

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY REMINDS CITIZENS THAT DROUGHT IS NOT OVER
Conservation Still Needed Following Recent Rainfall

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today asked citizens throughout North Carolina to continue their water conservation efforts since the latest federal drought map shows that 97 of the state’s 100 counties are still in some form of drought.

“We had some good rain the last few weeks, but that does not mean that we now have plenty of water,” said Easley. “The rain helps but spring is coming, which means water use goes up and evaporation loss increases. We are still looking at some tough months as we go forward, so people need to continue to conserve.”

The federal drought map released today shows no counties still in exceptional drought, down from 39 counties that were in the worst of the four-category system last week. Also, 37 counties are experiencing extreme drought, 15 are in moderate drought and three coastal counties, Carteret, Dare and New Hanover, are abnormally dry. Abnormally dry means that drought is not present but could develop without rain.

Despite the improvements, people need to remain vigilant in their efforts to conserve water. Statewide, 5.56 million people, or 82 percent of the people who receive water from systems tracked by the state, are subject to voluntary or mandatory water use restrictions.

On Tuesday, Easley announced a three-part legislative package to to modernize the state’s more than 600 public water systems; mandate water conservation and efficiency by water systems, businesses and private individuals; and upgrade the response to water emergencies including giving the governor more power to take action prior to a declaration of a public health and safety emergency.

The governor also unveiled a new website, *SaveWaterNC.org*, with the goal of convincing the public to continue saving water to avoid a crisis in the current drought and to instill the need for continued water conservation even when the drought is over.

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