

Decrease in water use by Calif. may be temporary

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Driven by drenching rainstorms that dramatically reduced the need to water lawns, Californians cut water use 22.2 percent in December compared with the same month a year before, according to new data released Tuesday.

For the first time since last June, when the State Water Resources Control Board required the 411 largest cities and water districts in California to issue monthly water use reports, residents of the Los Angeles and San Diego areas conserved more water than residents of the Bay Area: 23.2 percent vs. 21.6 percent.

But leaders at the board said Tuesday that the impressive gains aren't expected to last.

January was bone dry and hot, and officials hope water use doesn't shoot right back up again when the tally is done for January.

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