



State of Utah

SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Natural Resources

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Executive Director

Division of Water Resources

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Robert Snyder
Rockville Pipeline Company
PO Box 630212
Rockville, UT 84763

April 28, 2021

Dear Robert Snyder,

On March 17, 2021, Gov. Spencer J. Cox issued an Executive Order declaring a state of emergency due to drought conditions. As you are aware, 100% of Utah is in drought. 2020 was one of the hottest and driest summers on record, our snowpack was well below average this year, and soil moisture is at an all-time low. We believe taking action now is critical – especially because we don't know how long these drought conditions will continue.

Now is an excellent time to review and potentially update your system's drought response plan, drought mitigation plan and water ordinances related to drought response and conservation during times of drought.

We ask that you evaluate and monitor your primary water sources (groundwater, springs, reservoirs, etc.). Some questions to consider in regards to your system include:

- Have you seen any impact on your water sources in the past 12 months due to drought? For example, well drawdown, reduced flow in springs, lower reservoir levels, etc.
- Do you anticipate implementing water use restrictions in the next six months?
- Do you have a drought surcharge included in your rate structure?
- Have the areas you serve (county or counties) issued a local drought declaration?

Recommendations & Considerations During Drought

- Outdoor watering: Consider asking residential customers to delay outdoor irrigation until after five days of 70 degrees or warmer weather, which could mean mid-May instead of mid-April.
- Restrict watering except on days allowed to water. One option is, limit outdoor irrigation to 2 days per week, then to 1 day per week if drought conditions persist through spring and

summer. Ensure all government buildings comply with whatever suggestions or restrictions are implemented.

- Recommend customers postpone new landscape projects until a wetter year.
- Recommend postponing replacement trees downed in last year's wind storm until a better water year.
- Ask local nurseries to stock low water use plants and encourage use over annual flowers and high water use ornamental plants.
- Encourage or provide a rebate to replace inefficient indoor fixtures and appliances with water-efficient models instead of landscaping changes this year.
- Fire restrictions: because more than 80% of the fires in 2020 were human-caused, consider a ban on fireworks and firework sales.
- Restrict or ban outdoor target shooting.
- Limit outdoor fires to an established fire ring with a gravel perimeter of at least 6 feet.
- Prohibit using water to wash driveways and sidewalks.
- Send notifications asking customers to conserve water in response to prolonged and extreme drought conditions throughout Utah. Educate users of actions they can take, such as reducing their showers by one minute.
- If costs to provide water increase in a drought, consider implementing a surcharge to cover additional costs. This type of surcharge would likely take time to study and approve. However, it could be in place for future droughts.
- Send notices to customers with excessive use or stop by for a visit. Remind them of the current drought conditions, ask them to please reduce water use, state any rate increases or fines your system may include. Offer personalized suggestions on how they can reduce their use.

Resources

- Utah Water Savers (utahwatersavers.com): Offers statewide residential rebates for smart irrigation controllers and toilet replacement. If you are interested in rebates for water-saving devices (like smart controllers and toilets) in your city parks, schools, and/or government buildings, please contact Shelby Ericksen at 801-300-1623 for more information.
- LocalScapes (localscapes.com): Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District is offering free online LocalScapes classes this year. LocalScapes guides homeowners through the process of designing a landscape that thrives in Utah and uses water wisely.
- Water Checks (cwel.usu.edu/watercheck): Utah State University Extension offers free water checks in some areas of the state. Water checks help homeowners better understand their lawn's water needs. DIY instructions are also online for homeowners outside of areas that offer water checks.

- Slow the Flow (slowtheflow.org): The Governor's Water Conservation Team formed this organization to promote conservation throughout the state. Resources and information can be found on slowtheflow.org.
- Residents can report water waste by filling out the form at surveymonkey.com/r/FameOrShame.
- Conserwater.utah.gov: This site offers information on water conservation in Utah, a weekly lawn watering guide, Water Conservation Plans, resources for waterwise plants, state water campaign information, etc.
- When creating a Water Conservation Plan, we encourage waterwise ordinances. Visit conserwater.utah.gov/wcp for more information.

We encourage you to use our office as a resource during this time. We are happy to help you draft drought response plans, assist with Water Conservation Plans, provide drought messaging materials for your customers, and provide support where we can.

Sincerely,



Todd D. Adams
Division Director
Division of Water Resources
Department of Natural Resources

