**TOWN OF DREXEL – NORTH CAROLINA**

**WATER SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN**

**February 2011**

**(Updated 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 demands for potable water.

1. **AUTHORIZATION.**

The Drexel Town Manager shall enact the following water shortage response provisions whenever the trigger conditions outlined below are met. In his or her absence, the Public Works Director will assume this role.

Ms. Sherri Bradshaw Mr. Roger Burleson

Drexel Town Manager Drexel Public Works Director

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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 email announcements, notices at municipal buildings and on the Town of Drexel website homepage. Required water shortage response measures will be communicated through PSA on local radio and cable stations, local newspaper and the Town of Drexel website. Declaration of emergency water restrictions or water rationing will be communicated to all customers by telephone or door hangers if necessary.

1. **LEVELS OF RESPONSE.**

Five levels of water shortage response are outlined in the table below. The five levels 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 follow below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **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. |
| 2 | Mandatory Reductions I | Water users must abide require water use reduction and efficiency measures; penalties apply for noncompliance. 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 1, Voluntary Reductions, all water users will be asked to reduce their normal water use by 5%. Customer education and outreach programs will encourage water conservation and efficiency measures including: irrigating landscapes at a minimum of two days per week, a maximum of one inch per week; preventing water waste, runoff and watering impervious surfaces; reduction of residential vehicle washing; washing only full loads in clothes and dishwashers; using spring-loaded nozzles on garden hoses; and identifying and repairing all water leaks.

In Stage 2, Mandatory Reductions I, 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: irrigation is limited to one half inch per week between 8PM and 8AM two days per week; outdoor use of drinking water for washing impervious surfaces is prohibited; eliminate residential vehicle washing; and all testing and training purposes requiring drinking water (ie: fire protection) will be limited.

In Stage 3, Mandatory Reductions II, customers must continue actions from all previous stages and further reduce water use by 20% compared to their previous month’s water bill. Limit lawn and landscape irrigation to no more than one day per week. Prioritize and meet with commercial and industrial large water customers to discuss strategies for water reduction measures including development of an activity schedule and contingency plans.

In Stage 4, Emergency Reductions, 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 health and safety is implemented. Prioritize and meet with commercial and industrial large water customers to discuss strategies for water reduction measures including development of an activity schedule and contingency plans. Prepare to implement the Emergency Plan.

In Stage 5, Water Rationing, the goal is to provide drinking water to protect public health (ie: residences, residential health care facilities and correctional facilities). In Stage 5, all customers are only permitted to use water at the minimum required for public health protection. Firefighting is the only allowable outdoor water use and pickup locations for distributing potable water will be announced according to Drexel’s Emergency Response Plan.

1. **TRIGGERS.**

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

**RETURN TO NORMAL.**

When water shortage conditions have abated, and the situation is returning to normal, water conservation 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.

1. **ENFORCEMENT.**

The provisions of the water shortage response plan will be enforced by Town of Drexel personnel and local law enforcement. Violators may be reported by phone to the Municipal Building or by email. 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 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Mandatory Reductions  (Stages 2 and 3) | Warning | $100 | Discontinuation of Service |
| Emergency Reductions | $100 | $250 | Discontinuation of Service |
| Water Rationing | $250 | Discontinuation of Service | Discontinuation of Service |

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Customers will have multiple opportunities to comment on the provisions of the water shortage response plan. First, a draft plan will be available at Town Hall for customers to view. A notice will be included on the customer utility bill notifying them of such. All subsequent revisions to the draft plan will be published at least 30 days prior to an adoption vote by Drexel’s Board of Aldermen.

1. **VARIANCE PROTOCOLS.**

Applications for water use variance requests are available at Town Hall. All applications must be submitted to the Town Hall for review by the Town Manager or his/her designee. A decision to approve or deny individual variance requests will be determined within one week of submittal after careful consideration of the following criteria: impact on water demand, expected duration, alternative source options, social and economic importance, purpose (ie: necessary use of drinking water) and the prevention of structural damage.

1. **EFFECTIVENESS.**

The effectiveness of the Drexel Water Shortage Response Plan will be determined by comparing the stated 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.

1. **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 at a minimum of every five years in conjunction with the updating 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 Drexel’s Board of Aldermen. The Town Manager is responsible for initiating all subsequent revisions.