

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

The State of California is involved in another year of drought. The State continues to be faced with cutting back on agricultural crops due to the water shortage and again another dangerous fire season that could seriously reduce our stored water. The governor rightly has announced plans to reduce water usage state wide. Here, in Humboldt, we are better off than the population in the southern part of the State but we should do our part in conserving water. The trouble with a State mandate of 'one size fits all' is the nature of California itself, the North with a lesser population and the South with a larger population and a lesser amount of water. To add to the problem is the large number of homes with swimming pools in the south State metro areas. I am sure that if you have flown to any California metro area that you have seen the rows and rows of swimming pools as your plane circled the residential neighborhoods on approach to the airport. The Governor has requested a 25% reduction in water usage. Just how is that goal going to be monitored when it comes to swimming pools? I am not against pools but I can see the need for some strict control during the drought. The only good thing I can say about a pool is its use as a back-up reservoir for firefighting purposes, especially in the more rural areas. It is disturbing to see the drastic cutback of water to the State's farmers. We grow crops that help feed the nation and the sure rise of the involved cost pushes the price of some food above the financial reach of the lower income consumer. I would rather see the water destined for a swimming pool go to a field growing food. Recently there have been demonstrations in Sacramento against the bottled water industry demanding the shutdown of water bottling plants to conserve water with accusations that the plants are gouging consumers. This type of short sightedness is unfair both to the bottler and the consumer. Bottled water has been seen as a fad by some but when you take a closer look there are benefits which are quite clear. How many of you have attended a meeting, private or otherwise, and have found free bottled water offered? It happens all the time. You see someone moving about town with a water bottle in hand most any day of the week. One of the things these people are doing is keeping 'hydrated' which is a healthy thing to do. I would hope that you folks here in California keep an earthquake emergency kit at the ready including plenty of bottled water (you don't store it in a bucket). Take away the water bottling plant and you cause a lot more harm than good. No one is talking about the bottlers of carbonated soda which also contains water plus additives.

Fred Nelson for Community Comment