

May 2006

With summer just around the corner, Collin County will be facing the same drought issues that we faced last December. In 2005 we received only 18.97 inches of rain which made 2005 the driest year since the 1950s and the fifth driest since 1910.

At this time most cities served by the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) in Collin County are at Stage 2 drought level. NTMWD has notified their Member Cities and customers that they plan to initiate Stage 3 in early June.

A breakdown of NTMWD's drought stages and requirements are:

Stage 1, Mild

Stage 2, Moderate: Goal 2% Use Reduction

- request voluntary use reductions
- increase public education
- reduce non-essential uses
- ask public to reduce landscaping watering and wait for new landscaping

Stage 3, Severe Goal: 5% Use Reduction

- no hosing pavement, buildings and windows
- no operation of ornamental fountains
- no vehicle washing by hose-commercial car washes okay
- landscape irrigation with sprinklers or irrigation systems allowed only once a week (7 days) this includes residential, commercial, school and city
- no outdoor watering with sprinklers between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- no draining and refilling existing pools

Stage 4, Emergency Goal: 10% Use Restriction

- no washing of vehicles
- no commercial or residential landscape watering except with a soaker hose or handheld hose to water foundations and trees-even these times can be restricted by city ordinances.

- treated water may be used only on golf course greens and tees
- no new residential pool permits, existing pools may add water to maintain levels
- no new landscaping
- water supplies rationed

Even with last winter's drought, water use for January-March 06 was up 29% percent over the same period last year. If we still have a lack of rain coupled with summer weather we could very well see the Stage levels increase. So please keep this in mind as you use water.

Below are some conservation tips from the North Texas Municipal Water District:

- Save 1000 gallons a month by running the washing machine and dishwasher only when they are full.
- Check your water meter and bill to track your water usage.
- Watering during early morning hours minimizes evaporation.
- Showering for under 5 minutes will save 1000 gallons a month.
- Adjust your lawn mower to a higher setting.
Longer grass shades root systems and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak. It's easy to fix, and you can save more than 600 gallons a month.
- Fixing a leak faucet can save 140 gallons a week.
- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save 4 gallons a minute.
That's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- Turn off the water while you shave will save more than 100 gallons a week.

Many other tips for water conservation and other news concerning this important topic can be found at North Texas Municipal Water District's website at www.ntmwd.com.

As the summer heat sets in please keep in mind that by just thinking about

your water

use and making some minor changes could save thousands of gallons not to mention

the savings on you will have on your water bill.