

Rich Californians balk at water limits

By Rob Kuznia, Washington Post

RANCHO SANTA FE – Drought or no drought, Steve Yuhas resents the idea that it is somehow shameful to be a water hog. If you can pay for it, he argues, you should get your water.

People “should not be forced to live on property with brown lawns, golf on brown courses or apologize for wanting their gardens to be beautiful,” Yuhas fumed recently on social media. “We pay significant property taxes based on where we live,” he added in an interview. “And, no, we’re not all equal when it comes to water.”

Yuhas lives in the ultra-wealthy enclave of Rancho Santa Fe, a bucolic Southern California hamlet of ranches, gated communities and country clubs that guzzles five times more water per capita than the statewide average. In April, after Gov. Jerry Brown called for a 25 percent reduction in water use, consumption in Rancho Santa Fe went up by 9 percent.

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