2026 AGRICULTURAL WATER POLICY

DELANO-EARLIMART IRRIGATION DISTRICT

WEBSITE: www.deid.org

SECTION 1. APPLICATION FOR WATER

a. All Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District (District or DEID) water deliveries must be preceded by an accepted "Application for Water" (Application) that is completed by the water user and signed acknowledgment and understand of water policy by property owner. The Application shall be completed for all parcels under the applicant's ownership or control for which water service is being requested. **Water users may submit their 2026 Application on-line through the District's website, (www.deid.org) via email, (water@deid.org)** or by mail (P.O. Box 7869 Visalia, CA 93290).

b. Applications cover the water year, beginning March 1, 2026 and run through February 28, 2027. The actual start of water deliveries will be announced once the District water supply is known, which occurs at the end of February.

c. **Applications will be accepted at the District office until 3:30 p.m. on February 25, 2026 in order to receive water March 1, 2026.** Applications sent via mail are encouraged to be mailed in advance to ensure time for processing. Applications received or postmarked after February 24, 2026 may be subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Regardless of when the Application is received, the water user is not eligible to receive water until the Application is processed and approved. Early submittals are encouraged to avoid unnecessary delays in water service.

SECTION 2. USE OF WATER

a. The District receives its primary water supply from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau). As a recipient of federal water, the District and its water users must comply with specific federal regulations and law that governs the delivery and use of agricultural irrigation water and uses incidental to irrigation. The determination of appropriate irrigation and incidental uses is subject to the ongoing regulations of the Bureau. Therefore, irrigation and other incidental uses that are currently approved by the Bureau may be changed, restricted, or reviewed at any time, if necessary, to meet regulatory requirements.

b. District water is not intended for human consumption and may not be introduced into a dwelling or structure for any household use whatsoever.

c. **District water must be put to reasonable and beneficial use within the District's irrigated boundaries** – by lands which pay the District's original assessment, standby, special benefit assessment, and supplemental assessment. By using District water, **water users agree to allow District staff entry on water users' parcels located outside the District's irrigated boundaries to perform water testing in order to ensure District water is being used appropriately on lands adjacent to the District. The District will refuse to continue water deliveries if water is used outside of the District's irrigated boundaries**, or if water is used excessively, wastefully, or in an imprudent manner.

SECTION 3. WATER ALLOCATION

a. Water users are advised that the annual water supply available for delivery by the District can be highly variable and may not be sufficient to meet the landowners total demands within the District. When the demand for District water is greater than the available supply, the supply is typically prorated among water users with approved Applications on file for the current water year, based upon the total irrigable acreage as reported on the approved Applications. Dependent upon the supply available and other related factors, alternative methods of allocation may be used.

a. Water allocations may be transferred whole or in part from one water user to another water user within the District's irrigated boundaries subject to District provisions governing the transfer of water.

SECTION 4. WATER TRANSFERS

a. Transfers of District water may be limited by the Board of Directors based on water supply, year type or other considerations. Applications filed after the February 25, 2026 submittal deadline may not be allowed to transfer water.

b. Transfers between individuals or entities within the District are required to complete a water transfer request signed by both parties. The District will assume no responsibility for collection or disbursement of funds between transferring parties.

c. Consistent with the District's water conservation and management plan and conjunctive use needs, water users may not transfer, sell or otherwise dispose of any District water outside of the District's boundaries.

d. Water users owning or leasing multiple parcels that are part of the same water account within the District may transfer water between those parcels without restriction.

b. Water cannot be transferred to parcels that carry a delinquent balance or unpaid assessments.

SECTION 5. WATER ORDERING PROCEDURES FOR TURNOUTS *WITHOUT* FLOAT SYSTEMS

a. All water orders must be placed with the District office by 9:00 a.m. at least one day in advance and be made in person, by telephone, or through the District's website *(www.deid.org)*. Water orders placed less than 24-hours in advance may or may not be honored and cannot be guaranteed.

b. Water orders must include the following information:

- Turnout number
- Name of water user and/or water account number
- Name of person placing order
- Details of order (water quantity by gallons per minute, date to turn on and shut off or revised order changes)

c. District personnel will turn water on or off as ordered. No one other than District personnel may make any water delivery change, or otherwise operate any component of the District's distribution system. No person shall molest, tamper, or interfere with any District facility or structure. Water users found in violation of this provision will be subject to termination of water service.

c. Water ordered will run continuously until ordered off. Minimum water order duration is twenty-four (24) hours unless the District approves a shorter duration in advance.

