

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ASKS WORST HIT WATER SYSTEMS TO TAKE ACTION NOW TO  
ENSURE WATER WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR THE FUTURE**  
*Calls for Regional Interconnections, Water Audits and Conservation-Based Rates*

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley today told water system managers from the state’s 30 most vulnerable communities they need to take certain actions now to make sure they will have adequate water supplies for their citizens during the long, hot summer if North Carolina’s historic drought continues. He called on these communities to set up interconnections to other water supplies, conduct water audits and adopt conservation based price structures to encourage citizens to conserve water.

“Public water systems should act now, not wait for an emergency, to set up interconnections with other water systems and seek backup supplies, whenever those options are possible,” said Easley. “I have directed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to work with the League of Municipalities and your communities to quickly identify the funding needed and assist in making sure there are no delays in getting this important task accomplished.”

The governor also announced that DENR will send water audit experts into each of the 30 communities to make sure undue amounts of water are not being lost to leaks and other structural problems. DENR experts will conduct water audits, identify problems and recommend appropriate measures to improve the systems.

Easley also reiterated his request for the public water systems to adopt conservation-based rate structures to encourage both residential and commercial customers to save water. At the Dec. 20 meeting of the Drought Management Advisory Council, the governor called on local water systems to enforce a fee system to penalize those who are excessive water users with significantly greater water bills.

Easley called for the Emergency Water Shortage Response Planning Workshop to provide assistance for the state’s worst hit water systems so they have effective emergency plans and additional water supplies in place in the event the drought continues to worsen. It was held at the Pinecroft-Sedgefield Fire Station in Greensboro.

The federal drought map for the last two weeks has shown 67 counties listed in exceptional drought (the worst level); 20 in extreme drought and 13 in severe drought. For more information, visit [www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org).

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