

## **Cobb County Drought Response Plan**

On March 29, 2005, Cobb County established a Water Efficiency Program intended to reduce water demand through a number of conservation strategies, including school programs, outreach initiatives, retrofit kit distribution, rain barrel programs, indoor and outdoor use audits, and adult education. On October 23, 2007, Governor Sonny Perdue mandated that water use in North Georgia be reduced to a level equivalent to 90% of the average use for the months of December 2006 through March 2007.

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 shower heads. Cobb County will also examine water use within County buildings to determine potential savings.

The following represents a Drought Response Plan to serve as the basis for Cobb's efforts to comply with the Governor's recent mandate. As the current drought is a changing situation and the seasons greatly impact water use and commercial needs, Cobb County will revisit the existing Drought Plan in early spring or as deemed necessary due to additional state direction or other changing conditions.

### **Residential Customers**

1. Two additional tiers will be added to the existing conservation structure for high water users:

30,000 Gallons - 49,000 Gallons	\$3.50/1,000 gallons
50,000 and above	\$5.00/1,000 gallons
2. A new campaign to provide users with water use tips and the expected savings for each will be created, encouraging residential customers to save 10 gallons a day.
3. A new toilet rebate program will be initiated retroactive to the Level 4 declaration of September 20, 2007.
4. With respect to outdoor water allowance beyond Level 4 please see the comments regarding landscapers and pressure washing below.

### **Landscapers**

1. An exemption is allowed for new landscape installations (including aeration and over seeding) performed by licensed landscapers. These may be watered for 15 days following installation. Homeowners may water between the hours of Midnight and 10 AM and licensed landscapers may water when they are on site during this period.
2. New home construction will have 15 days to water newly installed landscape, for the purpose of erosion and sedimentation control. A builder may choose to heavily mulch a property instead until water conditions improve.

3. Only one new landscape exemption (as discussed above) will be permitted per planting season as defined as September – March, and April- August. A New Landscape Exemption Form with a receipt must be submitted to the Water Conservation Coordinator in order to receive the exemption. Aeration and over seeding counts as a new exemption.

### **Commercial Users**

1. Each Commercial user will be given a water allowance of 90% of last year's winter average (December, January, February and March). Exceeding this allowance will result in a surcharge of 25% for all water use exceeding the 90% allotment. There will be no assessed surcharge for the first billing period exceeding this allowance. The surcharge will be assessed to every subsequent month exceeding the 90% allotment. This will include businesses, institutions, multi-family developments, and schools.
2. Cobb County will continue to offer commercial water audit programs for high water users.
3. Cobb County Water System will employ a leak detection company to review commercial properties for leaks as deemed necessary by consumption history.

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

1. Car washing of new and used vehicles at car lots is prohibited, unless they have a car wash operating with a water recycling system.
2. Car washes operating with a water recycling system will be exempt from the 90% surcharge applied to commercial customers.

### **Service Leaks**

1. Cobb County Water System currently leaves a door hanger at any address where a leak is detected. Language will be added to let customers know that the leak must be repaired within 10 days or water service may be disrupted.
2. For any leak exceeding 1.0 gallon per minute water service will be terminated until the leak is repaired.

### **Restaurants**

1. Cobb Water has already sent a letter to the restaurants asking them to serve water only upon request.
2. Cobb Water will promote the pre-rinse spray valve program more aggressively through our website, professional organizations, and the Cobb Chamber of Commerce.

### **Pressure Washing of Parking lots and Commercial Buildings**

1. Pressure washing of parking lots is prohibited.

2. Pressure washing of commercial buildings for beautification is prohibited.
3. Pressure washing will be allowed for health and safety.
4. Pressure washing will be allowed when required prior to a procedure such as painting.

### **Schools**

1. Cobb County Water System will work with the Cobb County Schools to assist in developing a comprehensive water efficiency program.
2. Cobb County Water will read school meters during non-operational hours to determine if a leak detection service is needed.
3. Schools will be subjected to the commercial 90% surcharge.

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