmental permits, and design and construct facilities.
- **Communication** - Communicate and report dam safety issues and program status to internal and external stakeholders.
- **Documentation** - Organize and secure program and facility documentation.
- **Technical Expertise** - Hire, train, and develop qualified staff through documented training programs and partnering with external experts.
- **Program Reviews** - Monitor program performance metrics and perform regular audits and formal management to promote continual improvement.

State Water Project Dam Safety Policy water.ca.gov/Programs/State-Water-Project

This Policy is memorialized as Water Resources Engineering Memorandum (WREM) 16b - State Water Project Dam Safety Policy current.water.ca.gov/pnp/Pages/WREM.aspx

