

# Water shortages could generate social conflicts

## City government tries to ensure fair and adequate access to water

THE NEWS

Although the director for the National Water Commission (Conagua) José Luis **Luege Tamargo** told citizens not to be alarmed by water shortages in Mexico City, the Government of the Federal District acknowledged that the shortages pose the risk of generating social conflicts and acts of vandalism.

The Subsecretary of the Federal District, Juan José García Ochoa, said the lack of access to water could possibly lead to difficult social situations and underlined that "Our idea is to ensure fair and adequate access to water, even in these times of scarcity."

The governor of the Federal District, Marcelo Ebrard, emphasized that the water shortages predicted for 2010 could bring not only social disruption,

but also health risks.

Ebrard qualified the water situation as "very grave" and has the possibility of eroding public health.

The mayor called for healthcare workers to educate their communities on how to confront the water shortages without risking their health.

García noted that water pipes and records of potable water registers in the delegation of Iztapalapa have been stolen.

He denied that these actions would prompt the state government to call in the armed forces.

"I don't think we have reached that point. I believe that Mexico City can be governed through information and dialogs," he said.

"Above all else, we need to supply information to citizens on how

they can cope with the crisis and to make sure that everyone knows that the government is doing everything in its power to restore access to water," he added.

Guaranteeing the right to water is a very urgent matter, which is why a proposal has been made to the Federal District's Legislative Assembly to include it in local laws.

"We will tell the Assembly the fundamental points the law should cover in order to guarantee the right to water in Mexico City," he said.

"Then they will discuss the details and formalities and create the new law," he explained.

The law would guarantee the administration of potable water in adequate quantities free of discrimination of any sort.



Water trucks deliver the vital liquid to several zones of Mexico City that are experiencing water shortages.

