

Meters getting little credit for less water consumption

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

As communities around the Sacramento region continue to install water meters, a number of local officials say the devices are not saving as much water as expected.

Water usage is definitely declining, but other factors – including a poor economy and years of conservation education efforts – are having as much or more effect than meters, they say.

“People are more aware of being green and using water efficiently,” said Shauna Lorange, general manager of the San Juan Water District. Water savings are less dramatic when people are already in conservation mode, she said.

Over the last decade, water usage by area households has dropped from about 290 gallons to 240 gallons per person per day, about 17 percent, according to the Sacramento Regional Water Authority, an umbrella agency of water districts from West Sacramento to El Dorado and Placer counties.

In Roseville – which just this week completed a 10-year, \$12 million project to retrofit 16,000 homes with meters – usage has dropped steadily since 2006, according to city data.

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