

# **Stage 4 Water Shortage Emergency**

**-2020-**

On Monday June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the MCCSD Board of Directors declared a Stage 4 Water Shortage Emergency via Resolution 2020-271, in accordance with the Water Shortage Contingency Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan Ordinance 2020-02 both adopted in May of 2020. Due to recorded rain fall of only 20.32 inches from October 1, 2019-June 23, 2020.

At Stage 4 the intention of the plan is to restrict water demand to vital functions, such as human consumption, sanitation, and fire protection.

## **What a Sage 4 Water Shortage Emergency Means: Customer Responsibilities**

- Rationing for all developed property owners with GWEP's
- 40% reduction in Water allotments by all property owners with GWEPs
- Mandatory GWEP for all developed parcel owners

## **Water Wastage Prohibition**

The companion Ordinance 2020-02 prohibits the following water wastage practices:

- Indiscriminate running of extracted groundwater that is wasteful and without reasonable purpose.
- Allowing extracted groundwater to spill into streets, curbs, or gutters.
- Using extracted groundwater in any manner that results in runoff beyond the immediate area and intended purpose of use.
- Watering using extracted groundwater to establish new lawns and other high water demand (non-Xeric) landscaping

## **Water Conservation**

The companion Ordinance 2020-02 limits the watering of existing established landscaping to manual garden hose watering or use of a drip irrigation system between the hours of 7:00 PM and 10:00 AM. However, since extensive outdoor landscaping is not common in this community, the Water Conservation portion of the companion Ordinance focuses on the following:

- **Washing of Vehicles.** The washing of personal and commercial motor vehicles, including boats and other equipment, is permitted only by means of a “bucket and sponge,” and a hose with a shutoff nozzle.
- **Cleaning of Exterior Surfaces.** The hosing down of porches, sidewalks, driveways, and other hard surfaces is prohibited, except as needed for health and safety reasons.
- **Cleaning of Structures.** Using a hose to clean the exterior of buildings is prohibited, except as is necessary to avoid creation of a public nuisance.
- **Pools and Spas.** Emptying and refilling a swimming pool, hot tub, or spa except to prevent or repair structural damage or to comply with public health regulations, are prohibited. All pools, hot tubs, and spas are to be covered to prevent evaporative losses when not in use.
- **Fountains.** Use of decorative fountains is discouraged. Using water to operate a fountain is prohibited unless such water is recirculated.
- **Visitor-Serving Facilities.** Owners and managers of hotels, motels, bars, restaurants, and other visitor-serving facilities are to display placards or decals promoting public awareness of the need for water conservation and/or advising the public that waste of water is prohibited.
- **Restaurants.** Restaurants in the District are only to serve water to restaurant customers upon request.
- **Construction.** No potable water obtained from the MCCSD groundwater supply may be used for soil compaction or dust control during construction activities. All water hoses used in connection with construction activities are to be equipped with an automatic shutoff nozzle.

Water conservation would be voluntary during a declared Stage 1 Water Shortage and become mandatory in Stages 2 through 4.

### **Public Education and Outreach**

The Town of Mendocino and surrounding area is very unique from a water supply and water conservation planning perspective. All of the residents and business owners in the community are aware of the limited water supply available to them from their individual wells, and virtually all (by necessity) have a strong water conservation understanding and ethic. Nearly all are also very aware of the need to “ramp up” water conservation efforts late in the summer and fall, even during normal rainfall years, and to achieve even higher water conservation practices during times of drought.

Accordingly, the MCCSD public education and outreach program regarding water conservation will focus on the following:

- 1) Informing the public and MCCSD customers when a Water Shortage has been declared by the District Board and providing additional water conservation tips.

- 2) Informing tourists and visitors to the community of the ongoing, perennial water supply situation and any declared Water Shortage Emergencies, as well as the need for them to help conserve water.
- 4) Performing water conservation “audits” at the request of residential and business customers to help identify additional water conservation strategies.
- 5) Providing brief water conservation seminars to community groups and local schools.

Public education and outreach during declared Water Shortage Emergencies will be achieved by the following mechanisms:

- Newspaper articles
- Information on MCCSD Website (water conservation links)
- Billing inserts
- Tent cards on water conservation in hotels and restaurants.

## Penalties

The Ordinance provides for enforcement mechanisms and a penalty structure, which includes written warnings by MCCSD staff for first offenses, with penalties and surcharges on customer bills for subsequent violations.

