# Outdoor Water Use

November 18, 2016

Due to the continuing drought, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has upgraded the Drought Response to a Level 2 Drought declaration for 52 counties in Georgia (See Map). Additional watering restrictions have been issued above those for Level 1.

The City of Calhoun Water System does not have any type of water supply shortage, but must enforce the outdoor water use restrictions under the Drought Response Level 2 guidelines.

Outdoor watering is restricted to the guidelines as shown in the following:

(3) Drought Response Level 2. During Drought Response Level 2, permittees shall implement all Drought Response Level 1 measures plus the following additional Drought Response Level 2 measures:

(a) General Outdoor Watering. Outdoor irrigation for purposes of planting, growing, managing, or maintaining ground cover, trees, shrubs, or other plants, as described in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(a), shall be limited to two days a week on an odd-even schedule. Even numbered addresses may irrigate on Wednesday and Saturday between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. Odd numbered addresses may irrigate on Thursday and Sunday between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. "Even numbered address" means an address number ending with the number 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, or the site does not have a numbered address. "Odd numbered address" means an address ending with the number 1, 3, 5, 7, or 9.

(b) Specific Categories of Outdoor Water Use. The outdoor water uses listed in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(b) shall be allowed.

(c) The following outdoor water uses shall not be allowed, except as provided below:

1. Washing hard surfaces such as streets, gutters, sidewalks and driveways, except when necessary for public health and safety;

2. Using water for ornamental purposes, such as fountains, reflecting pools, and waterfalls;

3. Use of fire hydrants, except for the purposes of firefighting, public health, safety, or flushing;

4. Washing vehicles, such as cars, boats, trailers, motorbikes, airplanes, or golf carts;

5. Non-commercial washing, or pressure washing, of buildings or structures, except for immediate fire protection; and

6. Charity, or non-commercial fund-raiser, car washes.

(d) Permittees that are public water systems shall select and implement four, or more, additional practices from the Drought Response Strategies Menu in paragraph (5). Such permittees shall submit monthly reports to the Division by the 10th of each following month detailing the drought response strategies the system has selected, the extent of implementation, and enforcement strategy, if applicable.

(4) Drought Response Level 3. During Drought Response Level 3, permittees shall implement all Drought Response Level 1 and 2 measures plus the following additional Drought Response Level 3 measures:

(a) General Outdoor Watering. Outdoor irrigation for purposes of planting, growing, managing, or maintaining ground cover, trees, shrubs, or other plants, as described in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(a), is not permitted.

(b) Specific Categories of Outdoor Water Use. The outdoor water uses listed in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(b) shall be allowed, subject to the following additional requirements:

1. Irrigation of personal food gardens shall be conducted between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m., unless done using drip irrigation or soaker hoses. Irrigation of personal food gardens using drip irrigation or soaker hoses may be done at any time;

2. Handwatering with a hose with automatic cutoff or handheld container may be conducted between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.;

3. Irrigation of athletic fields or public turf grass recreational areas may be conducted between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m., subject to the two days a week odd-even schedule described in Drought Response Level 2;

4. Irrigation of golf courses shall be conducted in accordance with the "Golf Irrigation Prediction and Estimation Worksheet" and only between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m., provided, however, irrigation of golf course greens may occur at any time of day;

5. Use of reclaimed waste water by a designated user from a system permitted by the Division to provide reclaimed waste water shall not be allowed for general outdoor watering as described in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(a). It shall be allowed for any use described in Rule 391-3-30-.03(1)(b) subject to the limitations in Rule 391-3-30-.07(4)(b);

6. Installation, maintenance, or calibration of irrigation systems is allowed, provided that it is done by professional landscapers or golf course superintendents.

(c) Permittees that are public water systems shall implement all practices from the Drought Response Strategies Menu in paragraph (5).

