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## **Water restraints aid whole region**

[Express-News editorial-](#)

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San Antonio got a bit of welcome rain Thursday, but the drought is not over.

Without significant rainfall, increasingly strict water restrictions will remain an unpleasant fact of life for San Antonio-area residents.

City Manager Sheryl Sculley declared Stage 2 water restrictions this week, and entering Stage 3 appears to be just a matter of time as summer weather grips the region.

Area lawns will suffer, but compliance with the restrictions is necessary to keep the Edwards Aquifer level from plummeting while residents wait for rain.

Protection of endangered species in the aquifer-fed Comal and San Marcos springs led to litigation and the legislation that required water restrictions. More than endangered species protection is at stake.

The level of the trigger well for restrictions in San Antonio has been sinking, and the flows at the Comal and San Marcos springs have slowed, too.

The San Antonio well level has dropped to 646 feet above sea level. The lowest level since the 1950s drought of record was 622.6 feet on June 29, 1990.

The aquifer is a key part of a huge, interconnected water system that allows in the Edwards region and the Guadalupe River basin to flourish.

Reduced flows in the aquifer-fed springs mean less water for downstream residents who rely on surface water.

Water conservation in a drought is necessary to be good neighbors and to properly manage San Antonio's main water source.

Restrictions start earlier than they once did as a result of compromise legislation passed in 2007 that lifted the pumping cap during times of plenty, giving San Antonio more access

to inexpensive Edwards Aquifer water.

The compromise was good for San Antonio and good for the aquifer.

So avoiding a fine isn't the only reason to adhere to the rules.

Water restrictions during critical drought periods are inconvenient, but serve the common good.

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