

# Weaker Calif. water conservation numbers prompt fears

By Matt Stevens, Los Angeles Times

Californians' water conservation slipped for the third consecutive month in August, prompting new alarm from regulators about whether relaxed water restrictions may be causing residents to revert to old habits as the state enters its sixth year of severe drought.

The trend raises new questions about Californians' willingness to continue austere conservation after spending the last two years dramatically reducing their water use by ripping out lawns, installing water-sipping appliances and shortening their showers.

Conservation numbers varied widely across the state, with some places actually saving more water compared with 2015 levels. But other communities are turning the spigot back on, and state data show that several of the worst offenders are the affluent cities that previously have been criticized for heavy consumption.

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