

COLORADO RIVER SHORTAGE FACT SHEET

Tempe's allocation of Colorado River water delivered by the Central Arizona Project (CAP) is an important source of supply for Tempe's water service area.

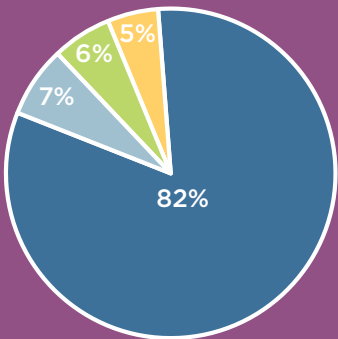
The Colorado River is over-allocated, and its production is being affected by drought and climate change. It is likely that the region will face a future with less available CAP water.

Tempe continues to prepare for a future with less Colorado River water by:

- Continuing to implement Drought Stage 0, also called Watch, of our Drought Preparedness Plan.
- Increasing the reliability and resiliency of our diverse water resources portfolio.
- Optimizing water treatment facilities and obtaining access to alternative water supplies.
- Expanding the successes of our robust water conservation program.

Tempe's typically available water supply by source

- SRP Surface Water Member Supply
- Safe-yield Groundwater
- CAP Supply
- Other SRP Surface Water



Although CAP water supplies just 6% of the city's water portfolio in a typical year, it is currently a primary water source for roughly 20% of Tempe's water service area. These geographic areas do not have rights to the Salt River Project (SRP) member supplies to support their demands. See tempe.gov/SRPLands for a map showing lands eligible to use SRP member water.

The Colorado River Basin

The Colorado River Basin is divided into two regions and covers portions of seven western states and Mexico. The river is managed and operated by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and significant federal resources are invested in monitoring and communicating drought status, runoff conditions and shortages. The Colorado River System provides water for more than 5 million acres of farmland and 40 million people. In 2021, the BOR declared shortage on the Colorado River for the first time in history. The BOR estimates that over-allocation and the effects of drought have resulted in the Colorado River system experiencing an on-going deficit of 2 to 4 million acre-feet (MAF).



Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan (DCP):

- In 2019, the Federal Government and seven basin states developed agreements to take reductions in Colorado River supplies in the event of droughts or shortages.
- Supply reductions (shortages) relate to the surface elevation of Lake Mead.
- Shortages take effect annually on Jan. 1 based on previous August predictions.
- The DCP was intended to prevent restricted operations of the Colorado River System.

Shortage declaration:

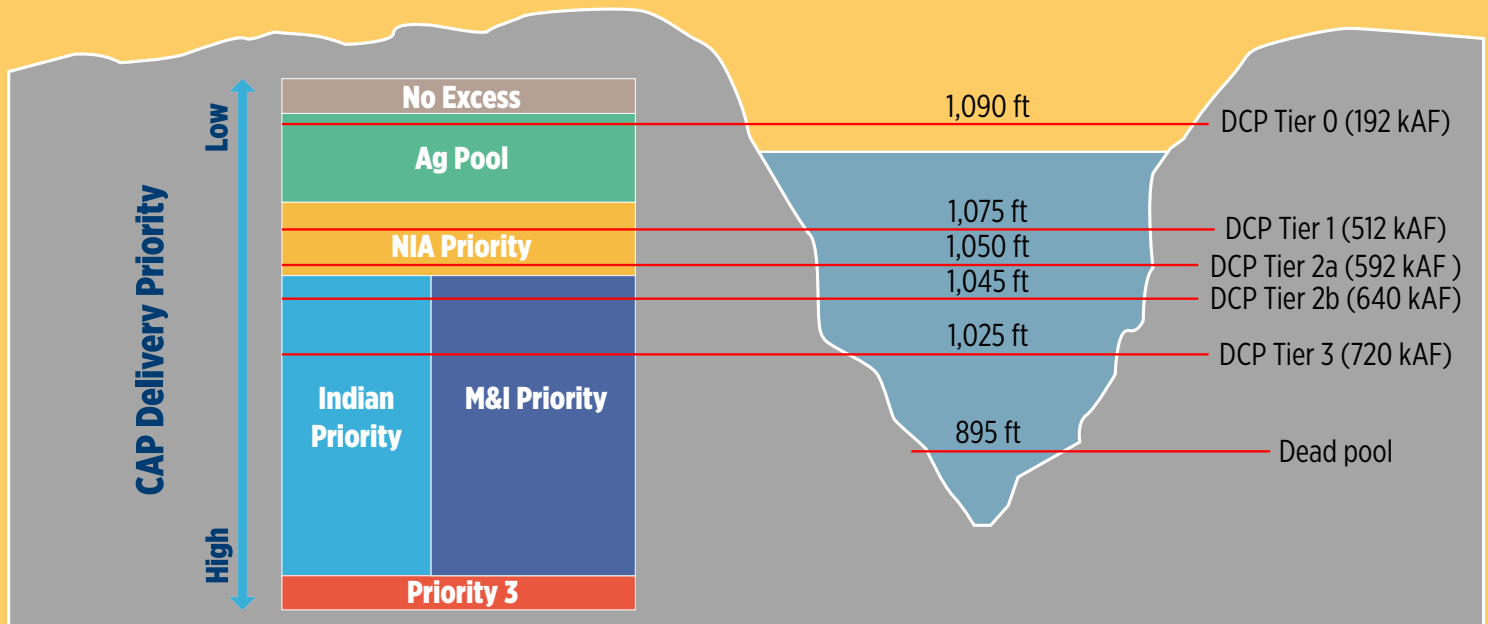
- In 2023, the Colorado River System remains in DCP Tier 2a shortage.
- For 2024, a DCP Tier 1 shortage is forecast.

Lower Basin Plan: In 2023, the Lower Basin States (Arizona, California and Nevada) developed a plan that would conserve at least 3 MAF of Colorado River water by 2026. This is in addition to DCP reductions.

CAP Subcontract Types

Lake Mead Surface Elevations

DCP Tiers (AZ Shortage)



Current impacts to Tempe:

Tempe has sufficient resources to meet demands, even in the case of a DCP Tier 3 shortage. In a typical year, Tempe CAP entitlements are 4,449 acre-feet, which are primarily associated with Municipal and Industrial (M&I) or high priority subcontracts in the CAP system. Under DCP shortage conditions, CAP applies cuts unevenly, with cuts applied first to CAP subcontract types with the lowest priorities, including agricultural water usage. Actual cuts depend upon numerous factors, but overall affects to the CAP and M&I supplies are estimated in Table 1.

DCP Tier shortage	Estimated effects of Tempe's CAP M&I allocation by DCP Tier	
	Percentage reduction to Arizona's CAP supply	Percentage reduction M&I supplies
Tier 0	12%	No reduction
Tier 1	30%	No reduction
Tier 2a	34%	~5 - ~10%
Tier 2b	40%	~15%
Tier 3	45%	~20%

For information about the Colorado River shortage and impacts to Tempe, review City Council Weekly Information Packet posted at tempe.gov/water. For the regional impact of shortage on the watershed, view the Colorado River Conditions Dashboard at cap-az.com/Colorado-river-conditions-dashboard.

Water resources terminology

An acre-foot of water represents 325,851 gallons of water: the amount of water it would take to fill an acre of land to a depth of one foot.

kAF = thousand acre-feet