 April M. Snead, MPM

Manager

**Water Shortage Response Plan**

**Applicable to all Scotland County Water Systems**

**August 2023**

The procedures herein are written to reduce potable water demand and supplement existing drinking water supplies whenever existing water supply sources are inadequate to meet current demand for potable water.

1. **Authorization**

The Scotland County, County Manager shall enact the following water shortage response provisions whenever the trigger conditions outlined in Section IV are met. In her absence, the County Public Information Officer will assume this role.

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Scotland County Manager Scotland County Public Information Officer

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1. **Notification**

The following notification methods will be used to inform water system employees and customers of a water shortage declaration: employee e-mail announcements, notices at county and municipal buildings, notices in water bills, and notice on the City of Laurinburg website homepage. Required water shortage response measures will be communicated through The Laurinburg Exchange, local radio, and on the City of Laurinburg’s website.

1. **Levels of Response**

Five levels of water shortage response are outlined in the table below. The five labels of water shortage response are: voluntary reductions, mandatory reductions I and II, emergency reductions and water rationing. A detailed description of each response level and corresponding water reduction measures are described below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Response** | **Description** |
| 1 | Voluntary Reductions | Water users are encouraged to reduce their water use and improve water use efficiency, however, no penalties apply for noncompliance. Water supply conditions indicate a potential for shortage. |
| 2 | Mandatory Reductions I | Water users must abide with required water use reduction and efficiency measures; penalties apply for non compliance. Water supply conditions are significantly lower than the seasonal norm and water shortage conditions are expected to persist. |
| 3 | Mandatory Reductions II | Same as Stage 2 |
| 4 | Emergency Reductions | Water supply conditions are substantially diminished and pose an imminent threat to human health or environmental integrity. |
| 5 | Water Rationing | Water supply conditions are substantially diminished and remaining supplies must be allocated to preserve human health and environmental integrity. |

In Stage I, daily water demand is approaching 90% of the City of Laurinburg water treatment capacity or operational time and that there is not more than 150 days of water supply available to the City’s water system. All water users will be asked to reduce the normal water use by 5%. Methods will include: irrigating landscapes maximum of one inch per week; preventing water waste, runoff and watering impervious surfaces; water plants deeply to encourage root growth; washing only full loads in clothes and dishwashers; using spring-loaded nozzles on garden hoses; and identifying and repairing all water leaks.

In Stage II, all customers are expected to reduce their water use by 10% in comparison to their previous month’s water bill. In addition to continuing to encourage all voluntary reduction actions, the following restrictions apply: Outdoor use of drinking water for washing impervious surfaces is prohibited; and all testing and training purposes requiring drinking water (e.g. fire protection) will be limited.

In Stage III, customers must continue actions from all previous stages and further reduce water use by 20% compared to their previous month’s water bill. All non-essential uses of drinking water are banned and garden and landscape irrigation must be reduced to the minimum amount necessary for survival.

In Stage IV, customers must continue all actions from previous stages and further reduce their water use by 25% compared to their previous month’s water bill. A ban on all use of drinking water except to protect public health and safety is implemented.

In Stage V, all customers are only permitted to use water at the minimum required for public health protections. Firefighting is the only allowable outdoor water use.

1. **Triggers**

Scotland County is provided water solely by purchase from the City of Laurinburg. When the City of Laurinburg declares a water shortage, Scotland County is required to do so as well. During this time, the Scotland County Manager will stay in close contact with the City of Laurinburg and follow their triggers.

When water shortage conditions have abated, and the situation is returning to normal, water conservations measures employed during each phase should be decreased in reverse order of implementation. Permanent measures directed toward long-term monitoring and conservation should be implemented or continued so that the community will be in a better position to prevent shortages and respond to recurring water shortage conditions.

**V. Enforcement**

The provision of the water shortage response plan will be enforced by Scotland County personnel and law enforcement. Violators may be reported to the City of Laurinburg’s dedicated water conservation hotline or email the contact listed on the City’s website. Citations are assessed according to the following schedule depending on the number of prior violations and current level of water shortage.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Water Shortage Level** | **First Violation** | **Second Violation** | **Third Violation** |
| Voluntary Reductions (Stage 1) | none | none | none |
| Mandatory Reductions (Stages II and III) | Warning | $100 | $200 & Discontinuation of Service |
| Emergency Reductions & Water Rationing (Stages IV and V) | $100 | $200 | Discontinuation of Service |

**VI. Public Comment**

Customers will have opportunities to comment on the provisions of the water shortage response plan. First a draft plan will be published in The Laurinburg Exchange and on the City of Luarinburg’s website. A public hearing will be scheduled with notice printed in all customer water bills to collect comments on the draft. All subsequent revisions to the draft plan will be published at least 30 days prior to an adoption vote by Laurinburg’s City Council.

**VII. Variance Protocols**

Applications for water use variance requests are available from the City of Laurinburg’s website and Consumer BIlling Department. A decision to approve or deny individual variance requests will be determined within two weeks of submittal and after careful consideration of the following criteria: impact on water demand, expected durations, alternative source options, social and economic importance, purpose (i.e. necessary use of drinking water) and the prevention of structural damage.

**VIII. Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of the Scotland County Water Shortage Response Plan will be determined by comparing the state water conservation goals with observed water use reduction data. Other factors to be considered include frequency of plan activation, any problem periods without activation, total number of violation citations, desired reductions attained and evaluation of demand reductions compared to the previous year’s seasonal data.

**IX. Revision**

The Water Shortage Response Plan will be reviewed and revised as needed to adapt to new circumstances affecting water supply and demand, following implementation of emergency restrictions, and a minimum of every five years in conjunction with the update of our local water supply plan. Further, a water shortage response planning work group will review procedures following each emergency or rationing stage to recommend any necessary improvements to the plan to Laurinburg City Council. The Scotland County Manager is responsible for initiating all subsequent revisions.