SECTION 6. WATER ORDERING PROCEDURES FOR TURNOUTS *WITH* FLOAT SYSTEMS

a. Water users that have had a pressure-compensating float system installed on their turnout(s) can operate that particular turnout(s) through a separate operating valve on the water user's side of the turnout. Water users with float systems may make changes at any time, including weekends and holidays, provided that they notify the District of all water requests and changes by 9:00 a.m. at least one day in advance. Notification may be accomplished through the District's website *(www.deid.org),* by telephone, or in person between 7:00 am and 9:00 am. An exception to this notification requirement is a change in an existing flow that is less than 100 GPM from their original water order.

b. Advance notification of water orders by water users operating their own turnout(s) is required so that the District may order the amount of water necessary to meet daily demands from the Friant-Kern Canal and other critical operational needs. A water user that violates this advance notification requirement will lose the privilege of operating the turnout.

c. Water orders must include the following information:

- Turnout number

- Name of water user and/or water account number
- Name of person placing order
- Details of order (water quantity by gallons per minute, date and time to turn on and shut off or revised order changes).

d. Water users with a float system may only operate the operating valve that is on the water user's side of the turnout to affect a delivery. No one other than District personnel may operate any component of the District's distribution system. No person shall molest, tamper, or interfere with any District facility or structure. Water users found in violation of this provision will be subject to termination of water service.

d. Water ordered by water users with a float system is to run continuously until ordered off. A water order of a duration that is less than twenty-four (24) hours is acceptable provided advance notification has occurred, as described above, or in case of a verifiable emergency.

SECTION 7. AFTER-HOUR EMERGENCIES

The District maintains on-call personnel to respond to emergencies that occur after-hours, on weekends, and holidays. The District recognizes three different types of emergencies:

a. Emergencies involving the District's distribution system - We appreciate immediate notification of any District system malfunction so that personnel may be dispatched to correct the problem. There is no charge to the reporting water user where the emergency is within the District's distribution system, including a malfunction of any component of the turnout (meter, valves, piping) or float system.

b. For water users **with a float system** - If an emergency is due to a malfunction of the water user's own irrigation system or other on-farm circumstance, the water user may immediately terminate the District's water delivery through operation of the water user's operating valve that was installed as part of the float system. Please call the District office immediately to advise us that the delivery was terminated because of an emergency. There is no charge to the reporting water user when no District personnel are required to make an immediate water change at the turnout in response to the water user's emergency.

e. For water users without a float system - If an emergency is due to a malfunction of the water user's own irrigation system or other on-farm circumstance which requires the immediate termination of District water deliveries, please call the District office so that District personnel can be dispatched immediately to respond to your emergency. An after-hours call out charge of $50 for the first incident and $100 for each incident thereafter will be charged to the water user.

SECTION 8. WATER RATES AND LIFT CHARGES

a. The Board of Directors annually determines the water rate for agricultural water users in response to federal water pricing policies amongst various other factors. The water rate is established at the beginning of the new water year and is subject to revision throughout the water year based on changing water supply conditions and/or other factors. Please contact the District office for the most current agricultural water rate. Water rates are generally determined the last week of February prior to the start of the new water year.

b. In addition to the applicable water rate, lift charges are also charged on a per acre-foot basis for water deliveries that require pumping. Lift charge rates are established at the beginning of the new water year and are subject to revision. A map is available from the District office that delineates the various lift zones and corresponding rates and is posted to the District website. Please contact the District office should you have additional questions regarding zone locations and charges.

f. The District will conduct a specific landowner notification and public hearing process in accordance with state law prior to any proposed increase in water rates and/or lift charges.

