

Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation



The State Water Resources Control Board on July 3 adopted the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation.

Why did the state adopt a regulation?

The purpose of the regulation is to better prepare California for its intense weather extremes that swing from wet weather to very dry periods. As the past few years have shown, these weather patterns have become normal and more frequent. This regulation is one step towards ensuring that water suppliers throughout the state are always prepared to deliver safe water and may lessen the need to implement extreme emergency measures during droughts.

What is the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation?

California's recently adopted regulation is intended to achieve long-term water use efficiency by having urban retail water suppliers achieve the following:

- Meet an agency-specific objective, or budget, measured in gallons that will be calculated using customer indoor and outdoor water use, supplier system water loss and applicable variances and/or bonus incentives. Each agencies' objective also considers unique local service area characteristics (e.g. population, climate, etc.)
- Implement commercial, industrial and institutional performance measures such as customer account classification and customer focused best management practices such as turf removal rebate programs and public workshops
- Submit annual reporting

How will the new regulation impact residents and business owners?

There are no immediate impacts. The water use budget will be set for a water suppliers' entire service area, not for individual households or businesses. Water suppliers will continue to work with their customers to achieve water savings that may be needed to meet the new regulation. This may include water savings through rebates and incentive programs.

Do I need to go back to saving water as if we were in a drought?

Saving water in California is always important, however, this regulation is meant to create long-term budgets to increase water use efficiency, not extreme, short-term measures that may be required during a drought.

Is it going to be illegal to shower and wash clothes at the same time?

No, there are no laws that dictate how or when you shower or do laundry. There will be goals set based on an estimate for what is considered efficient use for indoor water usage per person per day. However, that is applied to the overall water supplier's service area and not individual households or people. The current indoor water usage standard continues to be 55 gallons per person per day (gpcd). In January 2025, the standard will be reduced to 47 gpcd.