

Revenue loss impacts water conservation rules

By Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

It wasn't just generous spring rains filling north-state reservoirs that had California's urban water districts pushing back so hard against mandatory water cuts this year.

As water use plummeted because of the statewide conservation orders implemented last summer, many water agencies found themselves struggling to cover operating costs. Less water use has meant lower monthly utility bills, and for most utilities, there has been no correlating decline in basic operating costs, such as payroll, debt obligations and maintenance of pipes and treatment plants.

Water board chair Felicia Marcus acknowledged the revenue issue played a role in the decision to relax the state's regulations, but said it was not the primary factor.

Read the whole story