SECTION 9. WATER BILLING & ACCOUNT PAYMENT PROCEDURES

a. The District meters all water deliveries and bills according to metered use.

b. The District shall bill each water user monthly indicating acre-feet used, accrued water costs, and any accrued lift charges. **Payment of the full amount billed is due by the 25th of the month.** Due to changes in how the United States Postal Service postmarks and processes mail, it is highly recommended that remittances are mailed well in advance of the due date. If the 25th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, payment is due by 3:30pm on the next business day. Failure to make payment in full by the due date shall result in the following:

- Delinquent accounts will be assessed a 10% penalty on the unpaid charges.
- Accounts delinquent after 30 days are assessed a finance charge equal to 1.5% per month on the unpaid balance.
- Water service will be terminated until all delinquent charges are paid in full.

c. Each water account may designate one email address to receive paperless billing information via email. Paperless bills are sent out by the 5th of the month and are received prior to the paper bill that is mailed out. If for any reason you do not receive a paperless or paper bill you may contact the District office by phone or via email.

d. Payments are accepted by check or money order and should be sent to the District Post office Box for processing. Cash, credit card, and ACH are currently not accepted.

e. It is the responsibility of the paying party to notate account number(s), bill number(s) or assessor parcel number(s) (APN), when payment is intended to be applied to a specific account location. If notation is not provided with payment, payment will be applied to the most outstanding bill.

f. If partial payment is made, the District will deposit the payment; however, water service will not be restored until the account balance is brought current. During this period, penalties will continue to accrue and a certificate of sale may be filed.

g. Water service will not be provided to any parcel that has delinquent assessments or any other unpaid charges from a previous year. Any current year assessments or standby charges that remain unpaid on September 1, 2026 will have water service terminated to that parcel effective on that date.

h. The District may, at its discretion, require an advance deposit on water accounts that are severely delinquent or demonstrate a consistent history of delinquent payment. This Deposit will be held by the District and used only in the event the individual water user becomes delinquent again. If the deposit is reduced due to delinquency, water service will be terminated and will not be restored until the deposit has been replenished in full. The amount of the required Deposit will be based on the highest level of financial exposure the District will face in the event of delinquency.

g. IMPORTANT NOTICE TO LANDOWNERS THAT LEASE LAND TO OTHERS: Landowners are advised that any unpaid water or lift charges that become delinquent for 90 days or more may be assessed as a lien against the land that benefited from the irrigation water, or any other parcel of land owned by the landowner in the District, as provided by the California Water Code. This action of assessing unpaid water charges against the land shall be adhered to regardless of who ordered or applied the water to the land (i.e., lessee). Water service will not be provided to any water account with delinquent charges. As the District is not a party to any lease agreement, it is the responsibility of landowner to pay or cause to be paid all District assessments. If an assessment was to be paid by the lessee as a term of the lease and payment is not made, the landowner remains responsible for making payment, including any late charges. If payment is not made, a certificate of sale will be filed on the property.

SECTION 10. WATER CONSERVATION

h. Water conservation is an important aspect of the District's water management plan. District water users have a long history of employing various on-farm water conservation measures as appropriate for their individual operations. The District will continue to support water conservation by its water users.

i. Certain water users may find it advisable to avail themselves of the services of a private irrigation management consultant and/or other public agencies that provide similar services. For the convenience of those water users that may wish to seek such services, the District maintains a list of individuals and agencies that can provide on-farm water conservation and management assistance. Please contact the District office for a copy of this list.

j. The District encourages water users to use crop evapotranspiration (ET) data as a part of their water management plan. The District has a CIMIS weather station at its headquarters that provides daily local weather-related information, including ET. This information may be accessed through the Internet by logging on to the California Department of Water Resources website at *www.cimis.water.ca.gov*. Crop ET information may also be obtained from the Tulare County or Kern County Extension Service, local newspapers, and various radio station farm reports.

k. The District maintains historic water use by turnout. This data, in addition to water use information provided on the monthly water statement, may be beneficial to water users in making on-farm water management decisions. Please contact the District office for additional information if desired.

l. Recognizing that in some years the District cannot supply the total water needs within the District, most water users also have private groundwater wells. Water and energy conservation can be assisted by proper maintenance of these wells. Pump testing is an integral part of any maintenance program. The District encourages water users to perform pump efficiency testing on a routine basis.

