



Town of Chatham

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NEWS RELEASE

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Water Conservation Measures

CHATHAM – On September 20, 2022, the Select Board implemented modified water conservation measures taking into account the State designation of a *Level 3 - Critical Drought* status for the Cape.

The Board discussed the negative impacts of the drought on the town's ability 1) to keep water storage tanks full providing for fire protection and water system pressure; 2) limiting wear & tear and long run times on well infrastructure (pumps, motors, etc.); 3) avoiding excessive drawdown in the public wells to avoid bacterial or other contamination.

The Board implemented the following water conservation measures effective immediately:

1. The following are **prohibited**:
 - a. **Use of irrigation systems (see exception d).**
 - b. **Installation of new sod, seeding, and/or landscaping.**
 - c. **Watering during or within 48 hours after measurable rainfall.**
 - d. **Washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding).**
2. Outdoor watering is limited to **Monday, Wednesday, or Friday** by **hand-held hoses or watering cans**, to be used between **midnight and 8 a.m. or between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.** Users are asked to be considerate when hand watering, only do so when necessary, and use a hose with a nozzle that shuts off when not being squeezed by the person to avoid a running hose when it's not attended.

3. Exceptions to the restrictions include health and safety, agriculture and livestock, and core functions of a business, such as landscape nursery centers. In addition to the general exemptions noted the specific exemptions below have been adopted:
 - a. Boats may be rinsed to remove debris associated with fishing activities such as gutting, descaling, etc.
 - b. Boat engines may be flushed and boat hulls power-washed in preparation for winter storage.
 - c. Washing of personal vehicles, and washing of outdoor furniture in preparation for winter storage.
 - d. Watering of mitigation plantings approved by the Conservation Commission with temporary irrigation systems.

Violations could result in:

- First offense – Warning
- Second offense - \$100 fine
- Third offense - \$200 fine

We remind users that established vegetation needs no more than 1” of water per week, either from precipitation or watering, or combination thereof.

Municipal water users are reminded of the following from the Water Rules & Regulations:

- *“As of April 1, 2018, the Chatham Water Department shall not allow the initial filling, or subsequent draining and re-filling, of swimming pools from the municipal water system.”* (Article VII 19.)
- *“No new irrigation systems shall be connected to the municipal water supply as of January 1, 2021.”* (Article VI 2.)
- *“Existing irrigation systems not already on a separate water meter shall be retrofitted, at the customers expense, with a separate water meter no later than January 1, 2022.”* (Article VI 5.a.)

We strongly encourage private well owners to adhere to these measures as we all draw from the same aquifer.

Good quality and enough fresh potable water are vital to the health of our community.

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