

# Beverly Hills nailed for not cutting back on water use

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The Beverly Hills lily pond with the city's famous sign is seen during a severe drought in Beverly Hills, California on April 9, 2015

Four California cities, including upscale Beverly Hills, got slapped with fines on Friday for failing to cut back on water use as the west coast US state struggles with a historic drought.

The wealthy district's water utility was fined \$61,000 dollars along with

the desert cities of Indio, Redlands and Coachella.

It is the first time California officials have imposed fines on communities that have failed to meet water conservation goals imposed because of the four-year drought.

"Up and down the state, residents and water suppliers are making the necessary sacrifices needed to help California meet its conservation goals," said Cris Carrigan, director of the California Water Boards' enforcement office.

"However, some urban water suppliers simply have not met the requirements laid before them."

The four cities fined collectively wasted about 2.3 billion gallons of water since June, Carrigan said.

He said if they fail to cut back on [water usage](#), the fines, which amount to \$500 a day could be ramped up to \$10,000 a day.

According to officials, Californians overall have cut water use by 28.1 percent—or 253.4 billion gallons—since June.

That amount represents 65 percent of the savings goal to be achieved by February of next year.

The state's governor, Jerry Brown, earlier this year ordered communities to scale back on water usage by an average of 25 percent compared to 2013.

But the message apparently has not been heard by all and some residents of Beverly Hills and the nearby Bel Air neighborhood, home to many celebrities, have come in for stinging criticism for not turning their

faucets off.

One resident of Bel Air has reportedly guzzled a whopping 11.8 million gallons of water in one year, enough for 90 households.

According to a recent UCLA study, on average wealthier neighborhoods consume three times more water than less-affluent ones.

Beverly Hills officials said in a statement Friday that the city was striving to meet its water conservation goals and that penalty surcharges had come into effect in October.

"Beverly Hills is very concerned about not meeting the 32 percent goal set by the state," a statement said. "As such, the city is committed to continuing the outreach and implementing additional programs, such as new penalty surcharges, hiring additional staff to address [water](#) violations and developing individualized conservation programs that will help us achieve reductions we need."

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