

Water Use Recommendations and Restrictions for Three-Phase Drought Operating Plan

As Amended and Approved by the Delaware Water Supply Coordinating Council, September 17, 2014.

Water Use Recommendations for Drought Watch

Lawn and Turf Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- Use of potable water for lawns and turf should be minimized and performed in a conservative manner.

Landscape Plant Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- Use of potable water for outdoor landscape plants (including groundcover, flowers, shrubs, and trees) should be minimized and performed in a conservative manner.

Golf Courses and Athletic Fields

- Use of potable water for turf and landscape plants should be minimized.
- All outdoor watering should be performed by efficient means in a conservative manner.
- A facility-specific drought management plan should be developed or updated in preparation for a drought emergency.
- Recommendation: Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it should be used in lieu of potable water, in a conservative manner.

Miscellaneous Uses

- Water should be served in public establishments only at the customer's request.

Water Use Recommendations for Drought Warning

Lawn and Turf Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- Use of potable water for "established" lawns and turf should be avoided. Watering of "newly-planted" turf should be limited to between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. by any efficient means.
- Recommendation: Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it should be used in lieu of potable water in a conservative manner.
- "Established" means planted for one year or more. "Newly-planted" means planted for less than one year.

Landscape Plant Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- Use of potable water for "established" landscape plants (including groundcover, flowers, shrubs, and trees), should be avoided.
- Use of potable water for watering of landscape plants should be limited to those which are newly-planted. These plants should be watered either manually or with soaker hoses.
- Irrigation bags or similar devices are recommended for trees and other individual plants.
- Nursery stock should be watered by any efficient means.
- Recommendation: Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it should be used in lieu of potable water in a conservative manner.
- "Established" means planted for one year or more. "Newly-planted" means planted for less than one year.

Golf Courses and Athletic Fields

- Use of potable water should be limited to between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. for tees, greens, and fairways to prevent damage.

- Watering of grass or clay courts and athletic fields should be limited to between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m.
- Water conservation measures and the use of drought best management practices should be used to reduce water use.
- All facilities' drought management plans shall be finalized, submitted to DNREC, and readied for implementation.
- Recommendation: Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it should be used in lieu of potable water and may be applied to any part of the facility in a conservative manner.

Miscellaneous Uses

- Water shall be served in public establishments only at the customer's request.
- Use of potable water for washing private vehicles is permitted only by the use of a bucket and a hose with a flow-control nozzle.
- The use of potable water for washing paved surfaces is prohibited, except for sanitation.
- Watering required in earthworks projects for erosion and sediment control shall be done under plans approved by the prevailing governmental agency.

NOTICE: Individual water providers have the authority to impose more restrictive limits for demand management purposes.

Mandatory Water Use Restrictions for Drought Emergency

Lawn and Turf Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- The use of potable water for watering of "established" lawns and turf is prohibited.
- The following uses of potable water are permitted, only to the minimum extent necessary to prevent damage:
 - Use of potable water for "newly-planted" turf areas shall be limited to between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. by any efficient means and in a conservative manner.
 - Landscaping work over 10,000 square feet, under contract as of the declaration of drought emergency, may be watered by any efficient means and in a conservative manner.
 - Pesticides may be watered-in within 2 days of application using the recommended rate and only between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m.
 - Newly-installed irrigation systems may be tested by the contractor up to 10 minutes per zone and a sign on the premises shall be displayed stating testing is occurring.
 - Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it must be used in lieu of potable water in a conservative manner.
 - Diversions from sources of public water supply for non-potable uses may be restricted.
- "Established" means planted for one year or more. "Newly-planted" means planted for less than one year.

Landscape Plant Watering (including residential, commercial, institutional, and government uses)

- The use of potable water for watering of "established" landscape plants is prohibited.
- The following uses of potable water are permitted, only to the minimum extent necessary to prevent damage:
 - "Newly-planted" landscape plants may only be watered manually or with soaker hoses, and only between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. with the user in attendance.
 - Pesticides may be watered-in within 2 days of application using the recommended rate, and only between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m.
 - Newly-installed irrigation systems may be tested by the contractor up to 10 minutes per zone and a sign on the premises shall be displayed stating testing is occurring.

- Nursery stock may be watered by any efficient means for only 2 periods per day totaling no more 6 hours, with no more than 10 minutes of syringing of stressed plants between the hours of 12 noon and 3 p.m. [“Syringing” is the application of light amounts of water for the purpose of: (1) preventing wilt; (2) reducing transpiration; (3) cooling turf (and/or other plants).]
- Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it must be used in lieu of potable water in a conservative manner.
- Diversions from sources of public water supply for non-potable uses may be restricted.
- Exceptions:
 - Self-supplied public gardens may be watered conservatively by any efficient means and only to prevent damage.
 - Irrigation bags or similar devices may be used for trees and other individual plants.
 - Commercial watering is permitted beyond one year after planting if required by the applicable contract.
- “Established” means planted for one year or more. “Newly-planted” means planted for less than one year.

Golf Courses and Athletic Fields

- All facilities’ drought management plans as submitted to DNREC shall be implemented.
- Use of potable water is allowed between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. and only to prevent damage to tees and greens.
- Watering of grass or clay courts and athletic fields is allowed only between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. to maintain playability.
- Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it must be used in lieu of potable water and may be applied to any part of the facility in a conservative manner.
- Diversions from sources of public water supply for non-potable uses may be restricted.
- Exception: Daytime syringing for heat sensitive grasses is permitted to prevent damage. [“Syringing” is the application of light amounts of water for the purpose of: (1) preventing wilt; (2) reducing transpiration; (3) cooling turf (and/or other plants).]

Miscellaneous Uses

- Water shall be served in public establishments only at the customer’s request.
- The use of potable water for non-commercial washing of private vehicles is prohibited.
- The use of potable water for washing paved surfaces is prohibited, except for sanitation.
- Opening of hydrants or flushing of water mains is prohibited, except for public protection purposes and shall be performed only by authorized personnel.
- The use of potable water for filling of swimming pools is prohibited except for filling of therapeutic pools or to prevent structural damage to new pools.
- The use of potable water for topping off swimming pools is permitted only to the extent necessary to maintain proper filtration.
- The use of potable water for fountains and ornamental pools is prohibited unless they are supporting fish or plants.
- Watering required in earthworks projects for erosion and sediment control shall be done under plans approved by the prevailing governmental agency.
- Where a source of non-potable water exists at the location of use it must be used, when appropriate, in lieu of potable water in a conservative manner.
- Diversions from sources of public water supply for non-potable uses may be restricted.
- Exception: Use of potable water is allowed for the production of food, fiber, nursery stock, sod, flowers, livestock, and poultry.

NOTICE: Individual water providers have the authority to impose more restrictive limits for demand management purposes.