

# Mandatory Water Conservation Regulation Goes Into Effect

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**Contact: George Kostyrko**  
[gkostyrko@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:gkostyrko@waterboards.ca.gov)

On July 29, 2014, an [emergency regulation](#) to increase conservation practices for all Californians went into effect. The new conservation regulation targets outdoor urban water use. In some areas of the State, 50 percent or more of daily water use is for lawns and outdoor landscaping. This regulation establishes the minimum level of activity that residents, businesses and water suppliers must meet as the drought deepens and will be in effect for 270 days unless extended or repealed.

The regulation, adopted by the State Water Board July 15, and approved by the Office of Administrative Law July 28, mandates minimum actions to conserve water supplies both for this year and into 2015. For more information please visit the [Conservation Regulation Portal](#).

With this regulation, all Californians are expected to stop: washing down driveways and sidewalks; watering of outdoor landscapes that cause excess runoff; using a hose to wash a motor vehicle, unless the hose is fitted with a shut-off nozzle, and using potable water in a fountain or decorative water feature, unless the water is recirculated. The regulation makes an exception for health and safety circumstances.

Larger water suppliers are required to activate their Water Shortage Contingency Plan to a level where outdoor irrigation restrictions are mandatory. In communities where no water shortage contingency plan exists, the regulation requires that water suppliers either limit outdoor irrigation to twice a week or implement other comparable conservation actions. Finally, large urban water suppliers must report water use on a monthly basis to track progress beginning Aug. 15.

Local agencies could ask courts to fine water users up to \$500 a day for failure to implement the conservation requirements of the regulation, in addition to their existing authorities and processes. Compliance with prohibitions and water agency restrictions on customer water use will be locally enforced. The State Water Board could initiate enforcement actions against water agencies that don't comply with the new regulations. Failure to comply with a State Water Board enforcement order by water agencies is subject to up to a \$10,000 a day penalty. To report state agency water waste, visit <http://www.saveourh2o.org/report-water-waste>

Governor Brown has called on all Californians to reduce their water use by 20 percent and prevent water waste – visit [SaveOurH2O.org](http://SaveOurH2O.org) to find out how everyone can do their part, and visit [Drought.CA.Gov](http://Drought.CA.Gov) to learn more about how California is dealing with the effects of the drought.