

Rain, Rain...Where Are You?

In Drought Conditions, HCMUD 132 and Our Residents Must Work Together to Protect the District's Water Supply

Record high temperatures and alarmingly low rainfall amounts have made this summer season, at times, a tough one to take. To avoid the intense heat, we slather on the sunscreen, cool off in neighborhood or backyard pools, and spend a lot more time indoors. Unfortunately, our lawns and gardens have no escape route. And with little rainfall, it's likely you're using more water than ever to quench their thirst. This can not only be tough on your pocketbook, but it can also bring the District's water supply down to a level that can infringe on what is necessary for emergency situations. In severe drought situations, low levels can even threaten the water reserve we need for basic necessities, such as drinking water.

In the best interests of the customers of this District, and as is required by law, HCMUD 132 adopted a revised **Drought Contingency Plan** in April of 2005. The plan outlines different "trigger points" in **Mild, Moderate** and **Severe** drought situations, and the measures that must be taken by the District and our residents if these trigger points are reached.

Based on the extended time period of high temperatures and low rainfall we've been experiencing, the Board felt it necessary to outline the high points of the Drought Contingency Plan. If any of the Drought Trigger Points are reached, we will immediately inform residents via sign postings at the entrance to the District and/or through mailout notices. Please note that there are Voluntary Water Conservation signs posted in District neighborhoods to encourage preventing a Mild Drought Trigger Condition through wise water conservation practices. *We have not reached the Mild Drought Trigger and with the cooperation of all of our residents we can avoid such a situation.* For information on how best to conserve, visit the HCMUD 132 website (www.hcmud132.com) and click on the "Conservation" tab.

Below are some important highlights in the Drought Contingency Plan:

Trigger Conditions

(based on a study and/or statistical analysis of the vulnerability of water sources under drought or record conditions):

- **Mild Drought:** a mild drought exists when total daily demand of the District's water supply facilities causes the well to run eighteen (18) hours or more per day for three consecutive days. These conditions will trigger a voluntary seventeen percent (17%) reduction in total water use and a reduced well run time of fourteen (14) hours per day or less.
 - Drought Response Measures

- Users will be asked to voluntarily reduce water use and will be informed of specific steps that can be taken to reduce water use.
 - All outdoor water usage (including lawn and garden watering, car washing, window washing, etc.), will be limited as follows:
 - Even-numbered addresses will use water outdoors on even-numbered days, and odd-numbered addresses on odd-numbered days.
 - Outdoor water use will be prohibited between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. (as these are peak times for general water usage).

- **Moderate Drought:** a moderate drought exists when total daily demand of the District’s water supply facilities causes the well to run twenty (20) hours or more per day for three consecutive days. These conditions will trigger a voluntary twenty-five percent (25%) reduction in total water use and a reduced well run time of fourteen (14) hours per day or less.
 - Drought Response Measures
 - Drought Response Measures established for Mild Drought Conditions will continue to be implemented, but will be mandatory and subject to fine (for a detailed listing of fines, click on the Drought Contingency Plan link).
 - All outdoor water usage (including lawn and garden watering, car washing, window washing, etc.), must be conducted with a hand-held hose and manual on-off nozzle.
 - The District will recommend that water usage not essential for public health and safety be curtailed (street washing, fire hydrant flushing, filling of swimming pools).

- **Severe Drought:** a severe drought exists when total daily demand of the District’s water supply facilities causes the well to run twenty-two (22) hours or more per day for three consecutive days. These conditions will trigger a voluntary thirty-three percent (33%) reduction in total water use and a reduced well run time of fourteen (14) hours per day or less.
 - Drought Response Measures
 - Mild and Moderate Drought Condition measures will continue to be implemented and will be mandatory and subject to fine.
 - All outdoor use of water (lawn and garden, car washing, window washing, etc.) will be prohibited.
 - A surcharge equal to 400% of the applicable rate for all water delivered in excess of average allowed usage of 10,000 gallons per month during the declared drought period.

For a look at the Drought Contingency Plan as a whole and more details on Drought Response Measures, click the “Drought Contingency Plan” sidebar link to the left.

And, as always, feel free to call our District office if you have any questions and/or concerns. You can reach us at: 281-209-2100.