



# Media Release

## **CALIFORNIANS MEET GOVERNOR'S WATER CONSERVATION MANDATE FOR FOURTH CONSECUTIVE MONTH**

### ***STATE WATER BOARD ISSUES PENALTIES AGAINST FOUR WATER SUPPLIERS***

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**SACRAMENTO** – Californians reduced water use by more than 26 percent during September, exceeding Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.'s 25 percent conservation mandate for a fourth straight month.

"Millions of Californians have saved water during the summer months, which are the four most critical months to save water," said Felicia Marcus, chair of the State Water Resources Control Board. "This is important and wonderful, and we are thankful for all of the effort by individuals and agencies. Now, we need to keep it up as best we can, even as we hope for as much rain and snow as we can safely handle. We're in the position of having to prepare for drought and flooding at the same time, but that's what we're faced with."

Nearly all water suppliers in the state have complied with the conservation standards. However, a few have not stepped up in the same way, despite warnings that failure to meet conservation targets could result in penalties. Yesterday, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Office of Enforcement issued enforcement actions against four urban water suppliers that have consistently failed to meet their water conservation goals.

The suppliers are the city of Beverly Hills, city of Indio, city of Redlands and the Coachella Valley Water District. Each of these suppliers has been issued a complaint for a \$61,000 penalty for failing to meet their mandated conservation tier standards. These penalties are based on the Board's authority to issue fines of \$500 per day for violations of its emergency

#### **Water Conservation Quick Links**

[Factsheet: September by the Numbers](#)

[June 2014-September 2015 data set](#)

[Cumulative Savings and Conservation Compliance for September](#)

[September Savings by Region](#)

[Supplier Enforcement Statistics](#)



regulation. The Board also has the ability to issue penalties of up to \$10,000 per day for violations of a Cease and Desist Order. The Board has not issued any Cease and Desist Orders to date.

“Up and down the state, residents and water suppliers are making the necessary sacrifices needed to help California meet its conservation goals. However, some urban water suppliers simply have not met the requirements laid before them,” said Cris Carrigan, director of the Office of Enforcement. “For these four suppliers, it’s been too little too late to achieve their conservation standard.”

With the end of summer, when water use is highest, it will be much more difficult for urban water suppliers that are significantly behind to make up ground on their cumulative savings totals. This issue is one of many that weighed into the decisions to take enforcement actions against four water suppliers. Water suppliers have 20 days to appeal these penalties to the full State Water Board.

## September Conservation Data

- For June through September, the cumulative statewide savings rate was 28.1 percent, which equates to 777,739 acre-feet or 253.4 billion gallons. This is 65 percent of the overall goal of saving 1.2 million acre-feet by February 2016.
- Statewide water savings rate for September 2015 was 26.1 percent (165,233 acre-feet, or 53.8 billion gallons), a decrease from August’s 27.0 percent savings rate.
- Statewide, the average water use for September was 97 residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD).

## Enforcement Data

- Suppliers reported 77,763 compliance and enforcement actions taken in September, a significant decrease from the 92,868 actions reported in August. See the [enforcement statistics](#) for more information.
- The Office of Enforcement continues to work with suppliers that have not met their conservation standard. Since June, the State Water Board has issued:
  - Eight conservation orders;
  - 99 information orders;
  - 68 warning letters; and
  - Seven alternative compliance orders.

Despite September’s lower overall savings rate, the number of suppliers in compliance with the emergency regulation remained similar to August. Of the 389 suppliers reporting for

September, six were more than 15 percentage points away from meeting their conservation standard -- one of these suppliers is new to this compliance category. For more information, visit the [enforcement page](#).

## **Conservation Must Continue Through Winter**

Residential water users are urged to keep up their efforts to conserve through the winter months. That includes complying with urban water supplier directives to switch to fall watering schedules of once a week as well as a prohibition against watering during a rain event and 48 hours directly following a rain event.

“With continued heat, the danger of more wildfires, and no way of knowing when the drought will end, every drop of water that remains in our local reservoirs and aquifers is insurance in case of another dry year or more,” Chair Marcus said. “We need to save water inside and outdoors in the creative ways Californians have. But at the same time, we need to protect our trees by making sure to water them slowly and carefully.”

Conservation programs put in place during the late spring and early summer months by most of the state’s water suppliers have yielded dramatic reductions in water use and a reexamination of personal water-use habits. In addition to many effective local programs, state-funded turf removal and toilet replacement rebates are also now available. Information and rebate applications are available at: [www.saveourwaterrebates.com/](http://www.saveourwaterrebates.com/).

## **Background**

In his April 1 [Executive Order](#), Gov. Brown mandated a 25 percent water use reduction for cities and towns across California.

In May, the State Water Board adopted an emergency regulation requiring an immediate 25 percent reduction in overall potable urban water use. The regulation uses a sliding scale for setting conservation standards, so that communities that have already reduced their R-GPCD through past conservation will have lower mandates than those that have not made such gains since the last major drought.

Each month, the State Water Board compares every urban water supplier’s water use with their use for the same month in 2013 to determine if they are on track for meeting their conservation standard. Local water agencies determine the most cost effective and locally appropriate way to achieve their standard. The State Water Board will work closely with water suppliers to implement the regulation and improve local efforts that are falling short.

California has been dealing with the effects of an unprecedented drought. To learn about all the actions the state has taken to manage our water system and cope with the impacts of the



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drought, visit [Drought.CA.Gov](http://Drought.CA.Gov). Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at [SaveOurWater.com](http://SaveOurWater.com).

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