

Senate Bill 606 establishes a “governing body” to oversee all water suppliers, both private and public and will require extensive paperwork from those utility companies.

Assembly Bill 1668 is where it gets personal. This establishes limits on indoor water usage for every person in California and the amount allowed will decrease even further over the next 12 years.

The bill, until January 1, 2025, would establish **55 gallons per capita daily** as the standard for indoor residential water use, beginning January 1, 2025, would establish the greater of **52.5 gallons per capita** daily or a standard recommended by the department and the board as the standard for indoor residential water use, and beginning January 1, 2030, would establish the greater of **50 gallons per capita daily** or a standard recommended by the department and the board as the standard for indoor residential water use. The bill would impose civil liability for a violation of an order or regulation issued pursuant to these provisions, as specified.

If you’re wondering how the government would know how much water your family is using, the utility providers will be obligated to rat you out of face massive fines. And they’re encouraged to spy in all sorts of creative ways. They “shall use satellite imagery, site visits, or other best available technology to develop an accurate estimate of landscaped areas.”

### **Some analysis**

Now, if you’re wondering where I get my assertion that you can’t shower and do laundry on the same day, here’s some math:

- An 8-minute shower uses about 17 gallons of water
- A load of laundry uses about 40 gallons of water
- A bathtub holds 80 to 100 gallons of water
- A dishwasher uses 6 gallons of water

There are also standards to be established for outdoor use such as landscaping, caring for livestock, and gardening, but those numbers don’t seem to be available at this time. Maybe Californians just get to wait in suspense to see if their chickens are allowed to have water on the same day as their vegetables. Back when I lived in California, we were only “allowed” to water our gardens two times per week, which, in that heat, as you can imagine, didn’t lead to very productive gardens.

Farmers on a larger scale will have to jump through numerous hoops and create water management plans which must then be approved by the people in suits because obviously, they’ll know more about the needs of crops and livestock than the farmers will

Oh, and don’t worry, rich people. There will be “provisions for swimming pools, spas, and other water features.” So you can still have your pretty fountains and pools while the rest of the peons take 2 showers a week. One might wonder if “variances” will apply to the wealthy for their landscaping needs.

“The State Water Resources Control Board, which will oversee local agencies’ progress, will also consider possible “variances” for some districts that need additional allowances due to specific local circumstances.” (source)

Both Brown and his most-likely successor, Gavin Newsom, want to spend \$17 billion to build a tunnel that will bring water from resource-rich Northern California down to bone-dry Southern California. This means, even the parts of California that DO have water will be restricted in its use.

### **What if you don’t comply?**

If you don’t plan to comply it’s going to be way cheaper to move. Here are the fines Californians will be looking at – and it’s not a typo – these fines are PER DAY.

(1) If the violation occurs in a critically dry year immediately preceded by two or more consecutive below normal, dry, or critically dry years or during a period for which the Governor has issued a proclamation of a state of emergency under the California Emergency Services Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8550) of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code) based on drought conditions, **ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for each day** in which the violation occurs.

(2) For all violations other than those described in paragraph (1), **one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each day** in which the violation occurs.

It's important to note that your usage is only tracked if you have municipal water. If you have a well, at this point, you will probably be okay. Back when I lived there, the idea of metering private wells and billing the owners for use had been floated around, but most people resisted and it wasn't enforced. If you truck your water in, you can also use as much as you need to.

For years it was illegal to use greywater systems in California, despite the epic droughts. Those regulations have been loosened, however, compliance is still extremely onerous. (Get the details here.) And rainwater catchment is not only legal, it's encouraged. In fact, there's a ballot on the table that is a "measure to allow rainwater capture systems to be installed without counting as new construction for the purposes of reassessing property taxes."

### **Don't think this only affects California**

Not only are Californians fleeing the state in droves, but there are other ways these restrictive laws can affect the rest of us directly.

- These stringent measures set a dangerous precedent for the rest of the country.
- There could be a shortage of food coming out of California because there isn't enough water to produce it.
- The food we do get from there will cost a lot more.

It's important to pay attention to stuff like this and not shrug it off because "I don't live in California." In an economy such as ours, we're all interlinked. A draconian law that gains a footing in one part of the country is much easier to pass in other parts.

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