

April 30, 2015

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, 24th Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: Comment Letter – Emergency Conservation Regulation

Dear Board Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Proposed Emergency Regulation Implementing The 25% Conservation Standard. These emergency regulations clearly address a growing concern over the availability of potable water within the State of California.

Implementation of the 25% reduction in potable water use is a worthy goal; however, the use of percentages as a measure often leads to inequities in application. To demonstrate this, I point to the FAQ for the Notice of Proposed Emergency Regulation Implementing The 25% Conservation Standard. Two examples are given, the Smith family and the Jones family. The Smith family is using 210 gallons per day and must reduce their usage to 180 gallons per day or 60 gallons per person. The Jones family is using 1,200 gallons per day and must reduce their use to 840 gallons per day or a whopping 210 gallons per person. In terms of real use, the Smiths are penalized much more than the Jones.

The U.S.G.S. estimates that the average daily per capita water use is between 70 and 100 gallons per day. The Smith family was using the average and is now being asked to reduce their use to less than that. The Jones however, are still allowed to use 8 times the daily average. The burden on the Smiths is much greater than that of the Jones. Percentagewise, the Jones make the bigger cut, but in terms of the burden to be borne, the Smiths are harder hit. They are being asked to use less than the daily average. They will have to sacrifice their meager lawn because at 60 gallons per day, there will be no surplus left for irrigation. The Jones meanwhile will still have a surplus of 400 gallons a day above the average daily use.

While the example you provided is fictional, it does illustrate the problem, those users who are wasteful at this time are being called upon to make less of a sacrifice to their lifestyle than those who have been water wise.

It appears that the Jones are favored by this rule based on their water use outside the home, lawn and fruit trees, and the Smiths are being punished because the majority of their use is in the home.

To be truly equitable, no user should be asked to reduce their water consumption to less than the average daily per capita water use of 70 to 100 gallons per day. The first cuts to water use should occur to ornamental landscaping, then non-commercial trees, fruit or otherwise, and finally to household use. Please don't burden those who are already conserving water. Your proposed system punishes the frugal user and allows the big users to continue to use more than their share of the available water.

Thank you for your consideration.

Terry Fritz