

Westford Water Department

Outdoor Water Use Restriction Stages

Drought Management Plan procedures are established to provide staged water conservation restrictions to meet Westford's permit limits. These procedures may also be used in times of drought. The triggers implementing water restrictions are based on the declared drought status by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and/or Westford's permitted withdrawal limit registered with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The trigger may be adjusted based on future changes to Westford's permitted withdrawal limit or other reasons deemed appropriate by the Water Department.

Water restrictions will be lifted or reduced to a lower stage when the state reduces the drought declaration status and/or daily withdrawal returns to levels below the trigger.

Water restrictions are not effective until the public is notified. Notices will remain posted until restrictions are lifted or changed. When restrictions are lifted or reduced to a lower stage, the public and MassDEP will be notified in the same manner used to declare the existing restrictions. Notifications shall be given in the same manner required by Section 169.7.F (Regulation of Use – Public Notification of a State of Water Supply Conservation; Notification to DEP) under Town of Westford Massachusetts General Bylaws. Each conservation stage and allowable water usage is described below. Public notification methods are not limited to the ones noted below.

All irrigation systems should be fitted with an appropriate rain sensor that shuts off the system during precipitation.

1. Non-essential outdoor water usage shall mean those that are not required:

- For health or safety reasons
- By regulation
- For the production of food and fiber
- For the maintenance of livestock
- To meet the core functions of a business

Non-essential outdoor water usage subject to mandatory restrictions includes:

- Irrigation of lawns using sprinklers or automated irrigation systems
- Filling of swimming pools, washing of exterior building surfaces, parking lots, driveways, or sidewalks, except as necessary to apply paint, preservatives, stucco, pavement, or cement
- Washing of vehicles
- Any other use deemed non-essential by the Water Department

Stage I (Voluntary Odd/Even With Time Restrictions):

Voluntary Restrictions (May 1 – October 31):

Odd/Even Outdoor Watering with Time Restrictions: customers are requested to voluntarily minimize outdoor water usage by complying with an odd/even schedule. Those with odd numbered addresses should restrict outdoor watering to odd numbered days, and even numbered addresses to even numbered days. Outdoor watering should not be performed between 9 am and 6 pm.

Customers are requested to fill swimming pools before June 1st.

Public Notification Methods:

Place voluntary conservation signs at well-traveled locations throughout town.

Notify customers in Consumer Confidence Report.

Post notices in Town Hall, Public Library, and on the Water Department website.

Send copy of notification to MassDEP at the same time the public is notified.

Enforcement:

Since this stage is voluntary no official enforcement measures are necessary. If the Water Department is notified that the policy is not being followed, a reminder may be sent to the appropriate party as a request to adhere to the voluntary odd/even with time restrictions watering schedule.

Stage II (Mandatory Odd/Even With Time Restrictions):

Mandatory Restrictions:

Odd/Even Outdoor Watering Using Automatic Sprinklers: customers must restrict non-essential outdoor water usage by complying with an odd/even schedule. Those with odd numbered addresses must restrict outdoor watering to odd numbered days, and even numbered addresses to even numbered days. Outdoor watering is prohibited between 9 am and 6 pm.

The filling of swimming pools is prohibited.

Use of a hand-held hose with an automatic shut-off or watering can is not subject to this restriction.

Public Notification Methods:

Broadcast notice on local cable channel and periodically thereafter.

Post notices in Town Hall, Public Library, and on the Water Department website.

Print notice in local newspaper at time restriction takes effect.

Use any means reasonably calculated to reach and inform all customers of the Water Conservation Stage.

Send copy of notification to MassDEP at the same time the public is notified.

Enforcement:

Failure to comply with the mandatory restrictions identified under Stage II is subject to a fine of \$50 for the first violation and \$100 for each subsequent violation. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense. Fines are issued pursuant to section 169.7.I (Regulation of Use - Penalties) under Town of Westford Massachusetts General Bylaws.

Stage III (Emergency):

Mandatory Restrictions:

ALL OUTDOOR NON-ESSENTIAL WATER USE IS PROHIBITED

Public Notification Methods:

Broadcast notice on local cable channel and periodically thereafter.

Post notices in Town Hall, Public Library, and on the Water Department website.

Print notice in local newspaper at time restriction takes effect.

Use any means reasonably calculated to reach and inform all customers of the Water Conservation Stage.

Send copy of notification to MassDEP at the same time the public is notified.

Enforcement:

Failure to comply with the mandatory restrictions identified under Stage III is subject to a fine of \$50 for the first violation and \$100 for each subsequent violation. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense. Fines are issued pursuant to section 169.7.I (Regulation of Use - Penalties) under Town of Westford Massachusetts General Bylaws.

Exceptions:

The following outdoor water use is subject to review and approval by the Westford Water Department through its Water Commissioners or their designee (Water Superintendent):

- Irrigation of newly planted or replanted lawns (seeded or sodded) during the months of May through October.

A letter of approval from the Water Superintendent granting approval and providing conditions to irrigate for the above purposes is required during a water conservation restriction period. It is the responsibility of the customer/owner to request this permission.