

New California Laws Affecting Groundwater Sustainability Agencies: AB 293 and AB 709

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Governor Newsom signed two bills this past October that directly impact California's Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs). Assembly Bill (AB) 293 requires GSAs to modify their websites on or before January 1, 2026, to include information on their board of directors and executives. AB 709 clarifies that GSA coordination agreements may be amended outside of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) review cycle.

Assembly Bill 293

AB 293 seeks to increase transparency and establish uniform standards for GSAs by requiring new information on GSA websites.

First, the new Water Code section 10724.2 requires a GSA to publish the names of its board of directors on either its website or its local agency's website. According to the bill's author, membership lists for GSA board of directors are not universally published on GSA websites currently.

Second, a GSA must publish links to the Statement of Economic Interest (SEI, commonly referred to as a Form 700) filed with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) for the members of its board of directors and executive officers to increase agency transparency. Based on AB 293's language, publishing a link to the GSA or local agency's "DisclosureDocs" on the FPPC website appears to be sufficient.

Agency Form 700s may be accessed through the "Search for a Form 700" feature on the FPPC website. ([Link to FPPC's Search for a Form 700](#))

Assembly Bill 709

As part of California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), when multiple GSAs develop multiple groundwater sustainability plans (GSP) for a groundwater basin, the GSAs must enter into a coordination agreement for implementing the multiple GSPs within the basin. The SGMA requires GSAs to submit their coordination agreement for the GSPs within the basin to the DWR for periodic review.

Previously, the SGMA failed to specify whether the coordination agreements could only be amended in conjunction with the submission of GSPs to DWR for review, or if GSAs could amend their coordination agreement at other points in

the DWR review cycle. AB 709 clarifies that GSAs may amend their coordination agreements in between DWR's periodic review of the basin's GSPs.

Takeaways

AB 293 and AB 709 both went into effect on January 1, 2026. GSAs should review and update their websites as necessary as soon as possible.

If you have any questions about AB 293 or 709, please contact the authors of this Client News Brief or an attorney at one of our [eight offices](#) located statewide. You can also subscribe to our [podcast](#), follow us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), or download our [mobile app](#).

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