

City Water Ration Fines Begin May 1

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A lot of people are panicking unnecessarily about the water use they are permitted under terms of the city's emergency water rationing ordinance.

About 1,000 persons called the city water department Wednesday, most of them fearful that they may be going over the limits allowed and be

subjecting themselves to stiff penalties.

"There is no need to panic, none whatsoever," Traci Bliss, the city's water conservation coordinator, stressed this morning, just as she and her telephone aides stressed Wednesday to the callers they talked to.

And Morris Allen, Santa Cruz water director, said that while all regulations in the ordinance apply to all city and

noncity customers of the water system, there will be no penalties assessed until May 1.

Allen added: "People really should not panic. This period is to be used to get their water consumption into conformance with the emergency ordinance.

"We are planning to read all residential meters beginning April 1," Allen added. "We will warn persons if

their water use appears high so that they may use the period before May 1 to bring their consumption down."

But consumption should be brought down by everyone as promptly as possible, without reliance upon a meter reading and warning by the city, because penalties definitely will be assessed beginning May 1.

The reason for cutting down now is this: some meters which have been read

for billing purposes since March 1 will be read in early May, and that reading will be for real. Any reading after May 1 will be for real, for it will mark the end of the two-month billing period a particular meter may be in. The city reads meters and bills customers every two months.

Clay Nelson, the city's customer service supervisor, said that many of the callers are confused about the ration

allowed each residential household.

"The ration for a duplex, triplex, fourplex or other multiple units with a single meter is 70 per cent of 1975 water consumption registered on that meter," Nelson said. "If a duplex or triplex has an individual meter for each dwelling unit, then the ration for persons in these units will be the same as it is for per-

sons who live in single-family homes."

Nelson said that other persons still don't know what the rationing provisions are, so at his request the Sentinel is reprinting the major ones.

It is stressed that under the sliding scale of water allocations in the emergency law, a person living alone in a single-family, duplex or triplex dwelling with individual

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