



**Town of
Greenwich
Conservation Commission**

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**Denise Savageau
Conservation Director**

March 9, 2017

To: Board of Selectmen
Director of Health

Fr: Denise Savageau, Conservation Director

Re: Board of Selectmen Meeting – March 9, 2017
Updated Water Supply Emergency Measures (updated from March 3, 2017 memo)

On September 22, 2016, the Board of Selectmen place mandatory restrictions on all outdoor water use. This was necessary to reduce the demand on both our public and private water supplies including private wells. Additional restrictions were adopted on October 6, 2016 and these measures remain in place until lifted by the BOS.

The State Department of Public Health issued a new declaration of Water Supply Emergency on March 1, 2017 (attached). This order recognizes the need to continue good water conservation practices to ensure reservoir fully recover but also recognizes improvements to water supply over the past several months. It focuses on restricting use of water for irrigation and allows for the continued transfer of water from the Bridgeport system. The DPH order is directed to Aquarion and its customers. The BOS order covers the entire town including residents served by both public water supplies and on private wells.

We are in now in year three of a statewide drought. Reservoir levels for the Greenwich system as of February 22, 2017 is 73% full. Normal for this time of year would be over 88%. It is estimated that the Greenwich system will reach 100% full by May 1, 2017. This does not necessarily take into consideration the overall ground water situation that takes longer to recharge. Additionally, we are still in a rainfall deficit for the year. It should be noted that the Greenwich system did reach 100% full last year but was severely impacted by below average precipitation and large summer water demands resulting in emergency situation late in summer.

The mandatory ban put in place dramatically curtailed the excessive demand from outside irrigation last fall. Greenwich residents continued to keep water usage below average over the winter. The reduction in demand coupled with temporary water transfers from the Bridgeport system have played a significant role in the recovery of the reservoir system. It is important that we remain committed to water conservation as we move into the warmer months so as not repeat mistakes of last year.

For these reasons, I recommend that the Town replace the existing restrictions with the following:

In order to protect the drinking water supplies and provide for adequate fire protection, the following drought response measures are adopted the Board of Selectmen at a meeting held on March 9, 2017 meeting and apply to all public and private water supplies including private wells, effective immediately. These restrictions replace those adopted on October 6, 2016. This is in accordance with Town Ordinances: Article 5 – Water Shortages.

1. Water Supply Emergency - effective immediately
 - 1.1. Outdoor Water Irrigation Restrictions
 - 1.1.1. Mandatory water ban on all outdoor irrigation by automatic irrigation systems and sprinkler type equipment.
 - 1.1.2. Mandatory water ban on watering of fairways at golf courses. Courses must limit irrigation to tee areas and greens and be in compliance with their Drought Management Plans. All courses are required to maintain adequate levels in ponds registered with the fire department as fire ponds with the fire department. Voluntary maintenance of pond and other surface water levels are requested to ensure proper fire safety.
 - 1.2. Exceptions to Outdoor Irrigation Restrictions
 - 1.2.1. Use of drip irrigation, soaker hoses and watering by hand held hose is allowed.
 - 1.2.2. Irrigation of nursery crops at commercial operations is allowed. Commercial operations should have a Water Conservation/Drought Management Plan.
 - 1.2.3. Repairing or testing of new or existing automatic irrigation systems is allowed.
 - 1.2.4. Trucking in water from outside is allowed provided that the water is obtained from an acceptable source that is not under drought advisory or restrictions and is independent of private wells and/or the public water supply system. A bill of sale showing origin of water is required.
 - 1.3. No new water diversions or hookups are to be allowed to provide for outdoor or non-essential use. This includes the drilling of new irrigation wells, or diversions from ponds, streams or other surface waters. All residents are asked to maintain surface water levels for fire protection purposes.
 - 1.4. In addition to mandatory requirements, all residents and businesses should practice water conservation and reduce water usage by 20%. This includes making sure that all plumbing and air conditioning systems that use water are in good repair with no leakage.

1.5. No drawing of water for transport by truck from any surface water supply except for emergency purposes as determined by the Director of Health and the Fire Chief.

1.6. The Fire Department will continue monitoring of public land for fire hazards and possible park closures.

1.7. Additional restrictions may be adopted as recommended by the Director of Health, Conservation Director, and the Fire Chief at any time.

1.8. Variances may be issued by the Conservation Director in consultation with the Director Health on a limited basis to protect the environment and ensure community resiliency.

