

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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GEORGIA EPD DECLARES LEVEL ONE DROUGHT ACROSS THE STATE

The director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has declared a level one drought across the state and will require all Georgians to follow a more stringent outdoor water use schedule.

“We have studied conditions around the state and our findings show that drought conditions exist throughout Georgia,” said EPD Director Carol A. Couch. “It’s important that citizens conserve water now to help ensure there is a sufficient water supply in the coming months.”

The drought declaration was made following a meeting today of the State Drought Response Committee. The Committee includes representatives from several state, federal and local agencies, as well as universities and non-government organizations. The EPD Director, working with State Climatologist David Stooksbury, consults with the Committee members and then determines whether a drought declaration is appropriate.

“We monitor stream flows, lake levels, precipitation, groundwater levels and other climatic indicators,” said Stooksbury. “It’s clear that conditions have worsened over most of the state during the past several weeks.”

The level one drought was declared for all nine climate divisions in Georgia. Click the link below for a climate division map:

http://www.gaepd.org/Files_PDF/news/Climate_Divisions_of_Georgia.pdf

A level one drought is the least severe level of drought, however EPD will continue to monitor conditions statewide and issue revised drought declarations as necessary.

A level one drought declaration places hourly limits on the outdoor water use schedules already in effect. The new outdoor watering schedules statewide are as follows:

- Odd-numbered addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays-12 midnight to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 12 midnight.
- Even-numbered and unnumbered addresses may water on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays-12 midnight to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 12 midnight.

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The new outdoor watering schedule replaces the non-drought schedule, which had been in place for the past two years. The non-drought schedule was as follows:

- Odd-numbered addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays
- Even-numbered and unnumbered addresses may water on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays

Local governments and water utilities may impose more stringent watering schedules. Citizens are encouraged to contact their local water providers for more specific guidance.

The metropolitan Atlanta area is at even greater risk for drought, because of the over release of water from Lake Lanier by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps has said that it has miscalculated the amount of water in the lake for conservation storage and mistakenly released 22.5 billion gallons of water. The state has taken legal action to require the Corps to allow the lake to refill and recover the stored water lost to downstream releases.

More information about the outdoor water use schedules can be found on the EPD web site at www.gaepd.org. To learn more about water conservation, please go to the EPD Water Conservation web site at www.conservewatergeorgia.net. Detailed information on the drought can be found at www.georgiadrought.org.

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