(d) Rate Structures. Within 1 year of the effective date of this Rule, permittees that are public water systems shall develop a drought surcharge program as a temporary price incentive for customers to reduce water demand during a declared drought. Permittees with tiered conservation rates that comply with specific criteria for tiered conservation rates in the applicable Regional Water Plan are not required to develop a drought surcharge program. Permittees are not subject to requirements regarding Rate Structures if they do not serve retail customers.

1. The drought surcharge program shall meet the following criteria:

   (i) Drought surcharge rate(s) shall be implemented within 60 days of receipt of drought response level declaration notice.

   (ii) Drought surcharge rate(s) shall be distinct from established water rates;

   (iii) Drought surcharge rate(s) shall apply only to the volumetric water rates; and

   (iv) Drought surcharge rate(s) shall be approximately revenue neutral relative to non-drought periods. The Division will give deference to public water systems for their reasonable definition of revenue neutral.

   (v) The drought surcharge program is not required to include industrial customers.

   (See current Rate Resolution)

2. Permittees shall be exempted from the requirement to have drought surcharge rate(s) that are distinct from established water rates if they demonstrate to the Division that their billing system is unable to make such distinction. Such permittees shall notify all affected customers of the drought surcharge rate(s) through a billing insert whenever the drought surcharge program is initiated.

3. Permittees shall be exempted from the requirement to have drought surcharge rate(s) that apply only to the volumetric water rates if they demonstrate to the Division that their billing system is unable to apply a surcharge rate only to the volumetric use of water.

4. If the applicable Regional Water Plan does not have specific criteria for tiered conservation rates then permittees are exempted from the requirement to develop a drought surcharge program if their conservation rates are designed and implemented consistent with the Division's "Conservation-Oriented Rate Structures" guidance dated August 2007 or Conservation Action Item 5.1 in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's 2009 Water Supply and Water Conservation Plan.

(e) Numeric Water Usage Reduction Requirements.

1. The Division may establish numeric reduction requirements for permittees that are public water systems and whose monthly average water use is greater than one million gallons per day. The numeric reduction requirements may vary based on time of year (i.e., warmer months and cooler months). The Division shall consider economic and climatic conditions during the baseline period when establishing the numeric reduction requirements. The Division shall also consider the public water system's peaking factor or their "Baseline Water Use and Efficiency Profile for Public Water Systems", if provided to the Division by the public water system, when establishing the numeric reduction requirements.

2. Permittees that are public water systems and whose industrial customers comprise more than 90 percent of water use shall be exempt from Numeric Water Usage Reduction Requirements.

The following outdoor water uses shall not be allowed, except as provided below:

1. Washing hard surfaces such as streets, gutters, sidewalks and driveways, except when necessary for public health and safety;

2. Using water for ornamental purposes, such as fountains, reflecting pools, and waterfalls;

3. Use of fire hydrants, except for the purposes of firefighting, public health, safety, or flushing;

4. Washing vehicles, such as cars, boats, trailers, motorbikes, airplanes, or golf carts;

5. Non-commercial washing, or pressure washing, of buildings or structures, except for immediate fire protection; and

6. Charity, or non-commercial fund-raiser, car washes.

Public water systems shall select and implement four, or more, additional practices from the Drought Response Strategies Menu under the Drought Rules established by the State of Georgia. In addition the City of Calhoun must submit monthly reports to the Environmental protection Division of the Georgia department of Natural Resources by the 10th of each following month detailing the drought response strategies the system has selected, the extent of implementation, and enforcement strategy, if applicable.

The following additional practices to be enforced by the City of Calhoun are as follows

(a) Public information campaign that goes significantly beyond the minimum notice and public service messages associated with Drought Response Level 1;

(b) Glasses of water provided to restaurant customers only upon request;

(c) Implement a drought surcharge program, or tiered conservation rates, that satisfy the criteria of this rule; (See current Rate Resolution).

(d) Implement, or accelerate, leak detection and repair program(s);

(e) Impose monetary penalties or terminate water services to customers to reduce outdoor water waste due to excessive application, outdoor leaks, improper irrigation, or other similar reasons.