

Calif. cuts water use 26%; 4 communities earn fines

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

Californians slashed their water use 26 percent in September, meeting Gov. Jerry Brown's goal of a 25 percent reduction for the fourth straight month even as the specter of complacency rises with forecasts of drenching El Niño rains, according to state data released Friday.

But state water officials, rather than relishing in modest progress, toughened their stand against those getting in the way of even greater savings.

The State Water Resources Control Board announced for the first time that it was slapping fines on four urban water suppliers that haven't conserved as much as they should. The Southern California cities of Beverly Hills, Indio and Redlands, as well as the Coachella Valley Water District, face penalties of \$61,000 apiece, officials said.

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