

# California Drought: Santa Rosa Officials Make 20 Percent Cut In Water Usage Voluntary For Now

SANTA ROSA (CBS SF/BCN) — In the grip of extreme drought, the Santa Rosa City Council has asked residents to voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 20 percent.

The request comes weeks after the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors declared the region under a drought emergency.

In doing so, county officials pointed out that Lake Mendocino was currently 43% of target capacity and Lake Sonoma was at 62% — both the lowest they have ever been this early in the year. The low levels came as the area has endured dry conditions the past two years.

The U.S. Drought Monitor showed on Thursday that the entire San Francisco Bay Area was in the midst of extreme drought.

Gov. Gavin Newsom visited Lake Mendocino on April 21, where he declared a state of emergency due to drought conditions in the Russian River Watershed. The Russian River is the primary source of water for the city's population of 180,000 — the county's largest urban area — supplied via aqueduct by the Sonoma County Water Agency.

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Santa Rosa officials asked residents to take such steps as finding and fixing leaks, reducing outdoor irrigation, converting to drought-tolerant landscaping, taking shorter showers, and turning off the water while brushing teeth.

"To achieve necessary water savings, we all need to take action now," Mayor Chris Rogers said. "Changing simple habits, like reducing your irrigation run times and shortening showers can make a big difference and will help us to meet our community-wide water savings target."

Water-saving kits will be offered at a Drought Drop-By event will be held by Santa Rosa Water from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. June 12 in parking lot B at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds at Brookwood Avenue and Bennett Valley Road.

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Kits will include a bucket, high-efficiency showerheads, faucet aerators, shower, and a shower timer, along with free advice.

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