



The head of the National Water Commission, or Conagua (L), speaks during the ceremony for the signing of the Water savings and efficiency initiative.

'Dramatic' drop in available water

Luege says shortage related to population increase

THE NEWS

MEXICO CITY - The head of the National Water Commission (Conagua), Jose Luis Luege Tamargo, classified the decrease in water availability in the country as "dramatic", during the signing of the "Water saving and efficiency initiative".

The federal official said that the water shortages are associated with population increase.

Mexico City, he reported, has one of the most critical water levels nationally, because on average annually, double the water capacity is extracted and its aquifer is considered to be in the worst situation in the country.

The Valley of Mexico will not resolve its water problem with the Cutzamala and Lerma systems and its aquifer. For this reason it will need to import water from other sources that are already being studied.

The "Water savings and efficiency initiative" was signed by 68 businesses from different sectors with the objective of promoting actions among company personnel for the correct use of

this scarce resource.

Luege Tamargo reported that the businesses can count on the participation of 600,000 direct employees and 2.4 million people in general just to change showers, toilets and valves in their homes.

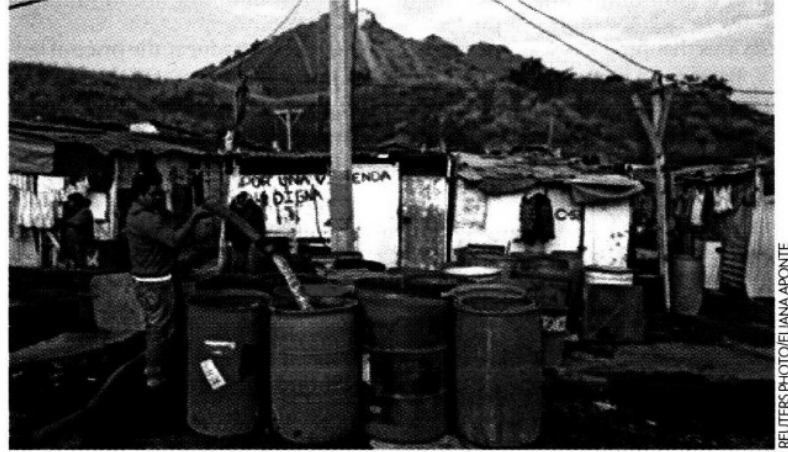
The Assistant Manager of Potable Water, Drainage and Sanitation at Conagua, Jose Ramon Ardavin Ituarte, said that with these actions a water saving of 10.7 cubic meters per second is possible in the metropolitan zone of the Valley of Mexico. In other words, savings equivalent to two-thirds of the water supplied by the Cutzamala system.

Luege said that Conagua issued a standard to orient water operating organizations so that they can fix their rates to reflect the direct and indirect costs involved, such as investment repayments and sewage treatment.

He emphasized that what is proposed is a fair and equitable rate, free from influence of party politics and electoral disputes, that reflects the guarantee of providing good service.



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A worker fills up tanks with water in a poor neighborhood in Mexico City.