

IWVWD General Manager's Column
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“Spare a Minute?”

By Don Zdeba

In response to Governor Brown's mandate to reduce water use by 25% statewide, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) established conservation targets in nine tiers ranging from 4% to 36% for all urban water suppliers. The assigned targets were based on residential gallons per capita per day, or R-GPCD, reported during the months of July, August and September 2014. With a three month average of 240.8, Indian Wells Valley Water District (IWVWD) was assigned a conservation target of 36%.

Beginning in June and for the next nine months, water suppliers are required to report to the SWRCB their monthly water production along with other information related to water use and enforcement actions. The data for the current year is being compared to data from 2013, the year the SWRCB is using a baseline since it was prior to mandatory conservation actions adopted last summer. Over the nine month period, each water supplier is expected to cumulatively average their assigned conservation target. For the month of June, IWVWD fell significantly short reporting a decrease of only 10.6% compared to June 2013. With summer months being the months of highest production due to increased landscape irrigation and the use of evaporative coolers, it is critical that we achieve the assigned conservation goal during these months. Once the summer months are over and water use typically declines substantially, there will be little opportunity to make up a deficit resulting from earlier shortfalls.

The good news is July achieved much better results with production 29.4% lower than July 2013. This is a remarkable turnaround and shows our customers are responding to the challenges presented by the drought conditions we are experiencing. It also shows we have the ability to reach our target. To do so, IWVWD is launching an initiative called “Spare a Minute?” Since outdoor landscape irrigation is typically the largest single use for residential customers and some commercial customers, we are asking customers to reduce landscape irrigation by one minute for each zone you irrigate. By reducing just one minute, you can save as much as 2.5 gallons of water per zone. That's 15 gallons per day if you have six zones on your timer. It adds up! Also, please make sure that your timers are set to irrigate only on the appropriate days. If your address ends in an even number, landscape irrigation is allowed only on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Addresses ending in odd numbers may water only on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. No landscape watering is allowed on Monday. As evidenced by the July results, we are close so please help us hit or exceed our goal by “Sparing a Minute”. We can do this!