MCCSD Water Shortage Contingency Plan

**Table 8: MCCSD Water Shortage Contingency Plan**

Water Shortage Stage/ Condition	Customer Responsibilities	Water District Activities	Penalties
<b>1. Conservation Alert:</b>  Mild shortage. (22.5-25% below normal rainfall) Frequent condition after March 1 due to lack of inter-annual (carryover) storage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Voluntary water conservation</li> <li>➢ Prohibition of water waste (hose washing driveways, parking area, walkways or other paved surface, except as is required for sanitary purposes)</li> <li>➢ Display of conservation information by hotels and restaurants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Ongoing public information campaign, media outreach</li> <li>➢ Request voluntary water conservation with 10% use reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Warning letter on need for water conservation</li> <li>➢ Possible penalties on blatant water wastage after first warning</li> </ul>
<b>2. Mandatory Restrictions:</b>  Moderate Shortage (25-40% below normal rainfall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Designated irrigation times</li> <li>➢ No vehicle washing except with a hand-held bucket or hose equipped with a positive shutoff nozzle</li> <li>➢ Prohibition on refilling of decorative fountains or ponds unless such water is part of a recycling system.</li> <li>➢ No refilling of hot tubs or swimming pools.</li> <li>➢ Drinking water served at restaurants only upon request</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Request voluntary 15% reduction</li> <li>➢ Intensify media outreach and information campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Warnings</li> <li>➢ Educational letter from-MCCSD representative</li> <li>➢ Water wastage penalties (e.g., fine for any person that causes or allows the water to run off landscape areas into adjoining streets, sidewalks, or other paved areas due to incorrectly directed or maintained sprinklers or excessive watering and hard surface washing)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Limited Rationing:</b>  Serious Shortage (40-50% below normal rainfall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 20% reduction in water usage by all GWEP holders.</li> <li>➢ Request 20% reduction in water usage by all developed property owners.</li> <li>➢ Irrigation audit for landscape maintenance.</li> <li>➢ Recommend use of paper plates at restaurants to avoid dishwashing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Require a 20% allotment reduction</li> <li>➢ Intensify public relations</li> <li>➢ Temporary moratorium on new groundwater extraction permits for new development, expansion of existing use, and changes of use, which require a hydrological study.</li> <li>➢ Prohibitions on aquifer pump tests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Warnings</li> <li>➢ Surcharge or penalty for repeat offenders</li> </ul>
<b>4. Full Rationing:</b>  Severe Shortage (>50% below normal rainfall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Rationing for all developed property owners with GWEPs</li> <li>➢ 40% reduction in water usage by all property owners with GWEPs</li> <li>➢ Mandatory GWEP for all developed parcel owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 40% allotment reduction by all developed parcel owners</li> <li>➢ Intensify all Stage 3 actions</li> <li>➢ MCCSD coordinates outside water delivery to meet demand, provided by private vendors.</li> <li>➢ MCCSD requires all developed property owners to obtain a GWEP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Warnings</li> <li>➢ Rigorous enforcement with penalties and surcharges</li> <li>➢ Possible revocation of GWEP for serious repeat violators</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Water Shortage Stage Criteria (Previous Year with Normal Rainfall)\***

Water Shortage Stage	Severity	Rainfall	Expected Recurrence	Evaluation Date/ Cumulative Rainfall Total		
				Jan. 31	March 31	May 31
<b>1 Alert</b>	mild	75% to 82.5% of normal	±5 years	14-19"	29-32" and <7" since Feb 1	32-35" and <12" since Feb 1
					26-29" and 7-18" since Feb 1	29-32" and 10-20" since Feb 1
					22-26" and >18" since Feb 1	24-29" and >20" since Feb 1
<b>2 Warning</b>	moderate	60% to 75% of normal	±8 years	10-14"	26-29" and <7" since Feb 1	29-32" and <10" since Feb 1
					22-26" and 7-18" since February 1	24-29" and 10-20" since February 1
					16-22" and >18" since Feb 1	20-24" and >20" since Feb 1
<b>3 Emergency</b>	severe	50% to 60% of normal	±15 years	8-10"	22-26" and <7" since Feb 1	24-29" and <10" since Feb 1
					16-22" and 7-18" since Feb 1	20-24" and 10-20" since Feb 1
<b>4 Crisis</b>	historic	less than 50% of normal	±50 years	<8"	16-22" and <7" since Feb 1	20-24" and <10" since Feb 1
					<16"	<20"

\*Rainfall measured from October 1.

Table 3 (above) from the 2020 Water Shortage Contingency Plan outlines how rainfall totals are used to guide the Board in declaring a Water Shortage Crisis. You can see we are currently in a Stage 4 Crisis, with only 20.32 inches of total rain fall measured from October 1, 2019-June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, and only 5.57 inches measure from February 1, 2020-June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.