



## COBB COUNTY WATER SYSTEM

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**To: Cobb County Board of Commissioners**

**Through: David Hankerson, County Manager**

**From: Stephen D. McCullers, P.E., Director  
Kathy Nguyen, Water Conservation Coordinator**

**Re: Drought Response Plan**

Following is the Drought Response Plan, proposed by the Water System for adoption by the Board of Commissioners, to be effective immediately upon approval by the Board of Commissioners. This Plan is being amended in order to come into compliance with newly adopted state laws regarding outdoor water use restrictions.

### **Cobb County Drought Response Plan Spring and Summer 2009**

On May 14, 2008, Governor Sonny Perdue signed House Bill 1281, requiring all jurisdictions to comply with the state's outdoor water use restrictions, or apply to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division for special exception.

As Cobb County recognizes the need during this historic drought to preserve our water resources, several actions have been taken by County agencies including limitations on fire flow testing, total ban on outdoor irrigation, and the retrofitting of County buildings with low flow plumbing fixtures.

The following represents a Drought Response Plan to serve as the basis for Cobb's efforts to comply with the newly approved state law. As the current drought is a changing situation and the seasons greatly impact water use and commercial needs, Cobb County urges citizens to continue to limit their water use to reasonable and necessary use.

## Drought Response Plan

### Residential Customers

1. Two tiers for high water users will remain in place:  
30,000 Gallons - 49,000 Gallons           \$5.24/1,000 gallons  
50,000 and above                               \$6.80/1,000 gallons
2. The "Pick 10" Campaign will be continued for residents encouraging indoor conservation tips.
3. A toilet rebate program has been successfully initiated, and more than 4,500 rebates have been issued since November 1, 2007. The program will continue throughout this year and funding will be reallocated annually for the program.
4. A new toilet valve rebate program has been approved for master-metered and multi-family customers.

### Landscaping

1. **Hand watering, defined as one person with one hose with a shut off nozzle, is allowed for 25 minutes a day, on the odd/even watering schedule.** Even and unnumbered addresses may water Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and odd addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays **between the hours of Midnight and 10 AM. Irrigation systems may not be run under this exemption.**
2. **Drip Irrigation and Soaker Hoses for use on established plants.**  
For established plants defined as: trees, flowers, vines, and shrubs (**This exemption is not to be used for turf or lawn grass.**)

Drip Irrigation defined as: systems manufactured and sold specifically for delivering water through small flexible pipes and emitters slowly and directly to the soil around the base of individual plants in a manner that minimizes evaporative losses, pooling, runoff, and wetting of plant foliage may be used for 1 hour on the odd/even schedule on established plants as defined above. Even and unnumbered addresses may water on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays between Midnight and 10 AM. Odd numbered addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays between Midnight and 10 AM.

Soaker Hoses defined as: a hose that is connected to a typical outdoor faucet and that is manufactured and sold specifically for delivering water slowly and directly to the soil around the base of individual plants by allowing water to seep from it in a manner that minimizes evaporative losses, pooling, runoff, and wetting of plant foliage may be used for 1 hour on the odd/even schedule on established plants as defined above. Even and unnumbered addresses may water on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, between Midnight and 10 AM. Odd numbered addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays between Midnight and 10 AM.

3. **An exemption is provided for new landscape installations.**
  - a. These new installations may be watered for a period of 10 weeks following installation **on the odd/even watering schedule.**
  - b. **Only newly - installed landscaping may be watered** by an irrigation system; all other watering must follow the hand watering exemption.
  - c. Irrigation systems may be used to water newly - installed landscaping, but **only between the hours of Midnight and 10:00 AM**

