

ARCCA

2015 California Climate and Energy Legislative Update

Already a global model in the fight against climate change, additional new landmark legislation that establishes long-term energy and climate goals and resiliency measures for California's environment, economy and communities was passed by the State Legislature and signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown. This historic package of climate policies and standards solidifies California's role in climate and clean-energy leadership and fosters innovative solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, bring green jobs and economic development to local communities, and move the state closer toward a more sustainable and resilient future. Below are the major highlights of key energy and climate bills that were signed into law this session:

AB 802 (Williams) - Energy Efficiency

Requires the California Public Utilities Commission to update the rules for the measurement of energy efficiency so that measurement is based on normalized metered energy consumption. Measuring energy savings at the meter, while making adjustments to account for outliers, accounts for true energy efficiency impacts on the grids.

Major Points:

- Requires the California Energy Commission, in consultation with the California Public Utilities Commission, to make all reasonable adjustments to its energy demand conducted to account for its findings of market conditions and existing baselines, authorizing the Energy Commission to consider the results from specified programs.
- Requires utilities to maintain records of the energy usage data of all buildings to which they provide service for at least the most recent 12 months.
- Beginning no later than January 1, 2017, utilities must deliver or provide aggregated energy data to the building owner, owner's agent, operator, or to the owner's account in the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager.
- Requires the Public Utilities Commission, by September 1, 2016, to authorize electrical and gas corporations to provide incentives, rebates, technical assistance, and support to their customers to increase the energy efficiency of existing buildings and requires the corporations to recover the reasonable costs of those programs in rates.

AB 1482 (Gordon) - Climate Adaptation

Requires state agencies to promote the use of the climate adaptation strategy to inform planning decisions and ensures that state investments consider climate change impacts when developing infrastructure to address adaptation. Requires the Strategic Growth Council to review and comment on the State's Five-Year Infrastructure plan to take current and future climate change impacts into account in all infrastructure projects.

Major Points:

- Codifies the adaptation provisions of Governor Brown's Executive Order B-30-15.
- Requires California Natural Resources Agency to update the Safeguarding California Plan by July 1, 2017 and every 3 years thereafter to include vulnerabilities to climate change by sector.
- Requires state agencies to address the vulnerabilities identified by pursuing a number of activities that support regional and local action.

SB 246 (Wieckowski) - Climate Change Adaptation

Establishes the integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program to coordinate regional and local efforts with state climate adaptation strategies. Sets up more transparent and consistent mechanisms for local input on state actions and focus on state efforts on supporting local action.

Major Points:

- Sets up the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program, administered by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and designed to coordinate state, regional, and local efforts.
- Directs the Strategic Growth Council to "inform" state-led programs, including state planning processes, grant programs so they better reflect local and regional considerations.

- Requires California Natural Resources Agency and Office of Emergency Services to update the Adaptation Planning Guide to provide tools, guidance, and strategies for adaptation planning within one year of an update to the Safeguarding California Plan.
- Establishes an advisory council led by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research comprised of members from a range of disciplines to provide scientific and technical support and facilitate coordination.
- The Governor's Office of Planning and Research to establish a clearinghouse for climate adaptation information.

SB 350 (De León and Leno) - Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015

Sets mitigation goals for 2030: 50% increase in efficiency in existing buildings and 50% utility power coming from renewable energy sources.

Major Points:

- Requires the California Public Utilities Commission to establish efficiency targets for electrical and natural gas corporations consistent with the annual targets set by the California Energy Commission, which will be set by November 1, 2017.
- Directs the California Public Utilities Commission to review and update its policies governing energy efficiency programs to achieve the annual targets.
- Makes revisions to Renewable Portfolio Standard Program and other requirements on utilities to ensure achievement of goal to increase amount of electricity generated from renewable energy sources.
- Provides for transformation of the California Independent System Operator into a regional organization.
- 50% reduction in petroleum use removed from bill language, but electric vehicles component remains intact, providing opportunities to see the transportation sector progress and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

SB 379 (Jackson) - Land Use: General Plan: Safety Element

Requires cities and counties to include climate adaptation and resiliency strategies in the safety elements of their general plans to ensure safety and protection of their communities in the future. Cities or counties that have an adopted HMP, climate adaptation plan or applicable provisions in their general plans, may use that information to comply.

Major Points:

- Upon the next revision of a local hazard mitigation plan on or after January 1, 2017, or, if the local jurisdiction has not adopted a local hazard mitigation plan, beginning on or before January 1, 2022, require the safety element to be reviewed and updated as necessary to address climate adaptation and resiliency strategies.
- Requires the update to include a set of goals, policies, and objectives based on a vulnerability assessment, identifying risks that climate change poses and geographic areas at risk from climate change impacts. Requires a set of feasible strategies that include among other things natural infrastructure options.

SB 758 (Block) - Atmospheric Rivers: Research, Mitigation, and Climate Forecasting Program

Creates the Atmospheric Rivers: Research, Mitigation, and Climate Forecasting Program under the Department of Water Resources to research atmospheric river patterns to increase water supply and reliability of water resources and improves flood protection.

Major Points:

- Aims to close key knowledge gaps in weather observations, models, and forecasting
- Requires the Department of Water Resources to take all actions within its existing authority to operate reservoirs in a way that improves flood protection and flood control and water storage facilities to capture water generated by atmospheric rivers to increase water supply, hydropower availability, and reliability of water resources.

This legislative factsheet has been produced by the Local Government Commission (LGC), the coordinator for the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation (ARCCA). ARCCA is a network comprised of existing regional adaptation collaboratives from across California that are already coordinating and supporting climate adaptation efforts in their own regions to enhance public health, protect natural systems, build economies, and improve quality of life. Through ARCCA, members come together to amplify and solidify their individual efforts, as well as to give a stronger voice to regionalism at the state and federal levels.