SECTION 11. 2-INCH SPRAY CONNECTION AGREEMENT

Growers with 2-Inch Spray Connections installed on their Turnouts understand and agree to the following:

a. Water from this connection will be metered and billed as part of the agricultural water delivery. The Grower is responsible for providing their own locking device to the supplied valve.

b. Water provided from this connection is for convenience and may be used without ordering on or off. Use is limited to filling spray tanks, dust control, cooling systems and other agricultural applications.

c. Grower agrees to use only the gate valve installed by the District. The use of a quick-closing ball valve (which can cause water hammer within District pipelines) is prohibited.

d. The connection of pumps to a 2-inch spray connection is prohibited.

e. Use of the 2-Inch Spray Connection for domestic purposes or other unauthorized use will result in immediate termination of the connection. District water is unfit for human consumption and is not allowed under any circumstances.

f. Water provided by the District through the use of this connection is subject to modifications, interruptions, or discontinued use in accordance with the Districts operating and maintenance system requirements.

g. Use of this connection may be terminated by the District in the event of changes, conditions, restrictions, or operational criteria imposed on the District by either the United States Bureau of Reclamation or its successor agency, or the State of California or any of its subordinate agencies which render continuation of this service infeasible for the District.

SECTION 12. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

a. The employees and authorized contractors of the District **shall have free access at all times to land irrigated with District water for District purposes**, including examination or repair of water delivery facilities and related appurtenances, and maintenance of the flow of water therein.

b. In order to assist with the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and other purposes, the District is authorized to access, receive, and record all ground water usage on properties within the District's boundaries. The District is further authorized to receive well completion, construction, and repair details from well driller and rehabilitation services.

c. Modifications to a District turnout or any other water distribution system component may only be done by District personnel. Water users requesting a modification should contact the District office. Modifications made for the convenience of the water user shall be paid by the water user.

d. Those who are planning to work near a District pipeline or other facilities are required to contact the District office prior to the commencement of work so that all underground components can be marked. Anyone causing damage to the District's distribution system will be liable for all repair costs including labor, overhead, material and equipment. Additionally, a $500 penalty for the first offense and $1,000 penalty for every offense thereafter may also be levied, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, based on the circumstances of the incident and if prior notification was given.

e. Damage to District pipelines caused by water hammer due to the actions of a grower, their employee, or contractor will cause the grower to be liable for all repair costs including labor, overhead, material and equipment.

f. Landowners and Lessees are required to maintain the area around each turnout in a clean an unobstructed manner.

g. Water service may be discontinued without notice upon violation of any of these rules and regulations and will be restored only upon order of the Board of Directors and subject to any conditions as determined by the Board.

h. District may force account consolidation of family or related entities for properties if accounts become delinquent. Accounts will not be separated into multiple accounts to isolate individual turnouts contracted by family or related entities for purposes of receiving service while outstanding balances remain unpaid.

i. If multiple growers are utilizing the same turnout, the District is not responsible for the terms of the sharing agreement between the growers. Financial responsibility will be that of the party that signed the water year application.

SECTION 13. DISTRICT LIABILITY

a. The District assumes no responsibility for the quality of water delivered. This water is not intended for human consumption and may not be introduced into a dwelling or structure for any household use whatsoever.

b. The District may experience water supply shortages due to state or federal regulations, or pursuant to the District's federal water service contract. In no event shall any liability accrue against the District or any of its officers, agents or employees for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from a shortage on account of errors in operation, drought, or unavoidable cause.

c. The District has allowed some water users to install hydrants or similar valves to permit access to District water for fire suppression. The District does not commit or provide water for such purposes and shall not be responsible for the use of any water facility used for fire suppression or for the adequate supply of water for fire suppression. Water users with said fire hydrant connections are required to submit an annual "Application for Fire Hydrant" that acknowledges these and other limitation/conditions of service as a requirement for continuance of the connection.