



Media Release

CALIFORNIANS SAVE 1.1 MILLION ACRE-FEET OF WATER, URGED TO STAY FOCUSED ON CONSERVATION

***DESPITE DROP IN THE CUMULATIVE WATER CONSERVATION RATE,
RESIDENTS REDUCE WATER USE TO LOWEST PER CAPITA LEVEL EVER RECORDED***

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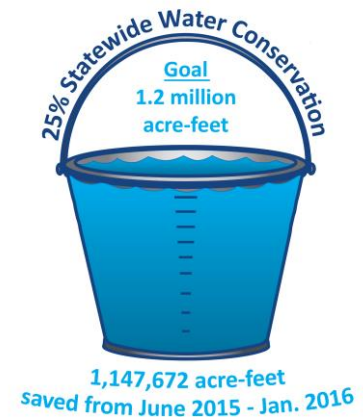
SACRAMENTO – For the first time since June, California just missed Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.’s 25 percent water conservation mandate in January, as urban water suppliers reported a cumulative savings of 24.8 percent for the eight months since mandatory conservation began.

With more than 1.1 million acre-feet of water conserved from June 2015 through January, the state is 96 percent of the way toward reaching its goal of 1.2 million acre-feet of water to be saved by the end of February, an unprecedented conservation achievement.

Nonetheless, California remains in a record drought. Californians are urged not to relax their water-saving habits and continue conserving by reducing or eliminating outdoor irrigation when it’s wet and keeping household water use to the essentials.

“We’re hoping for every raindrop and every snowflake we can handle. We’re hoping for a miracle March and an awesome April. But we can’t know what the next couple months will bring. And a warm and dry February has proved that we can’t count on El Niño to save us,” said State Water Resources Control Board Chair Felicia Marcus. “Californians have risen to the occasion as never before. But we have to stay the course. We have to keep it up.”

Statewide, the conservation rate dropped from 18.4 percent in December 2015 to 17.1 percent in January, likely because January 2016 was warmer than January 2013. Residents generally use much less water for outdoor irrigation in the winter months, so there’s less opportunity for



Water Conservation Quick Links

[Factsheet: January by the Numbers](#)

[June 2014 - January 2016 Data Set](#)

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



savings. Nonetheless, average per capita water use declined from 67 gallons per person per day in December 2015 to 61 gallons in January, the lowest statewide per-person rate since water-use reporting began in June 2014.

With the drier than expected February, and lower January conservation results, Californians are urged to re-focus their efforts to conserve through the winter and spring months. These efforts should include complying with urban water supplier directives to switch to once-a-week watering schedules, not irrigating outdoors during and within 48 hours following a rain event, and fixing leaks that are discovered during individual water user audits.

In November 2015, the Governor issued an [Executive Order](#) directing the State Water Board to extend and revise the drought emergency water conservation regulation based on conditions through January. The Board adopted an updated and [extended emergency regulation](#) on February 2 and the extended emergency regulation took effect February 11.

The State Water Board may revisit the regulations based on a review of the statewide water supply and drought status in March and April. This review will include considering reservoir level reports, snow pack totals, and how individual communities are doing in building drought resiliency through water recycling enhancements and other methods to stretch both potable and non-potable water supplies.

January Conservation Data

- For June through January, the cumulative statewide reduction was 24.8 percent, compared to the same months in 2013. That equates to more than 1.1 million acre-feet of water saved, putting the state 96 percent of the way to meeting the 1.2 million acre-feet savings goal to be achieved by the end of February.
- Statewide water savings for January was 17.1 percent (62,644 acre-feet or 20.4 billion gallons), a decrease from December 2015's 18.4 percent savings. See fact sheet [here](#).
- Due to the lower monthly savings, January saw the lowest level of water supplier compliance to date with 58 percent of suppliers meeting their conservation standards.
- Statewide average water use for January was the lowest on record at 61 residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD), down from 67 gallons per person per day in December 2015.

Enforcement

The State Water Board's Office of Enforcement continues to work with water suppliers that are not meeting their conservation standards, and with small water suppliers that have not filed their December 2015 report.

Since June 2015 the State Water Board has issued:

- 97 warning letters;
- 117 information orders;
- 12 conservation orders;
- Four Administrative Civil Liability Complaints (one fine paid, three in negotiations); and
- Seven alternative compliance orders.

Background

In his April 1, 2015 [Executive Order](#), Gov. Brown mandated a 25 percent water use reduction for cities and towns across California. In May 2015, 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.

On February 2, 2016, based on Gov. Brown's [November 2015 Executive Order](#), the State Water Board approved an updated and expanded emergency regulation that will continue mandatory reductions through October, unless revised before then. The extended regulation responded to calls for continuing the conservation structure that has spurred such dramatic savings so far while providing greater consideration of three factors that influence water use: climate, population growth and significant investments in new local, drought-resilient water supplies such as wastewater reuse and desalination. Under the extended regulation, statewide water conservation is expected to continue at the high levels Californians have been achieving since June 2015.

The State Water Board tracks water conservation for each of the state's larger urban water suppliers (those with more than 3,000 connections) on a monthly basis, but compliance with individual water supplier conservation requirements and the statewide 25 percent mandate is based on cumulative savings. Cumulative tracking means that conservation savings will be added together from one month to the next and compared to the amount of water used during the same months in 2013.

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 drought, visit [Drought.CA.Gov](#). Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at [SaveOurWater.com](#). In addition to many effective local programs, state-funded turf removal and toilet replacement rebates are also available. Information and rebate applications can be found at: [www.saveourwaterrebates.com/](#).

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