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- d. In order to qualify for a new landscape exemption, the customer must enroll in the Urban Agriculture Council's online Water Conservation Class at [www.outdoorwateruse.com](http://www.outdoorwateruse.com). Forms obtained from the course **along with a** Cobb County Landscape Exemption form, <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/pdf/outdoorexemptionform.pdf>, and a purchase receipt , must be sent to:  
The Water Efficiency Program  
660 South Cobb Dr.  
Marietta, GA 30060  
Or Faxed to 770-419-6478
  - e. Exemptions may also be filed electronically. The certificate number from the outdoor water use quiz is required when applying for the exemption electronically at <https://www.cobbcountygov.org/secure/water/efficiency.htm>.
  - f. Failure to submit the forms and receipt may result in a water ban violation and possible discontinuation of an irrigation account.
4. **New home construction** will have 10 weeks to water newly installed landscape on the above odd/even schedule, for the purpose of erosion and sedimentation control. A builder may choose to heavily mulch a property instead, until water conditions improve. Builders must file a new landscape exemption for all properties, as outlined above, one company representative can take the mandated quiz and use that certification for all new installations.
  5. **Irrigation**- only accounts found in violation of the outdoor restrictions will be terminated and locked off until the end of Drought Response Level 4.
  6. **Rates for irrigation** - only accounts are equal to the top tier of residential use (\$6.80/thousand gallons).

### Pools

1. Public and private pools, previously prohibited in Drought Response Level 4, are permitted to open and be topped off as necessary for maintenance.
2. Pools may be drained and refilled for the purposes of repair, refurbishment, or drain system replacement. There are no scheduled times or days for pool filling.
3. New pools are permitted to be filled with municipal water. Permits issued for new pool construction will no longer read "must be filled by an alternate source of water."
4. New pool permits will stipulate that pool covers are mandatory for all new pools in Cobb County. Pools must be covered during the off-season, rather than drained.
5. Failure to comply with the above pool policy may result in a penalty.

### Water Waste Penalty

**Effective March 1, 2008**, the structure of the Water Waste fine shall be equal to the current structure for outdoor water ban violations, that is, the first offense shall incur a written warning; the second offense, a \$100.00 fine; the third offense, a \$250.00 fine; and fourth and subsequent violations, a \$500.00 fine and other penalty. In order to encourage the efficient use of outdoor water and the proper maintenance of irrigation systems, the following activities will be subject to a Water Waste Fine:

1. A broken irrigation system (missing heads, broken pipes, etc.)

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2. Excessive runoff – water running down the driveway, street, or sidewalk.
3. A hose running unattended without a shutoff nozzle.

### **Commercial Users**

1. Cobb County will continue to offer commercial water audit programs for high water users.
2. Cobb County Water System has purchased leak detection equipment and trained staff on the equipment. This service will be available to a limited number of commercial properties, based on consumption and availability.

### **Car Washes and Car Detailing Businesses**

1. Mobile Detailing is permitted, but reasonable care to limit water use should be undertaken.

### **Service Leaks**

1. Cobb County Water System currently leaves a door hanger at any address where a leak is detected. Language has been added to inform customers that the leak must be repaired within a reasonable time period. If such repairs are not conducted, water service may be disrupted.
2. The Cobb County Water System Service Leak Termination Policy will be followed. In the case of any leak exceeding 1.0 gallons per minute.

### **Restaurants**

1. The Cobb Water System has contacted restaurants by mail advising restaurants to serve water only when a diner requests it.
2. Cobb Water will promote the pre-rinse spray valve program aggressively through our website, professional organizations, and the Cobb Chamber of Commerce.

### **Pressure Washing**

1. Pressure washing can only be performed by a licensed professional.
2. Pressure washing of parking lots, driveways, decks, sidewalks, etc. is prohibited unless there is a public health issue or pre-procedure.
3. Pressure washing of structures is permitted.

### **Schools**

1. Cobb County Water System will continue to work with the Cobb County Schools to assist in developing a comprehensive water efficiency program.

Additional information can be found at [www.cobbwater.org/efficiency.htm](http://www.cobbwater.org/efficiency.htm).