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Published May 18th, 2016

## **EBMUD Drops Water Use Restrictions**

*By Nick Marnell*

Water - arguable the world's most valuable resource - will soon become more affordable.

The East Bay Municipal Utility District board unanimously approved the suspension of mandatory restrictions on water use effective July 1. The board declared the drought stage at zero, meaning water supplies were normal and the water emergency is over. The 25 percent drought surcharge also ends, though a 7 percent rate increase approved by the board last year goes into effect July 1. "We asked our customers to cut back 20 percent. This April, customers saved 26 percent compared to 2013. Our community stepped up and exceeded those goals," board president Frank Mellon said in a statement. "We want to thank both our customers and our staff for this tremendous effort." Director Marguerite Young, whose Ward 3 includes Moraga and Orinda, praised the communities for their response to the water emergency. "Our customers knocked it out of the park," she said. "For 2015, Orinda reduced overall water consumption by 34 percent and Moraga by 36 percent compared to 2013, saving an impressive 890 million gallons of water."

Ward 2 director John Coleman, serving the city of Lafayette, would not single out a specific area for its conservation efforts.

"Without the effort of all our customers, regardless of where they live, conservation far exceeded goals that we established," he said. "These strong results clearly demonstrated that residents in Lamorinda are as committed as any other customer achieving water savings. On behalf of EBMUD, I would like to personally thank everybody for stepping up to save water."

"As the governor has said, we are in for a drier climate and more frequent droughts," added Young. "It just makes sense to continue these wise water use practices."

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