

May a good water conservation month in Calif.

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

Californians are saving an extraordinary amount of water, records show, even after winter rains prompted state regulators to begin easing drought-driven restrictions on cities and towns.

The State Water Resources Control Board reported July 6 that urban water use dropped 28.2 percent in May compared with the same period in 2013 – the second-biggest monthly reduction since the state’s water rationing program began last year. May’s savings followed an impressive 26.1 percent reduction in April.

With state regulators relaxing water rules, however, some are doubting whether such high levels of savings will continue – and whether they even need to. Already, many water agencies have passed the state’s new “stress test” and are no longer required to save water under a policy being praised by suppliers and criticized by conservationists.

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