

Calif. plan makes water conservation 'a way of life'

By Darryl Fears, Washington Post

Here in the land of beauty and make-believe, it's important to keep up appearances. Tracy Quinn sees it whenever she walks her dog: sprinklers irrigating pretty green lawns and wasted water bleeding across sidewalks during the state's driest spell in centuries.

"It drives me crazy," said Quinn, a water policy analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

But now California is preparing for a dramatic change in how its residents use water. A water management plan that could be finalized in January is designed to make conservation "a way of life."

The new plan would instead give each water agency a budget for how much water its customers are allowed to use. Each agency's allowance would be based on estimates from state officials of its demographics – population, economy, outdoor temperature, tree canopy and even the rate of water evaporation – to determine its need.

Read the whole story