

Drought buster: Madera family reuses shower warm-up water

By Craig Kohlruss ckohlruss@fresnobee.com

Rayne Simons of Madera has a novel way of helping save water and putting it to additional use in this fourth year of drought in California.

Each morning he and his wife, Callie, fill buckets with water they capture as their shower heats up. They continue to collect water as they shower. They are able to collect five to eight gallons of water each day.

After showering, they take the buckets outside their bedroom patio door and pour the water into an old tub that is inset into the ground. Rayne says he originally set the tub in the ground to collect rainwater from a nearby downspout.

Once the water is in the tub, an automatic sump pump starts up and pumps the water through a hose system to a trio of redwood trees in his yard. This extra water has helped the trees stay green, he says.

Simons says he will eventually cap off the end of the hose and build a drip system so that the water hits more of the trees and plants in the yard.

He doesn't see his contraption as a drought-buster. "It's no big deal," he says. But Simons takes satisfaction in contributing to the greater cause of reusing water during the drought.

"We're doing our part to help," he says.