November 2026

Year-End Review

The California chapters reviewed 53 bills during 2026 and adopted positions on 34.

Reviewed	53
Adopted by legislature	2
Chaptered	17
Dead	12
Vetoed	3

The 2027-2028 session convenes on December 7, and APWA will return in January to review and report on legislation affecting public works officials.

Important Dates:

- August 31, 2026 – Last day for each house to pass bills
- September 30, 2026 – Last day for the Governor to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature before Sept. 1 and in the Governor's possession on or after Sept. 1
- November 3, 2026 – General Election.
- November 11, 2026 – Veterans Day.
- November 26, 2026 – Thanksgiving Holiday.
- November 30, 2026 – Adjournment sine die at midnight
- December 7, 2026 – 12 Noon convening of the 2027-28 Regular Session
- December 23, 2026 – Winter Holiday. [Ends December 25, 2026]
- December 30, 2026 – New Year's Holiday. [Ends January 1, 2027]
- January 1, 2027 – Statutes take effect
- February 21-27 – Engineers Week
- April 29-30, 2027 – ASCE Annual Infrastructure Symposium, San Diego
- May 16-22 – National Public Works Week (NPWW)
- June 1, 2027 – Joint ASCE/APWA Sacramento Fly-in (tentative)

Legislation

A report on the final status of APWA-tracked legislation follows, but APWA members can always access the current report, sorted by measure or subject, here:
Measure sort
Subject sort

ADA

AB 649 (Lowenthal, D): One of two bills dealing with the ADA. This bill would have extended an existing safe harbor, allowing defendants who corrected all violations identified in a CASp report a 120-day period to address new allegations within 10 years. During this period, if defendants met certain conditions, including pre-inspection correction of violations and lack of prior notice, they can also recover attorney's fees and costs for claims made.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

AB 1786 (Harabedian, D) AB 1786 extends the existing best-value construction contracting authority to general law cities and Joint Powers Authorities. AB 1786 expands STW mandates to new public entities under current law.
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State - Chapter 202, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Support

AB 2033 (Papan, D) This bill allows city councils to award yearly job-order contracts, each capped at $500,000, for repair, remodeling, or repetitive work based on unit prices. These contracts cannot be used for new construction projects. They must be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder and be based on standard plans and specifications. Requires City JOCs to use a STW unless there is a PLA.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Support

SB 935 (Choi, R), existing law, which allows local agencies to use design-build contracts for public projects over $1,000,000, will be repealed on January 1, 2031. This bill removes this repeal date, extending the law indefinitely.
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State. Chapter 102, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Support

CEQA

AB 317 (Jackson, D) would have established an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for new construction of a single-family dwelling that is 1,500 square feet or less with no more than three bedrooms and is intended to be sold to a first-time homebuyer for less than $400,000. Also provided for deferral of property taxes on eligible dwellings.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

AB 609 (Wicks, D) This bill would have exempted qualifying housing development projects from CEQA requirements, with the condition that local governments mandate the completion of a phase I environmental assessment by the development proponent. This process requires the lead agency to ascertain if a project qualifies for exemption.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

SB 887 (Padilla, D) provides that CEQA applies to data center projects, as defined. Adds data center projects meeting specified conditions and geothermal projects to existing judicial streamlining provisions for Environmental Leadership Development Projects (ELDPs).
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State. Chapter 439, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Watch

Codes

AB 2418 (González, Mark, D) Requires, until January 1, 2032, local agencies to contract with or employ, or allow an applicant to retain, a private provider to check plans and specifications for specified nonresidential buildings if there is an excessive delay in the local agency's estimate or performance of this function; specifies requirements for fees that local agencies may prescribe for nonresidential building permits; and, requires inspections of specified nonresidential buildings or structures to be conducted within 10 business days of a notice of completion of permitted work for those projects.
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State - Chapter 828, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Watch

Licensure

AB 1341 (Hoover, R) AB 1341 (Hoover) clarifies that existing provisions of the Contractors' State License Law, which make violations of the "building laws of the state" subject to discipline by the Contractors' State License Board, include the unlicensed practice of architecture, engineering, and land surveying. This clarification protects the public by helping prevent unlicensed practice in these critical disciplines.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

AB 2106 (Patel, D) This bill recasts the requirements of the certificate of merit to require a practitioner, licensed in this state in the same discipline as the defendant or cross-defendant, not the attorney, to complete the certificate.
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State - Chapter 137, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Watch

AB 2435 (Chen, R) The bill authorizes the board's executive officer to issue citations and administrative fines of $500 to $20,000 per violation for unlicensed practice or offers to practice in specified engineering, geology, geophysics, or land surveying fields. It applies to civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering, geology, geophysics, and land surveying, unless otherwise authorized by law.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

Water

AB 532 (Ransom, D) AB 532 would have clarified the statutory authority for urban retail water suppliers to run low-income water rate assistance programs within their communities and establish the California Low Income Household Water Rate Assistance Program.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

SB 473 (Padilla, D) SB 473 would have provided a permanent solution to water affordability and encouraged water conservation by ensuring the CPUC permit water utilities to use a 'decoupling' mechanism when requested. The program lets water utilities separate the fixed water infrastructure costs from the variable water consumption costs.
Location: Failed passage
APWA CA Position: Watch

Transportation

SB 922 (Laird, D) Senate Bill 922 clarifies long-standing local government authority to recover street maintenance and repair costs from public service and works partners. It does not create a new fee authority, expand local taxing authority, or impose costs on the state.
Location: Approved by the Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State. Chapter 148, Statutes of 2026.
APWA CA Position: Support